



**Friends
Of
Leckhampton Hill &
Charlton Kings Common**

**Minutes of the Sixteenth Annual General Meeting
held on Wednesday 11th November 2015 at Leckhampton Primary School**

16.0 Welcome

The Chair, John Harvey, welcomed about 45 members and visitors to the Sixteenth AGM of FOLK. The Chair noted that both long term and new members of FOLK were present. The Chair reminded all members that the AGM is an opportunity to question and to hold the Executive to account for its actions, and also as a forum to discuss views, hopes and concerns.

16.1 Apologies for Absence

Ray Wilson, Wayne Sedgwick, Margaret Whalley, Paul Ryder, Maureen McBane, Margaret Patterson

16.2 Minutes of the Fifteenth AGM Held on 12th November 2014

The minutes of the fifteenth AGM were accepted and signed as a true record of the meeting.

Proposed: Serena Meredith

Seconded: Pete Niblett

16.3 Matters Arising

The Chair noted that the minutes included reference to the website and the Newsletter, both of which would arise from Officers' reports. There were no other matters arising.

16.4 Officers' Reports:

16.4.1 Treasurer's Report. Geoff Holt

The Treasurer presented the audited accounts (see page 5 of these minutes), which showed a surplus of £746 for the year ended 30 September 2015 compared with a loss of £431 in the previous year. The balance in the bank accounts stood at £3479.

Membership income was up, due to the variations caused by the 5 year membership cycle plus increased membership, and income was boosted by a one-off Community Pride grant of £300

Expenditure was down, largely due to CBC taking over responsibility for maintaining, replacing and insuring our tools, and the large saving in newsletter production costs now that a majority of members have accepted delivery of the newsletter by e-mail.

The Treasurer thanked the local Parish Councils and the Cycling Club for their regular donations, the CBC for its flexibility shown in finding ways to help our funding, and to Paul Stefanoski for auditing the accounts free of charge.

The audited accounts were accepted at the meeting:

Proposed: Peter Whalley

Seconded: Chris Ryder

16.4.2 Work Party Coordinator's Report. Geoff Holt

During the year 929 volunteer hours were logged at our regular work parties, with attendance averaging 8.5 people. Tasks were varied, including Gorse and scrub clearance to open up the cattle grazing, burning brash from tree clearance, pulling ash saplings and Hemp Agrimony, footpath maintenance, grass mowing, litter clearance etc. There is lots to do to meet FOLK's plans, which are generated in liaison with CBC based on Natural England's SSSI requirements. The large work-load means that new volunteers are always welcome, even if they are only able to come occasionally.

The Chair pointed out that that the practical work is the most publicly visible and a very important part of our work, and on behalf of the meeting, thanked Geoff and all the volunteers for their efforts.

A comment from one of the regular work party members mentioned that when working on the Hill, many passers-by ask what we are doing, and sometimes voice complaints. Every effort should be made to encourage such people to join FOLK, which has an important role in representing all users of the Hill. Complaints should be addressed to the CBC.

16.4.3 Secretary's Report. Rick Plummer

The Secretary reported that there had been 7 well-attended Executive Committee meetings with many views expressed. In addition there had been a structured inspection walk around the Hill in the summer. The Committee made good progress on a number of fronts, most notably the construction of a working website, which is hosted by the Trust for Conservation Volunteers. Whilst it was a team effort, thanks were expressed to Geoff Holt, who actually carried out most of the work. The website needs to grow and remain live, so any contributions of articles, links, photographs and current information for the What's New section are requested. The existence of the website has allowed us to introduce a simple business card for handing out to anyone on the Hill.

A data policy is now in place so that members' information can be effectively used and protected. The policy can be viewed on the website.

Planning applications which could affect the site are considered. Relevant ones this year were in Hartley Lane and on the golf course.

FOLK had a stand at the Midsummer Fiesta in Montpellier Gardens, which was good for publicity, and attracted some new members.

Regular discussion points at committee meetings include the environment of the Hill such as tree clearance and coppicing, scrub, grass sward height and grazing, footpaths, wildlife, litter, information boards, benches etc.

16.4.4 Membership Secretary's Report. Anne North

18 new members have joined FOLK this year, bringing us to 125 memberships representing about 150 people. A number of people are currently renewing, and often need some chasing up! Members were reminded that renewal forms should be completed and returned to ensure that our records are kept up-to-date.

The Chair noted that Anne North was not only a founder member of FOLK, but has been Membership Secretary for all of that time. Recruiting members is important in several ways. A larger membership makes our voice more powerful in discussions about the future of the Hill. We need to build up the number of our active volunteers to replace those who are getting older, to increase the range of skills available, and to maintain the numbers in work parties.

Members are encouraged to recruit others from family, friends and neighbours, by telling them about FOLK's work and persuading them to join.

16.4.5 Newsletter Editor's Report. Peter Whalley

Apart from the actual creation of three Newsletters this year, the big change was e-mail distribution of the Newsletters to some 75% of the membership. This has helped our finances greatly with a much smaller printing and distribution requirement. Some of the required paper copies were kindly printed by CBC. All contributions of articles, letters or photographs are welcome for the coming issues.

The meeting expressed its thanks to Peter for producing all the high quality newsletters.

16.4.6 Chair's Report. John Harvey

The Work Parties are only one element of the management of the site, there are two other players; the grazier, Anne North, whose animals play a critical role in grazing part of the site, and the Borough Council, which carries out or funds most of the larger works. For all practical purposes, the Council takes the form of Wayne Sedgwick, the site manager and a frequent co-worker with the work parties.

A significant proportion of the Officers' time is spent liaising with Wayne, to agree work programmes, to advise on proposals he makes, making suggestions, making site visits and the like.

Some of the major works commissioned by the Council during the year included scrub clearance on parts of the Hill Fort, tree clearance at the top of the Common to reopen views down into Cheltenham, resurfacing car parks and a number of footpaths, tree felling on Leckhampton Hill, fencing off the remains of the former Lime Kilns and creating an interpretation board to be installed nearby. What neither Wayne nor FOLK have been able to tackle effectively is the amount of litter that can be left in some locations and use of the site for late night summer parties involving large fires.

At its last meeting the Executive discussed what projects we might like to develop in 2016. Our list in no particular order was:

Producing a new, more informative map of the site

Further developing the website.

Exploring the best way to store both FOLK's history and papers and the site's management data.

Collaborating with the Magnificent Meadows project about which we heard at last year's AGM.

Organising a public meeting in March with a speaker on the Industrial Archaeology of the site.

Getting an accurate estimate of visitor numbers.

Being represented at next year's Fiesta in the park, the source of several new members this year.

Replacing the tool store, which is currently on loan.

And, of course, recruiting more members.

16.5 Motions for Discussion

16.5.1 Constitution Changes

The Secretary led the meeting through this item

A proposal had been circulated to the membership in advance of the meeting to modify the Constitution as follows:

Delete membership class "Associate Member" (mainly under 18 years).

Reason: This class of membership is not used.

Delete special arrangements relating to the period leading up to the first AGM, and at the first AGM

Remove references to the "Minute Book".

Reason: Minutes are circulated and stored electronically.

Add "by electronic means" to the other methods of delivering notices to members.

Reason: Many members are happy to receive communications by e-mail.

Remove the need for member signatures on a members' request for a Special General Meeting.

Reason: To allow easier transmission by e-mail.

Appendix I Financial Regulations

Two officers to approve a spend of up to £100 (was £25).

A majority of the Executive Committee to approve a spend of up to £1000

(was the lower of £1000 or 25% of the annual income)

At least 75% of the Executive Committee to approve a larger spend

(was a majority at a General Meeting)

The proposal was accepted at the meeting:

Proposed: Rob Reid

Seconded: Tony Child

16.6 Election of Officers and Executive Committee Members

16.6.1 Election of Officers

The Secretary reported the situation as regards vacancies.

The Chair, Treasurer and Secretary may stand for election annually for a maximum of 5, 4 & 3 years respectively.

Chair, John Harvey is eligible and willing to stand for a further year.

There being no other nominees, John Harvey therefore continues as Chair.

Treasurer, Geoff Holt is eligible and willing to stand for a further year.

There being no other nominees, Geoff Holt therefore continues as Treasurer.

Secretary, Rick Plummer has reached 3 years and is therefore retiring from the position of Secretary. The constitution allows him to be automatically co-opted as a committee member for a further year and he has accepted this.

There was one nominee for the position of Secretary, Andrew Ross

There being no other nominees, Andrew Ross becomes our new Secretary.

The meeting approved these decisions.

15.6.2 Election of Executive Committee Members

The Secretary led the meeting through this item.

Committee Members are elected to serve for a term of 3 years, and can be re-elected for a second term of 3 years.

There are now 5 vacancies, and we have 5 nominations:

Anne North (for a second term) Peter Whalley (for a second term)

Julius Marstrand (for a first term) Mike Donnelly (for a first term)

Alistair McKenzie (for a first term)

There being no other nominees, all these are elected to the committee.

Other elected members continuing on the committee are:

Chris Ryder, Tim Sugrue and David Browning

The meeting approved these decisions.

The Chair noted that the committee has currently no particular skills or representation in a number of areas such as archaeology, horse riding, drone flying etc. Any members having or knowing of such skills should contact us.

16.7 Any Other Business

Rob Reid noted that he was impressed by the expertise on the Executive, and on behalf of Cheltenham Borough Council, he thanked everyone involved. He believed that CBC could not achieve what FOLK currently do.

There was no other business so the formal AGM closed at around 8.05 pm, followed by an interesting, but somewhat worrying talk by Chris Chavasse on how Ash Dieback is likely to affect the Hill.

Signed:

Chair

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Secretary

Date:

FRIENDS OF LECKHAMPTON HILL CHARLTON KINGS COMMON
Statement of accounts for the period 1st October 2014 to 30th September 2015

INGOME	(2014)	2015
Membership subscriptions		
Individual Members: 5 year subs	232.50	383.50
Individual Members: 1 year subs	72.00	120.00
Organisational Members: 1 year subs	65.00	65.00
Sub-Total	369.50	568.50
Donations/Sponsorship		
Cheltenham Borough Council (CBC)	0.00	300.00 See Note 1
Cheltenham & County Cycling Club	100.00	100.00
Leckhampton with Warden Hill Parish Council	250.00	250.00
Shurdington Parish Council	50.00	50.00
Charlton Kings Parish Council	300.00	250.00
Other	80.50	20.00
Sub-Total	760.50	970.00
Total	1,130.00	1,538.50

EXPENDITURE	(2014)	2015
TCV Membership and Insurance	534.01	233.01 See Note 2
Newsletter and AGM notices production		
Summer 2014 Newsletter Printing	239.00	225.00
Autumn (2013) 2014 Newsletter Printing	225.00	15.99
Spring (2014) 2015 Newsletter Printing	84.00	84.00
Summer 2015 Newsletter Printing	28.35	7.98
Newsletter Postage	20.00	20.00
AGM Notice Printing	512.35	432.97 See Note 3
Sub-Total	514.68	127.29
Other Expenses		
Fuel and Sundries	0.00	14.65
Tools and Equipment	285.68	8.30 See Note 4
Photocopying	25.00	1.35
Stationary	0.00	32.99
Room Hire (For AGM at Leckhampton School)	25.00	25.00
Open Spaces Society Membership Fee	45.00	45.00
Sundry	134.00	0.00
Sub-Total	514.68	127.29
Excess income over expenditure	-431.04	745.23
Total	1,130.00	1,538.50

Notes:

1. This was a Community Pride Grant to support newsletter costs
2. CBC have taken on the responsibility for insuring FOLK's tools
3. Newsletter printing costs have been reduced by introducing electronic distribution
4. CBC have taken on responsibility for maintaining/replacing FOLK's tools

I certify that, based on the evidence and explanations given to me, the above represents an accurate statement of accounts at 30th September 2015

Signed by:  Name Paul Stefanoski BA(Hons) CPFA

Date: 8/11/15.

Current Account	
Opening balance as at 1st October 2014	597.02
Add excess income over expenditure	745.23
Balance in Current Account at 30th September 2015	1,342.25
Savings Account	
Opening balance as at 1st October 2014	2,136.03
Income: Interest received	1.01
Balance in Savings Account at 30th September 2015	2,137.04
Overall income over expenditure	746.24