

FRIENDS of GALLOWS BANK

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Tuesday 20th September 2022

**Upstairs meeting room of the Rose & Crown public house, Ludlow
at 7.30 pm.**

PRESENT:

David Davies (Chair), Jane Davies (Treasurer), Heather Price, Brian Smart, Lesley Smart; Graham Hubbard, Christine Hubbard, Linda Downey, Ruth Rayner, Megan Blackmore, Trice Astill, Alexander Urka, Deborah Tillsley and Di Lyle (Secretary).

APOLOGIES:

Peter Norman, Robin Pote, Denise Thompson, Adrian & Sheila Cobley, James Cooper and Kate Adams.

APPROVAL OF 2021 MINUTES

Various inaccuracies to the 2021 Minutes had been pointed out. It was agreed an amended version would be circulated. The 2021 Minutes were not therefore approved.

Post meeting note: The amended Minutes contained actions. Dave Davies has agreed it is good practice to include these in Matters Arising, not previously on the 2022 meeting agenda:

MATTERS ARISING:

Fundraising: The appeal to members to identify anyone willing to explore and apply for funding opportunities remains outstanding.

Gallows Bank Ownership: The leaflet explaining who owns the Bank and who is responsible for its maintenance remains outstanding. However, a leaflet campaign was discussed under Membership Subscriptions (below).

Wildflower Meadow: A small wildflower meadow at the bottom of the muddy path was planted this year.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman began his report by expressing his thanks to the very few volunteers who help to maintain the Bank and to the committee members for their support.

A new natural freshwater spring has developed toward the top of the mud path and could prove beneficial in creating a wetland bog area which would encourage amphibians and help develop further wildflower species.

Considerable improvements have been made to the area and it is increasingly popular for walking, sightseeing and as a quiet contemplative space. However this will need upkeep.

Vandalism has become an increasing problem, with some semi-mature oak trees being felled with saws and more recently the fruit trees planted near Housman Close, paid for by a grant from Ludlow Rotary Club, were almost all damaged in the summer. Anyone spotting vandalism or unsociable activities should report them to the Chairman and to the Police.

A spring tine harrow for the Chairman's tractor has been purchased this year. This will be used very soon where dogs have been digging for moles leaving bare soil. When harrowed, wild flower seeds will be scattered which hopefully will be more successful than the areas prepared earlier in the year which have suffered from weed growth. Some seeds will take two years or more to bloom and it is hoped that regular maintenance will encourage that.

During the year the Chairman has applied for grant funding from Ludlow Rotary Club and Veolia. The Rotary application was not successful and the decision from Veolia won't be known for some time. He stressed that fundraising is a concern as there is no other source of income.

TREASURER'S REPORT

The Treasurer reported there was £6,548.37 in the bank account. Income for the year totalled £530, £190 derived from Membership Subscriptions and £340 as donations towards ploughing and wild-flower seeds.

The annual accounts were approved. The Treasurer confirmed that the accounts were submitted to the Charity Commission annually in March.

Proposed by Dave Davies Seconded by Graham Hubbard.
Carried unanimously.

The Treasurer reported that three new members had joined since the last AGM. The total number of members is now 34.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

The question of ceasing to charge a membership subscription was discussed. Originally, the idea was to use the subscription as a way of raising funds and it was included in the Constitution. However, that was only implemented last year and it was agreed that charging people to use a public open space is not right.

The proposal to the meeting therefore was that membership of the Friends of Gallows Bank is free from the date of this Annual General Meeting.

Proposed by Dave Davies Seconded by Linda Downey
Carried Unanimously.

While everyone present agreed access to the Bank should be free, there was still a need to raise funds to cover the maintenance of the Bank and to help fund projects. It was recognised that contacting the members to ask for donations for a specific project could be more attractive. It would also be a way of highlighting the cost of maintaining the Bank and also clarifying who owns it and who is responsible for its maintenance.

Suggestions as to how that information could be communicated to members and generally included updating the website and sending articles to the local papers and the Local to

Ludlow magazine. The fact that Ludlow is unique in having two Millennium Green spaces needs also to be included.

Action: Di Lyle to draft articles.

ANNUAL ELECTION OF OFFICERS: CHAIR, TREASURER AND SECRETARY

Dave Davies was elected as Chair, Jane Davies was elected as Treasurer and Di Lyle was elected as Secretary.

Proposed by Graham Hubbard Seconded by Trice Astill.
Carried Unanimously.

ANNUAL ELECTION OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

It was proposed to replace the term 'Executive Committee' with 'Management Committee'.

Proposed by Dave Davies Seconded by Brian Smart
Carried Unanimously.

The maximum number of Management Committee members was 8, in addition to the three officers: Currently there are 7: Brian Smart, Lesley Smart, Heather Price, Trice Astill, Graham Hubbard, Kate Adams and James Cooper.

It was agreed to remove James Cooper as a Committee member as he has not attended any meeting since his election last year.

Action: Di Lyle to contact James Cooper.

(Post meeting note: James Cooper emailed Di Lyle on Thursday 22nd September to offer his late apologies and his resignation which was accepted).

FORTHCOMING ACTIVITIES

The possibility of resuming the Fireworks event in November this year was supported in principle.

(Post meeting note: Di Lyle informed on 21st September that this will not now be going ahead).

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Wildflower Meadow: Dave Davies stated that the main challenge was keeping the weeds down but he hoped the new harrow for the tractor might help with this. A few poppies bloomed this year and it is hoped more will come up next summer. Graham Hubbard said he was impressed by the number of insects he had seen. It was acknowledged that this area needed more work and the need for regular maintenance was emphasised.

Linda Downey volunteers at the Discovery Centre and they organise working parties when they have specific work to be done. She suggested Gallows Bank could organise similar working parties which would help to encourage ownership.

Drainage: Severn Trent will charge the Trust for any work they do on Stych Brook. Graham Hubbard suggested that clearing the brook would offer an opportunity to create a pond.

Graham and Trice Astill offered to contact Shropshire Wildlife Trust to request a site visit to assess the bog area.

Action: Graham Hubbard and Trice Astill to invite Shropshire Wildlife Trust to assess the bog area.

Trees: The willows along the side of Syche Brook will need pollarding in the winter. This could be something for a working party to be involved with. The possibility of organising a willow-weaving workshop was suggested.

Also the trees planted behind the bench half-way up the Bank on the left will need some management in the future as they are all roughly the same age.

Trees resistant to climate change will be needed in the future as well as native trees. This could be a possible fundraising project for members. Local schools could also be involved with the children planting trees which could create a sense of ownership and help prevent vandalism.

A coppice of silver birch, wild plum/cherry, blackthorn and hawthorn was suggested, possibly in the area where the BMX track used to be.

The oaks at the top of the bank will need to be replanted this year before the roots are too established.

DATE OF NEXT ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

This will take place next July, specific date to be decided in due course.

Heather Price expressed her thanks and appreciation of the work and time put in by Dave Davies and Brian Smart. This was endorsed by all.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 8.50 pm.