

Minutes of the 10th Annual General Meeting of the Friends of Anderton and Marbury (known as FoAM).

Comberbach Memorial Hall. 18th May 2009

The chairman, Alan Garner, opened the meeting and welcomed some 24 attendees.

1. Apologies for Absence.

Apologies for absence were received from Noel Woodhead, Hilary Woodhead, Chris Reece, Janet Reece, Paul Hill and Ann Edwards.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting.

The 9th AGM minutes (2008) had been available on the Northwich Woodlands' website throughout the year. The chairman asked if anyone had any concerns or issues regarding last year's minutes.

No concerns were raised and the minutes were approved as a true statement.

3. Matters Arising from 2008 AGM minutes.

A request for the minutes to be made available on the website rather than being printed and handed out at the 2009 AGM meeting had been implemented.

The awards collected by FoAM in 2007 had not been displayed at the 2008 AGM but were on display at this year's meeting. Photographs of the awards had been put on the Northwich Woodlands' website.

4. Chairman's Report.

The chairman reported that it had been a successful year with a good variety of events and projects undertaken.

Both the Bushcraft event and Fungal Foray attracted large audiences and were held over two sessions. The Nestbox Building Event saw another record year with 49 nestboxes made. Thirty people attended the Dawn Chorus and the photographic competition was a great success.

The creation of a pond dipping station at the Ice Pond in Big Wood, a scrape in the meadow at Marbury (where 800 native trees and shrubs were planted as well) and the artificial Sand Martin bank at Haydn's Pool were the year's project highlights. A number of smaller projects were also completed successfully.

Successful grant applications mean that little of FoAM's funds had been used in financing these projects. However, the chairman said he was concerned that with increasing amounts of funding going into the 2012 Olympics, grants will become more difficult to secure in the future.

Press coverage has increased with numerous articles in the Northwich Guardian whilst volunteering continues to be strong. Volunteer numbers have been restricted to a manageable level of between 8 and 10 attending each volunteer day.

Twenty four new members were welcomed during the year and the membership remained fairly level at 150-160. Membership cards had been introduced to help the County Council apply the discount for the annual car parking permit. Approximately 1/3 of the membership now receive the Newsletter electronically but hard copies are sent out where requested.

Membership cards are issued at the same time as the Newsletter is distributed. The chairman informed the meeting that members wishing to receive their membership card more quickly should enclose a SAE with their application form and their card will be posted before the next newsletter is due. A new individual life membership category has been introduced at a fee of £80.

Finally the chairman offered his thanks to Tamsin McCarthy of the Mersey Forest, Ann Bates of Action Weaver Valley and Sarah Jeffery, the Northwich Woodlands Officer for the help they have given the committee throughout the year and to the Rangers for their continued support and encouragement. He also thanked his fellow committee members for all the support they have given him throughout the three years he has been Chairman.

5. Treasurer's Report.

The treasurer, Jim Jeeves, reported that the growth in funding was £1,237.72 for the last 12 months and that subscriptions had increased to £1,586.00.

The cost incurred for the photographic competition was for display equipment which will be used again for similar events, whilst income from the Nestbox event of £127 substantially affected the event's income account.

The total funding amount is the amount available for further projects and does not include monies already allocated for specified projects, including sponsored projects. The £1,000 Dragonfly award is included in these liabilities to allow for a project to be allocated to this award.

The £566.35 in the sponsored projects section is FoAM's contribution to the scrape and dipping platform projects and costs incurred in the application for the WREN submission.

A total of £1,077 has been paid to WREN for the Wild Flower Project (accounted in the "Unspent costs from grants" section), and £332 is to be reclaimed for the scrape project.

The woodmiser costs will be offset by the selling of wood to Shelley Signs Ltd, whose cheque had not arrived in time to be included in this report.

The poor weather last summer affected donations for logs, woodchip and charcoal which amounted to £455.

The Heritage bank account remains unchanged.

£2 remains in the sponsored dog walking account and un-presented cheques of £2.29 were costs paid by cheque and not yet cleared.

The total funding available is £8,143.33 plus £2,758.47 from the heritage fund.

This concluded the report from the treasurer.

The chairman thanked Mr Jeeves for his report and said that the balance was very healthy and looks good for the following year but that FoAM should make every effort to use the funds available.

6. Election of Officers and Committee for 2009/10.

The following election of officers took place according to FoAM's election rules.

Alan Redley - Proposed Chairman.

Vernon Lundy - Proposed Committee Member.

Both proposals were nominated, seconded and were unanimously accepted.

7. Any Other Business.

Alan Redley formally accepted his new role as chairman and, on behalf of the FoAM committee, members and volunteers, offered his thanks and best wishes to the outgoing chairman Alan Garner for all his hard work and contribution to FoAM and for leaving the group in such a strong position.

The new chairman informed all present of the arrangement and contact point to obtain the FoAM members' discounted parking permit from Cheshire West and Chester Council.

The AGM would be followed at 20.15 by a quiz and supper.

There being no further business, the new chairman closed the meeting at 20:00.

Alan Redley

Chairman, 10 July 2009