

## **Fuzzy Drove Conservation Group AGM**

### **Minutes of the third open Annual General Meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2017**

Present: Jenni Henderson (in the Chair), Coral Iles (Treasurer), Sally Matthews (Secretary), Walter McCormick (Group Liaison), Rita McCormick and 19 other supporters. Four supporters had sent their apologies.

#### **1 Introductions and Welcome**

The Chairman introduced the Committee members and warmly welcomed all our visitors and volunteers.

#### **2 Minutes**

The minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2016 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman. A copy has been made available on our web site ([www.fuzzydrove.co.uk](http://www.fuzzydrove.co.uk))

#### **3 Chairman's Report**

The Chairman presented her report on the achievements of the past year and set out our aims and objectives for the coming 12 months. A summary of her presentation is appended to these minutes.

The Chairman wished to record special thanks to Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council for their continued support, encouragement and advice. We would also like to thank donors of plants and other gifts in kind which have an estimated combined value of almost £150.

The Group wishes to acknowledge the work of regular volunteer supporters. Our records show that over 500 hours were spent on working for and in Fuzzy Drove over the last year. Additional occasional support is always welcome to enable us to achieve more in terms of direct conservation work as well as providing information for local interested folk.

Although there is no evidence of Dormice in Fuzzy Drove yet, we will continue to work towards improving the environment to encourage this endangered species to colonise the site.

Further planting is planned and will be done with the agreement of the Council and any immediate neighbours who may be affected.

#### **4 Annual Accounts**

The Treasurer presented the annual accounts to the meeting, a copy of which is appended to these minutes. The accounts had been certified by a qualified Independent Examiner, and the group would like to record their thanks for the Examiner's voluntary work on our behalf.

Special thanks are due to the Four Lanes Trust who had made a grant of £705 towards our expenses during the current year. The money has been earmarked for Dormouse nest boxes, hedgehog survey equipment and tools as well as saplings and wild species of bulbs to be planted in the verges of the Drove.

**5 Appointment of an Independent Examiner for 2017-18**

The Independent Examiner of our financial records for the coming year will, once again, be Figurefox.

**6 Date of next Annual General Meeting**

The next Annual General Meeting will be held on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> June 2018 at 7.30 pm. The venue is yet to be confirmed but is likely to be Kempshott Village Hall.

**Sally Matthews**

**July 2017**

**Following the conclusion of business of the Annual General Meeting, visitors were given the opportunity to ask questions.**

**1. The Chairman had outlined our intention to record observations of wildlife in the Drove registered by members of the public. A special page on our web site will be set up. What information will be requested?**

We would like to know which species have been seen, the date they were spotted and the location (between the field and Kempshott Lane) when seen. We would like to collect information on every aspect of the wild life in the Drove, including birds, animals, insects, butterflies and moths. The data will be collated and will help us to plan for future work in the Drove.

**2. There are some very muddy patches in Fuzzy Drove. Are there any plans to augment the surface of the path to solve this problem?**

We believe there may be a natural spring under the Drove which is causing the muddy patches to develop, and we have been advised that adding wood chips or other material to these areas would not be a long-term solution. However, we have begun planting very close to them with the idea that as the bushes and trees mature they will naturally absorb a significant proportion of the water. Further planting in these areas is planned.

**3. No information about conservation work in Fuzzy Drove is on display for passers-by to access. An information board would help.**

The Group agreed that an information board would be helpful, especially as the conservation work is now better established. The Chairman promised to look into the possibility. Council permission would be required.

**4. The “Hedgehog Highway” project is relevant to our work. Has the Group looked into this?**

Yes. We have registered the Group, and members of the Committee as individuals, as “Hedgehog Champions” and have actively promoted “Hedgehog Street” by encouraging supporters to create small holes in their fences to allow hedgehogs to roam more freely through gardens to find food. Our hedgehog survey results will be reported to the national survey, and will be repeated in the autumn before the hedgehogs hibernate. Plaques marking access points for hedgehogs – requesting others not to block the path – are available from <https://ptes.org/product-category/hedgehog-highways-signs/>

## **5. How do local residents feel about FDCG?**

Walkers and other users of the Drove often stop to chat as we run our working parties, and their comments are more and more positive. Immediate neighbours who were once sceptical are now more understanding and seem happy for us to continue our programme of work. We are delighted that a number of them have begun to join in. This progress has been helped by always consulting those closest to our work areas before we begin. There is also constant communication with them through our web site, the Kempshott Kourier, regular news letters distributed by hand or on email, Facebook posts, and activities such as this meeting and our children's events. We are always happy to listen to any comments that local people would like to make.