

Meeting Minutes
Steeple Woodland Project Group
22nd November 2021



Attendees

Chris Hogg (CH), Geoff Williamson (GW), Alwyn Jones (AJ), Rupert Manley (RM), Richard Brown (RB), Lorna Murray (LM), Helen Carver (HC), Mattie Pochee (MP), Rita Lait (RL), Julia Simpson (JS), Nick Parkin (NP), Kim Nicholl (KN), Kevin Trembath (KT)

--- Annual General Meeting ---

1. Apologies

Jerry Harper, Hazel Appleby, Giles Newcombe, Dinky Kennedy, Melanie Frankell.

2. Minutes of last meeting

Approved.

3. Chair's report (AJ)

A very peculiar and difficult time for all, but also very productive. Despite lockdown, we have worked 355 weekly sessions (6.8 years) without a break. We have lost some members and gained some – numbers average between 10 – 15 each Wednesday.

We have now got the new tool shed up and running, and a better than average tool supply.

With climate change we are noticing remarkable differences in how things are changing. Bracken and brambles are still being cut back when we used to stop cutting them back in August and certain plants are flourishing where they struggled in the past – Buddleia and Hypericum being two examples – so we are adapting to suit the new conditions.

Gorse cutting back is almost at a standstill and burning has been abandoned in favour of raking the debris into piles, which can be left for animals and invertebrates to use.

We are also changing some of our ideas about what needs to be done and are helping animal life on the site as well as managing it.

Paths still need to be cleared and the areas that have already been cleared of gorse are now being cleared again so that the work already done will not be lost to the undergrowth. These areas are already showing changes, much more heather and loads of foxgloves are appearing.

The Ancient Woods are largely left alone although several large trees have fallen due to the “tornado”. New paths have been put in and some small amounts of bramble clearing still needs to be done and there seems to be a noticeable drop in squirrel numbers.

The future – we just keep doing what we do best and being damn good at it!

4. Treasurer's report (RM for MF)

Treasurer's Report Year ending 30th April 2021

The Steeple Woodland Project's financial position declined during 2020/21 with a net cash out flow in funds of £1,912.19. This resulted in a balance on the SWP accounts at the end of the 2020/21 financial year of £5,340.84.

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Annual Income and Expenditure Summary										
	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16	2014/15	2013/14	2012/13	2011/12
Income										
Cornwall Council/PDC										£700
Donations	£1,000	£603	£270	£8	£413	£1,352	£137	£132	£142	£126
Co-operative										
HSBC										
Awards for All										
Cornwall Community Award					£300					
Woodland Trust/Tree Council							£300			
St Ives Town Council										
Tesco				£4,000						
Sale of logs										
Sponsor A Tree - donations										
Donations-DVDs										
Interest - Reserve accounts	£1.50	£14	£9	£2	£2	£5	£7	£16	£37	£40
HLF-residual funds										
Woodland Management Grant (FC)							£399	£399	£399	£399
Woodland Improvement Grant (FC)										£1,600
Calendars-sales	£422	£636	£728	£620	£534	£579	£548	£630	£499	£558
Calendars-sponsorship	£330	£270	£330	£330	£330	£330	£275	£280	£280	£275
Donations for Access Path Improvements				£1,877						
Other										
Total	£1,754	£1,522	£1,337	£6,836	£1,579	£2,267	£1,666	£1,458	£1,357	£3,698
Expenditure										
Advertising / Clothing	£304									£320
Bills										
Clearing / Spraying	£150							£150		
Insurance	£449	£449	£417	£405	£385	£275	£275	£275	£397	
Printing		£120								
Railfares										
Repairs										
Stationery										
Tools	£200	£299			£104	£230	£15		£100	£54
Membership			£38							
Meetings		£74	£69	£81	£71	£84	£53	£71	£116	£82
Signage										
Tool Shed	£2,216									
Herbicide treatment						£40		£60	£360	£285
Advice - Heathland				£160						
Other	£76		£75			£48	£44	£45		
Trees / Plants	£20				£448		£265		£16	
Courses		£227		£275						£180
Fees						£35				
Marquee										
Path Improvements			£27	£4,583						
Donations										£50
Chippings										
Infected tree felling									£15	
Bracken clearing										£936
Open Day		£133	£83	£58	£259	£163	£316	£370	£300	£147
DVD-reproduction										
Web site		£41	£41	£41	£39	£39	£39	£39	£39	£38
Sponsor A Tree - cost										
Calendars-printing	£252	£480	£488	£464	£462	£464	£462	£424	£693	£475
Total	£3,666	£1,823	£1,237	£6,068	£1,768	£1,379	£1,470	£1,434	£2,036	£2,567
Net	-£1,912	-£301	£100	£769	-£189	£888	£196	£23	-£679	£1,131

Income received in 2020/21 totalled £1,754 (2019/20 £1,522). The project received a very generous, anonymous donation of £1,000 this year. The sale and sponsorship of the 2021 Calendar generated £752 (2019/20 £936), a good result for a year in which sale opportunities were limited by COVID-19. There was minimal interest on our bank accounts (£1.50).

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Expenditure for 2020/21 increased to £3,666 (2019/20 £1,823). The project spent £2,216 on the new shed, £449 (2019/20 £449) on insurance, £304 on branded clothing for volunteers and £252 (2019/20 £480) on printing calendars, £200 on new tools and £150 on spraying rhododendron.

There was no expenditure on the Open Day or on meetings as they were not held due to COVID-19.

The sale of the 2021 calendar and cards produced a surplus income for the SWP of £500 (2019/20 £456) thanks to Kim adjusting the print run to suit circumstances this year.

The funds are available to continue with the SWP's current range of activities and obligations to maintain the Steeple Woodland Nature Reserve and also to fund further improvement.

Melanie Frankell
 Treasurer
 17 June 2021

Treasurer's Report 15th Nov 2021

Since 1st May 2021 (the start of our financial year) we have received:

- a generous donation of £650
- £355 in calendar sales and £285 from sponsors, total £640
- £65 at the Knill's Ceremony and £285 at the Open Day from sales of drinks and cakes

We have spent:

- £448.73 on Insurance
- £352.80 on calendar printing
- £141.60 on the Open Day (adverts in the Festival Programme and Times & Echo) • £46.10 on meetings (room hire and AGM advert)

Overall, income received so far in the 2021/22 financial year, amounts to £1,640, expenditure amounts to £989, giving a healthy surplus so far this year of £651.

Income	Calendar Sales	£355.00
	Calendar Sponsorship Donation	£285.00
	Interest	£650.00
	Knill Ceremony	£0.18
	Open Day	£65.00
Income Total		£1,640.18
Expenditure	Calendar	-£352.80
	Insurance	-£448.73
	Meetings	-£46.10

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	Open Day	-£141.60
	Expenditure Total	-£989.23
	Grand Total	£650.95

RM - Thanks given to Melanie Frankell for excellent work as Treasurer over the years and welcome to NP as the proposed new Treasurer.

5. Secretary's report (RM)

Since the last AGM and despite the pandemic and lockdowns our membership has grown. I would like to welcome Kevin Trembath and Nick Parkin to the group. In the volunteer group, there are several new faces: Julia, Hazel, Jack, Helen & Keith. Hope I haven't forgotten anyone.

From a secretarial point of view, there is little else to report. We have had a few approaches via the website and the very occasional telephone call – most recently someone asking if it is OK to walk dogs on the nature reserve!

We have been offered some trees by a neighbour of the site, Paul Sampson, who has accessed a scheme through Eon. Many of these are hedge trees that can be planted along the SE boundary of the top part of the site above the wall.

6. Election of Officers

- KT appointed as Secretary (on a best endeavours basis, pending recruitment of a full time Secretary)
- NP appointed as Treasurer
 - Following Bank Mandate amendment motion proposed, seconded and passed.
“The Authorised Signatories in the current mandate for the Steeple Woodland bank account to be changed to add <Nick Parkin> and the current mandate will continue as amended”
 - NP will meet MF to hand over details.
- AJ re-elected as Site Officer
- AJ re-elected as Chairman for remainder of 3 year period.
- RB re-elected as Vice-Chairman.
- KN re-elected as Publicity Officer.

--- General Meeting ---

1. Minutes of last meeting

Approved.

2. Matters arising

i. Projects update

(a) Ponds (CH)

3 ponds identified and dug out from root plate holes of fallen trees. Largely hidden from view. Will be planted up with natives in spring.

(b) Hiberniculum (AJ for GN)

One already built in the old woods. More to come around the Reserve.

(c) Nest boxes (AJ)

Tim Radford initiated work but now bird boxes on hold due to health issues. Work to proceed at the Wednesday sessions.

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Bat boxes taken up by CH who personally purchased a 7 boxes and have been / will be installed around the Reserve.

(d) Menhyr Field (AJ)

Field largely cleared despite bad weather. Residents Group (via Rachel) very pleased with the results. Likely annual maintenance all that is required.

(e) Meadows (AJ)

Some wildflower seeds planted in the autumn, further seeds to be planted in the spring. Aim to improve biodiversity beehives on site (health checked by Lawrence after Open Day 2021) working well and healthy.

(f) Cornish Hedges (MP)

Broken down Cornish Hedges exist in the Reserve. GN has experience of repairing Cornish Hedges and will lead repair work in the new year.

(g) Community Composting (AJ)

No longer required. No interest from Menhyr Park. Cornwall County Council didn't recommended we proceed. Project shelved and replaced with Geocaching which is going well with 5 caches hidden.

Action - KT to send KN details for Facebook.

(h) Richmond Park (RM)

Possibility of outreach work in the park to plant trees and enhance biodiversity. Questions over manpower among volunteers, but countered by possible benefits of outreach. Issues around decision making and devolution mean that this is unlikely to proceed with any urgency.

(i) Tree planting (RM)

Tree planting largely at capacity, with some scope for planting alongside the Bolitho Rhododendron area.

Replacement planting of native trees (oaks, hazel, alder, walnut) to infill fallen trees in the Ancient Woodland where canopy now allows light through.

ii. 10 year management plan (AJ)

Copy of current work plan distributed. Discussion of ideas for changes to the work plan, including monitoring of birds (possibly with help of Tim Radford) and butterflies.

Action - AJ to discuss with volunteers on 01/12.

iii. Email lists (KT)

Reminder given of GDPR responsibilities. Our website provider has upgraded their technology with a lot of contact and mail list management.

JS – as a minimum, all volunteer email addresses should be in the '.bcc' field so that they are not visible.

Action - KT to review new technology provided and pass on details of email tools and contact list management.

iv. Constitution review

RM distributed copies of the Constitution. Intention to keep the whole project informal.

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Questions over formality and wording (e.g. 'Objects') of Constitution document. RM - This is based on advice given and necessary to cover the formal responsibilities of the Steeple Woodland Project Group.

Discussion of Constitution split between Group members (who have responsibility for management of the site, including public liability etc and can vote on decisions), the elected officers of the Group and Volunteers (who take part in maintenance but do not have management responsibility). All are welcome to attend meetings and contribute to discussions. Varying opinions Re what is meant by "committee" vs "group".

Action - AJ to discuss further to clarify roles and responsibilities of "Officers", "Committee", "Group" and "Volunteers".

v. Publicity / Calendar (KN)

70 copies printed for 2022. Many sold at Open Day and others since. Calendars will be sold at the Christmas Farmers Market. Volunteers needed to man the stall.

Facebook page updates continue to be made, but more photos and updates specifically on Wednesday work sessions would be useful.

vi. Schools liaison and school trips (AJ)

Nothing to report. Need to stimulate interest, especially repeat visits to see progress.

Action - AJ to pass on to HC to provide suggestions on how to engage with schools etc.

Action - HC to review educational material on website and provide feedback.

vii. Christmas meal (KT)

All menu choices and deposits received and sent to The Watermill. Email to be sent out with reminders nearer the date.

3. Management operations for next period (AJ)

Carry on clearing and re-clearing bracken and scrub. Planting of trees likely over coming weeks. Volunteers are well versed in the work and largely work on their own initiative.

4. AOB

i. Climate Action Policy (RM)

Proposal for policy to be provided.

ii. Rhododendron on adjacent land (RM)

Steeple Lane around "September" and area around the quarry as well as other areas need clearing.

Concerns were raised about the amount of work required to take on clearing other people's land in addition to regular work sessions and about the tools needed to clear heavy growth of Rhododendrons.

Action - LM to discuss with land owners of the quarry area to get their views and possible permission to clear.

iii. Memorial Policy (RM)

Draft reviewed and approved. In summary, policy excludes installation of benches and encourages memorial tree planting.

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Action – AJ to discuss with volunteers on Wednesday 24th.

iv. St Johns in the Fields Christmas Tree Festival (AJ)

Further details provided by Debbie, including that the trees do not have roots. Decision of the attendees was to not take up the offer.

Action – AJ to inform Debbie that we will not take up their offer.

v. Payment for Ba (AJ)

Proposing to offer Ba a payment or gift as a token of thanks for her support. GW - This was mentioned in previous minutes.

Action - AJ to arrange a thank you payment or gift for Ba.

5. Date of next general meeting

19:15 Monday 21st February 2022.