

**General Meeting Minutes
Steeple Woodland Project Group
21st February 2022**



Attendees

Alwyn Jones – Chair (AJ), Richard Brown (RB), Mattie Pochee (MP), Nick Parkin (NP), Kim Nicol (KN), Kevin Trembath (KT), Rupert Manley (RM), Chris Hogg (CH), Lorna Murray (LM)

1. Apologies

Jerry Harper (Jerry has decided to stop being a member of the group), Dinky Kennedy, Giles Newcombe, Rita Lait.

2. Minutes of last meeting

Approved.

3. Chair's report

Very little to add from the last report – numbers are steady at between 12 – 15 volunteers every week. A great deal of bracken and brambles have been cleared, as have Rhododendron seedlings and larger plants. Most of the three areas by the Steeple that were cleared some time ago have been re-cleared and raked off.

Very few trees have been planted as we have almost run out of space - but we are starting to get donations for Memorial trees to be planted.

We have a bit of a problem with deer – especially in the area near the Monterey Pines, but are putting “deer” sleeves around the damaged oaks.

Minimal damage from the storms we have had recently – there is some need to check on a few from Storm Eunice.

I have asked the volunteers to come up with some plans to “tidy up” the area in front of the tool store as it is beginning to look very neglected.

4. Treasurer's report

**Steeple Woodland Project
Treasurer's Report 17 February 2022**

Since the last report on 15 November 2021 we have received:

Additional calendar sales of	£189
Further calendar sponsorship of	£30
Donations of	£192
A share of proceeds of the Knill Ceremony programmes sales of	£117.40

Expenses have been

Advertising the AGM	£16.40
Volunteers' shirts	£91.80
Website	£32.39

Giving a surplus for the current year of £1040.99

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Summary Income and Expenditure 1.5.21 – 17.2.22

Income:

Calendar Sales	544.00	
Calendar Sponsorship	315.00	
Donations	842.00	
Knill Ceremony	182.40	
Open Day	285.00	
Interest	0.27	
		2168.67

Expenditure:

Calendar Cost	352.80	
Open day	141.60	
Volunteers' shirts	91.80	
Website	32.39	
Meetings	60.36	
Insurance	448.73	
		1127.68

Surplus for current year

£1,040.99

Balances at bank

Current a/c 20.1.22	2439.25
Path improvement a/c 31.1.22	1271.96
Reserve a/c 31.1.22	2718.01

Total cash at bank

£6,429.22

5. Publicity Officer's report

All 2022 calenders have been sold and sponsorship monies received. Donations received from Open Day, including cards sold.

Facebook page – KT added as administrator of Group page. Working well.

T&E front page for vandalism story. Public awareness was raised.

6. Secretary's report

Firstly, thanks to Rupert for the very helpful handover. Since the last meeting, key points to note are:

- Steeple People

The membership lists of people in the Group have been updated in line with the Constitution. Summary is currently:

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Steeple People – Summary

	Contact	Active	Inactive	Resigned / Lapsed
Members	members@steeplewoods.org	14	0	2
<i>Officers</i>	<i>officers@steeplewoods.org</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>2</i>
Volunteers	volunteers@steeplewoods.org	6	6	1
Total	everyone@steeplewoods.org	20	6	3

Historical contacts with email addresses have been moved to the website contacts list.

- Policies

The Memorial Policy agreed at the last meeting has been published on the website. The Management page now has all key documents publicly available for the sake of transparency.

- Email

The two primary email addresses in use have been reduced to one (info@steeplewoods.org). The steeplewoodlandproject@gmail.com address is still active but now automatically forwards the emails to info@... and sends replies to the sender telling them what has happened.

- Electronic documents

All electronic documents are now stored in the Cloud (Google Drive). This is a free, secure, shareable and backed-up storage area for our information. We can extend this storage to all of the digital photographs if deemed useful.

- Website

The Blog has been started, with an initial blitz of posts to get things moving. This will settle down to 2 – 3 posts per month from now on. If anyone wants to be a 'blogger' and contribute posts please let me know.

The Partners pages now includes a page for Penderleath Community Woodland.

Social sharing has been added to all sections of the website. Kim has provided Admin access to our Facebook Page which means that I can share blog posts and pages – this is driving more traffic to the website.

- Tempo Time Credits

The paper time credits will no longer be accepted from the end of March and can be converted to the electronic version. The system works well and is easy to use. It would be helpful to have someone to distribute the time credits when I am not around.

- Geocaching

So far, a total of 86 logged finds of our caches and 5 people's favourite caches. One cache in the old woods was removed in mid-January and had to be replaced.

7. Management operations for next period

AJ Still working from the published plan. Will start cutting back bracken and brambles on heathland to allow room for natives, especially heather.

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8. Schools liaison and school trips

AJ Meeting with Sacha Williamson from St. Ives Secondary School, about mini-orchard area. Offered to donate oak trees.

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

9. Matters arising

i. Projects update:

(a) Ponds (CH)

Slow progress as we have been in winter.

Number 1 pond – three plants added (Hart's Tongue Fern and Marsh Marigold from MP plus Hornwort from Chris Coad).

Number 2 pond – some leakage from dam.

Number 3 pond – no work done, left to own devices.

Newts released when ponds were created but no longer visible. May look to release "toadpoles" if they can be found. More marginal flowering plants to be added over spring.

(b) Hiberniculum (AJ for GN)

One already built in the old woods. More to come by the Monterey Pines in the Autumn.

(c) Nest boxes (AJ)

One pre-made bird box bought by AJ and will be used as a template to make others as part of the Wednesday work sessions. RM Need to make sure they are kept out of sight to prevent vandalism and encourage use.

(d) Cornish Hedges (MP)

Giles is ready to provide a workshop of how to repair walls as part of a work session where no higher priority work is needed.

(e) Wildflowers (AJ)

Looking to increase the amount of wildflowers in the Reserve. Wildflowers to be planted in the Orchard as a trial area. Seeds are available and will be planted both as seedlings and broadcast sown over the area.

ii. 10 year management plan (AJ)

Item to be carried forward to next meeting.

Carried forward action - AJ to discuss with volunteers on 01/12.

iii. Constitution review

Item largely discussed during Secretary's report. Still need to get clarity over the details of the Constitution, before agreement can be reached.

Action – KT to publish names of Members and Volunteers (see addendum at end of minutes). Review at next meeting.

iv. Climate Action Policy (RM)

No update on the draft policy

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Decision – a Climate Action Policy is needed for the Group.

Action – RM to provide a draft.

RM Initial ideas for reducing climate impact are:

- stopping burning (already in place); and

- to reduce the use of fossil fuels in machine tools or more to manual tools. Questions raised over the viability of the current generation of electric tools. LM monitor the new generations of electric tools until they have advanced sufficiently.

CH if not burning bracken, why cut it? Will it not absorb CO2 as it grows? RM Need to balance the biodiversity impacts, especially on heathland, of letting bracken grow unchecked. Cut bracken piles provide areas for wildlife to shelter over winter. In lower areas cut bracken around the base of new trees. LM The amount of bracken cut this year may have gone too far, site looking “bald”.

v. Vandalism and anti-social behaviour

AJ Noted the graffiti on information map and gate signs as well as vandalism in the old woods (chopped trees, airguns, fires).

KT There is also the uprooted footpath post (previously reported to Cormac). There are references to vandalism and graffiti in previous minutes back to 2015

AJ Drafted a warning sign that could be put on the entrances. LM Should we have security cameras? MP Should we provide a space for young people to do what they want to – likely that designated places wouldn't be of interest.

Decision – do not put up signs or cameras, but monitor the situation and decide actions to take in future meetings.

vi. Risk assessment

AJ Provided updated risk assessment. RM Do we have a tabulated risk assessment, including risks and mitigations? More details required to be added. MP Is there an example that we can compare with?

Action – KT to provide AJ with previous SWPG risk assessment tables.

vii. St. Ives Town Council - Parks and Green Infrastructure Steering Group

AJ Request received from Louise Dwelly. AJ and Giles volunteered. Future contact to be reported back to the Group.

viii. Volunteer Agreement

KT We have a Volunteer Agreement that could be used with new starters. It seems that it hasn't been sent out recently. The current version needs to be signed and returned which is difficult to organise. Proposed a new version (as attached to meeting invitation). If agreed, could send out to all volunteers. CH Seems like a useful document for Volunteers to have.

Decision – yes, it is useful and should be sent out to Volunteers.

Action – KT to send out new version to Volunteers.

AJ Has updated Safeguarding Policy referred to in the Volunteer Agreement.

Action – KT to send out new policy for review at the next meeting.

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xi. Willow fencing on reservoir bank

AJ Request from MP to add willow whips around the base of the Reservoir slope to allow space for bees. RM Need to be mindful that the Nature Reserve should be left wild and not a "Nature Garden". LM bees have been found in other places – e.g. by paths near the Monterey Pines.

Action – AJ to arrange specific meeting at a Wednesday work session to discuss how best to encourage and protect bees.

10. AOB

i. Tree Warden

RM Disappointingly, no takers for the position from within the Group. MP Chris Harper could be a good candidate.

Action – AJ to confirm and pass on Chris Harper's contact details to RM.

ii. Date of Open Day 2022

AJ Proposal for Sunday 11th September. Noted that the 2021 changes to dates were due to Covid restrictions and don't apply for 2022.

Decision – Open Day will be on Sunday 11th September.

iii. Dog control

AJ A dog fight between dogs from the Group and a member of the public occurred at last work session. Need to control Group dogs to ensure safety of the dogs, volunteers and public.

iv. Definitive list of non-species / invasive species

KT It would be useful to have a definitive list of plants that need to be controlled by Volunteers. Only examples given in Management Plan. References are made in previous minutes to a list of plants to be removed but can't easily be found.

RB Japanese Knotweed, amongst others, is present on Steeple Lane. Is this a notifiable species?

Action – RM to investigate how to report Knotweed to Town / County Council.

v. Mammal monitoring

MP Would it be possible to install a trap camera to monitor mammals? AJ Needs to be well hidden to prevent damage. KM two badgers have been spotted. LM Roe Deer have been spotted (and on video).

Decision – A good quality camera (approx value £60) should be purchased using Group funds.

Action - MP to talk to Hazel about possible help with locating a camera.

vi. Specialist contacts

KT Who are the Group's first aiders – DK and MP have current certification.

Action AJ – Ask volunteers if they would like to attend first aid training.

vii. Engine House

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AJ We have had contact asking to clear a disused engine house. CH The ruins are 30 yards from the Reservoir.

Action – AJ to take volunteers to the site to discuss options for the ruins.

11. Date of next general meeting

19:15 Monday 23rd May 2022.

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Addendum to minutes – Group Lists

i. Officers

<u>Name</u>	<u>SWP Email</u>	<u>Role</u>	<u>Status</u>
Rupert Manley		Secretary	Resigned
Melanie Frankel		Treasurer	Resigned
Alwyn Jones	chair@steeplewoods.org	Chair / Site Officer	Active
Kim Nicol	publicity@steeplewoods.org	Publicity	Active
Richard Brown	vice.chair@steeplewoods.org	Vice Chair	Active
Nick Parkin	treasurer@steeplewoods.org	Treasurer	Active
Kevin Trembath	secretary@steeplewoods.org	Secretary	Active

ii. Members

<u>Name</u>	<u>Status</u>
Alwyn Jones	Active
Chris Coad	Active
Dinky Kennedy	Active
Lorna Murray	Active
Geoff Williamson	Active
Giles Newcombe	Active
Kim Nicol	Active
Richard Brown	Active
Mattie Pochee	Active
Nick Parkin	Active
Rupert Manley	Active
Rita Lait	Active
Tim Radford	Active
Kevin Trembath	Active
Jerry Harper	Resigned
Melanie Frankel	Resigned

iii. Volunteers

<u>Name</u>	<u>Status</u>
Ben Bowden	Inactive
Catelyn Cox	Inactive
Christopher Hogg	Active
Hazel Appleby	Active
Helen Carver	Active
Jack Nankervis	Inactive
John Nunn	Lapsed
Julia Simpson	Active
Charles Martin	Inactive
Jo Newcombe	Active
Keith Yeung	Active
Sean Quayle	Inactive
Will Hodgeson	Inactive