Minutes of the Lambley Reed Pond Group Meeting

4th March 2024 at 7pm in Lambley Village Hall.

Present:

Karen Hayter, (Group Chair) Stephen Bird ( Group Vice Chair) Ian Kassell (Secretary) Steve Brett (Treasurer), Gina Bajek, Christine Bridgett, Parish Councillor Kevin Stevenson, Peter Smith, Bonnie Bramwell

Guests: Len Harding, Andy Moss, Peter Clarke, and Michelle Donze

 Apologies: Sarah Rhodes and Kim Hogden.

1. Minutes from the last meeting dated 30th January 2024 were agreed as a correct record.

2.0 Matters arising from the last meeting:

2.1 (1.0a) Nursery walk

 Gina Bajek had received the correspondence which related to the original purchase of the Reserve. Action closed.

2.2 (7.2) Wildlife Surveys in 2024

 Peter Smith confirmed that surveys would start, weather permitting in April and advised that there would be full surveys, comparing flora/fauna after creating the new meadows in the south of the Reserve.

 **Action: Peter Smith**

2.3 (9.2/8.1 and 8.9) Refurbishing the decayed signpost in the Reserve.

 This will be competed once the waterlogged ground dries

 **Action: Stephen Bird**

2.4 (3.0) Annual Action Plan

 All fencing will be checked in March by Karen and Steve, and any repairs rectified before the sheep arrive on site in August.

 **Action: Karen/Steve**

 During March the eastern outflow ditch will be cleared.

 **Action: Karen to arrange**

 Reed Cutting

Two areas of dead reeds were cut just above the water line in February enhancing the views over the pond. Peter Smith and Len Harding suggested that reeds could be cut just under water level and maintained as such throughout spring and summer in these areas. Len who works for The Canal and River Trust has equipment called a grabber which can remove large sections of new reed growth. For our pond, this approach can reduce reed encroachment in to the pond and improve spawning areas for amphibians. Len is willing to lend us the grabber and may be able to attend himself if his time permits.

**Action: Karen/Stephen to follow up**

Pathways.

The ground is significantly waterlogged throughout the NW corner due to the large volume of rainfall. In February, the path through this area and the gate access were improved underfoot using the reed cutting debris and bark chippings.

3.0 Meadow Update

 The unprecedented amount of rain experienced over this last Autumn / Winter period prevented the meadow cut in September / October resulting in invasive grasses growing rapidly. Karen did a light strim throughout the 4 wild-flower seed beds in late February and the thatch debris removed.

 The germination of the meadow plants will be monitored. If the trend of earlier wetter winters continues Karen suggested a supplementary cut be made in December.

4.0 The eastern boundary of the Reserve.

 The action to clarify the position of the eastern boundary by the Parish Council remains open. Bonnie mentioned that as owners of the Reed Pond House they had boundary maps which she would copy to the Parish Council to assist the discussion. Councilor Stevenson agreed to liaise with Bonny and Mark on the subject and arrange a date to inspect.

 **Action: Councillor Stevenson/Bonnie**

5.0 Volunteering Event

 Several new volunteers were welcomed on the bramble pruning event in February. Christine has a record of those who attended.

6.0 Ash Tree Update

Councillor Stevenson and Dawn Edwards (Chair of the Parish Council) advised the condition of the ash tree near the northern bench had been assessed recently by an arborist Matt Hearn commissioned by the Parish Council (PC) and Katya Watmore. Matt had given assurances to the PC that the tree is safe and healthy and had agreed to write in to the PC with this assurance.

The committee is concerned that the subject of ownership of the tree is still unknown, however as Councillor Stevenson explained this is not a matter for the Group to be concerned with.

This matter is now closed.

7.0 List of Volunteers

Christine Bridgett agreed to compile an updated list of volunteers with contact details, the Secretary would provide a copy of the list that he has. Christine will follow up with Kim the best approach to contact volunteers and to also confirm whether all volunteers and group members wish to continue to be included on the LRPG circulation

**Action: Christine/Ian/Kim**

 8.0 Treasurers Report

The Treasurer informed the meeting that the current balance was £1627.24p. The donation of £125 from the Woodlark Event had now been received and the owners of The Woodlark thanked.

Councillor Boyd Elliott from Notts County Council has recently pledged £500. The Treasurer noted also that Councillor Helen Greensmith had been supportive of the Group and had previously provided £250.

9.0 Strategy Planning for the Reserve.

The Treasurer advised that some further work has been done on the draft management plan. The plan is based on the earlier Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust management plan and the 2021 report by Frank Knowles to the Parish council. Steve suggested a separate meeting is arranged to review the current plan and will circulate date options.

**Action: Steve**

As part of the previous discussion with the Notts County Council’s Forestry Officer Nick Tucker, he suggested we contact David Wraith from Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust regarding pond management.

**Action: Gina**

10.0 Grant Applications

10.1 Constitution / Mission statement

The Treasurer agreed to circulate the LRPG constitution with the proposed wording changes with the intention that the constitution will be finalized at the next LRPG meeting.

**Action: Steve**

11.0 Fund-Raising Meeting – Action Points

The main areas investigated were re-wording the constitution / strategy and investigating grant opportunities.

11.1 Trust Conservation Volunteers – Membership

The Secretary agreed to apply on behalf of the Group to join the TCV membership would be free. This would allow us to apply for startup grants to a value of £250. Once we have Membership, we are eligible to apply to their Chestnut Fund where grants of up to £500 are available.

**Action: The Secretary**

11.2 Go Fund Me page

Our Media Administrator Kim Hogden will investigate how we can close our Go Fund Me Group page which contains just over £120.

**Action: Kim**

11.3 Affiliation of the Group with the Friends of Gedling Country Park.

 **Action: The Secretary**

11.4 Community Involvement Project

One suggestion from the previous fund-raising meeting was to identify community focused projects. One suggestion was to create a circle of log benches to provide both relaxation and educational opportunities on the Reserve. Logs would be sourced locally and be sustainable. Stephen Bird would outreach to Parish Councillor, Andy Musson.

**Action: Stephen Bird**

11.5 General rules for Grant Applications

Stephen Bird informed the meeting that most of these organisations and businesses have strict criteria when donating funds. Many required matched funding, and some required charitable status. There were several that we could apply for, notably STWA Community Fund or BIFFA. The revision to our constitution will focus emphasis on community/environment and biodiversity. Peter Smith confirmed this environmental emphasis on securing grants from his own experiences at Netherfield Lagoons.

11.6 Village Quiz

Gina Bajek suggested a provisional date of 14th June to hold the village quiz with funds going to our Group. Julie Gregory had agreed to be quizmaster and some volunteers to organize and run the event have been identified. It is anticipated that food for the quiz could be shared platters. A Quiz sub- group would be set up, with Gina, Christine, Kim contributing. Peter Smith suggested we consider a raffle with the quiz.

**Action: Gina/Christine/Kim**

11.7 Village Donor

Dawn Edwards had forwarded the potential donors name to Gina Bajek and it was suggested that the person required sight of the type of project if a donation was available.

**Action: Gina to follow up**

12.0 Committee Functioning and Review

The Chair asked for feedback from the meeting on their views of the way the group was functioning.

It was agreed by all that the Committee WhatsApp platform was for information only, not decision making; where indicated acknowledgment of the message being read would be helpful.

The Group WhatsApp would be for general information of interest and one way to notify volunteers.

Notwithstanding in person meetings, email circulation for committee members would be used for items of discussion, work programmes, meeting minutes and reports and where possible the email thread should be to be maintained.

Steve was of the opinion that we should be more expeditious in all aspects e.g. decision making, issue of meeting agendas/minutes. This was agreed.

Councillor Stevenson suggested datelines are included in the column of actions. He mentioned that the Parish Council are very grateful and supportive of the work that the group is doing.

**All to Note**

13.0 Any other business

13.1 Hedgerow Management

The meeting was informed no work on hedge management would be undertaken before the end of September / October with an emphasis this year on the western hedge.

The merits of the type of hedgerow management were discussed. Peter Smith and Len suggested we concentrate on producing A shaped hedges, a view held by Frank Knowles, rather than laying them. It was noted that both a mature hedge and a layered hedge could provide benefit to nature. Stephen agreed to approach some hedge management companies to seek advice and quotations for work.

**Action: Stephen**

13.2 The definition of Reed Pond land

Steve raised the question as to whether the Reed Pond is a nature reserve or a green space for nature and the community. It is important that this is clear as it has a bearing on how we approach our management plan and how we structure applications for grants/funding. Karen will investigate the criteria for a nature reserve and advise at the next meeting. Stephen Bird said he would discuss these aspects with Len Harding and Peter Smith before the next meeting.

It was suggested that as a wildlife area the land was far more important than just having another green space in the village.

**Action: Karen/Stephen**

13.3 Recording of volunteer hours by the LRPG

All members were reminded to record hours and provide to the Treasurer.

**All to note**

13.4 Questionnaire to the community

The framework of questions is to be created to reach out to the village community to determine what they consider important/would like to see for the Reserve.

 **Action: Gina/Christine/Kim**

14.0 Date of the next Meeting

The next Meeting would be held on Wednesday 3rd April 2024 at 7pm in the Committee Room of the Village Hall.

All are welcome to attend.

**-Summary of Actions**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Item Number** | **Action** | **Action owner** | **Target date** | **Comments** |
| 30/01/2024 | 1.0a | Nursery walk |  |  | Closed |
| 29/03/2023 | 7.2 | Wildlife surveys | Pete Smith | On-going | Apr / May 24 |
| 06/12/2023 | 3.1 | Hedgerow management | Stephen | On-going | Open |
| 06/12/2023 | 6.1 | Issue Mission Statement/constitution | Steve Brett | Next Mtg | Open  |
| 29/06/2023 and 02/08/2023 | 9.2 / 8.1 and 8.9 | Reserve wood signs refurb | Stephen Bird | Next Mtg | Open |
| 06/12/2023 | 3.0 | Fencing check | Steve/Karen | Next Mtg | Open |
| 04/03/2024 | 2.4 | Reed management – cutting etc. | Stephen/Karen | On-going | Open |
| 06/12/2023 | 3.0 | Issue draft management / strategy plan  | Steve | Prior to next mtg | Open |
| 01/11/23 | 8.4 | Thinning alders in north woodland | All  | On-going  | Open |
| 03/04/2024 | 11.1 | TCV Membership | Ian | Next Mtg | Open |
| 02/08/2023 | 3.4  | 2024 fund raising activities  | All | Next mtg | Open |
| 04/03/2024 | 2.4 (3.0) | Additional clearance of overflow ditch  | Karen | Next Mtg | open |
| 02/08/2023 and 30/01/2024 | 4.2 and 8.8 | Re-instatement of pedestrian access gate East  | PC/ Cllr Stevenson | Next Mtg | Open |
| 04/03/2024 | 11.2 | Go Fund Me page closure | Kim | Next Mtg | Open |
| 30/01/2024 | 8.1a | North ash tree | PC/ Cllr Stevenson | See 4/3/24 Mins | Closed |
| 04/03/2024 | 7.0 & 12.0 | Volunteer list / whats app  | Christine/Kim | Next Mtg | Open |
| 30/01/2024 | 8.1 | North boundary clarification | PC/ Cllr Stevenson | On-going | Open |
| 01/11/23 | 8.2 | East boundary clarification | PC/ Cllr Stevenson/ Bonnie | On-going | Open |
| 04/03/2024 | 9.0 | Contact David Wraith | Gina | Next mtg | Open |
| 04/03/2024 | 11.6 | Fundraising item Summer Quiz | Gina / Christine | Next mtg | Open |
| 04/03/2024 | 11.4 | Sourcing for the log benches | Stephen | Next Mtg | Open |
| 04/03/2024 | 13.1 | Hedge contractors/costs etc. | Stephen | Next mtg | Open |
| 04/03/2024 | 13.2 | Definition of reserve/green space | Karen | Next mtg | Open |
| 04/03/2024 | 13.4 | Questionnaire compiling | Gina, Christine, Kim | Next Mtg | Open |