

Woodsman

The Booker Common and Woods Protection Society

Registered Charity No.289871

Newsletter No.71 Autumn 2009

28th Annual General Meeting 19th May 2009

Chairman Rita Luxton welcomed a good turnout for the meeting.

Chris Ryde from the Wycombe Ranger Service presented the Allan Duggin Memorial Award for Conservation. This year's winners were the pupil members of the John Hampden School Eco Club who have set up a wildlife area in the school grounds.

After a few photographs were taken, Chris continued with an impressive slide illustrated talk on "Fungi". Bearing in mind the impressive variety of fungi present on the common, Chris took pains to highlight the hazard of collecting and eating fungi without proper advice. Some varieties have proven medicinal effects and continuous investigation into their useful properties continue. The Ranger Service operate "Fungal Forays" in late summer and early autumn to collect and identify the huge variety available. (Partially as a result of this presentation, a member of the committee identified a variety known as Chicken of the Woods or sulphur polypore within yards of his door, and found it very palatable).

The presentation was much appreciated, and Rita thanked Chris for excellent work.

The business of the AGM proceeded with the minutes of the previous AGM being unanimously approved.

Planning.

Colin Kennedy reported that nothing threatening to the Common was currently planned. Since all planning is now readily accessible on the WDC internet site at www.wycombe.gov.uk, members are also invited to scan this and nudge the committee if it appears that we have missed anything. This was Colin's swansong, since he is standing down from the committee. (Simon Fraser is now the representative for planning matters.)

Finance.

Brian Wilson reported on Finance and Membership referring to the distributed statement of accounts. Nineteen new member households have joined the Society, now 290. Expenditure this year had been higher than usual, with the bench restoration absorbing £936. Affiliation to other societies and insurance accounted for £342 and the hire of the Hall £125. Donations to the Fighting Fund were down.

Environment.

A brief report on environmental work was given by Ron Walker. The bi-annual litter collection attracted the usual untiring group, more than usual this year; was the weather good? He mentioned that a number of people regularly collect rubbish when out walking, and encouraged anyone pursuing such activity to carry a few bags with them. Work continues on the triangle below "The Squirrel", mostly by Ron himself, Hedley Luxton and Vic West, but waiting for the weather to improve. High Heavens currently ceases to be a tip, and the domestic waste facility is under improvement, but sadly it appears that BCC would like to build a waste transfer station on the site for compacting of waste for transfer to an incinerator, thankfully not in Booker (for a change). The current composting facility does not appear to have worked well and was fined for olfactory pollution. The quantity of material planned to

be composted has had to be reduced, and *more* lorries take the excess elsewhere.

Airfield JCC.

Hedley Luxton reported on the Joint Consultative Committee of Wycombe Air Park. Several members of the JCC have left in protest at the managements apparent failure to address their complaints. Hedley believes that due to the proximity of most members to the Air Park, we should maintain a presence.

Communication.

Paul Baker reminded that www.bcwps.org.uk is available. We still need more feedback so that we can enhance the site to your satisfaction.

Committee.

Excepting Colin, the current committee were re-elected en bloc.

Any Other Business

Rita took the opportunity to thank all those who had worked so hard to collect subscriptions, delivered Woodsman, and thanked the committee for their hard work, particularly Colin, a founder member of the society, who although leaving the committee will continue to help with subscriptions and newsletters.

Planning

As reported, it appears that BCC intend to go ahead with a planning application for a waste transfer station at High Heavens. Bearing in mind that this is still AONB, another huge building and road widening on the way into the site seems quite out of order.

JCC

Hedley reminds everyone that breaches of the Noise Abatement Zone should be reported directly to Wycombe Air Park on 01494 529261 or Air Traffic Control on 01494 523426. Time, type, and identification of aircraft should be recorded, (though I confess that reading the ident of an overhead aircraft is almost impossible). Please be aware that Air Traffic Control should know what aircraft took off at a specific time, so don't be deterred by their reluctance to accept complaints without all details; they are supposed to know. Alternatively, call environment at WDC on 01494 421743. Otherwise, if response is unsatisfactory contact Hedley on 01494 436807. Are you affected by increased aircraft noise? Reports of increased noise from helicopters have been received from residents in Arundel Road and over the woodland adjacent to the Lane End Road.

Membership

Collection of subs will take place shortly (still only £3). Those members who are not signed up to Gift Aid will have a Declaration form attached to their Woodsman. If you are happy to complete the form please hand it to your Collector. Since interest on our account at the Bank is so poor, it would be nice to receive another 25p for every pound contributed.

Environment

Sadly, the progress of the triangle faded a little with the failure of the mower, but enough progress has been made to prove that continual cutting will at least encourage grass rather than weeds. Having cleared much of fallen blackthorn, a quince fell down and had to be cleared, then more blackthorn fell, most of which has been cleared .

This autumn's litter pick is scheduled for October 4th. Notices will be posted.