



# FRIENDS OF RIDGE WOOD

## Informal Meeting

Hanson's Quarry Club meeting room

Start time: 7.30pm

Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> September 2015

PRESENT:	Sarah Hardcastle	Chair
	Jill Hows	Vice chair
	Richard Aston	South Glos Council
	David Barlow	Secretary / webmaster
	Geoff Millard	Treasurer
	Dianne Millard	
	Emma Morrison	Publicity
	Dai Edwards	
	Edward Wrighton	

Apologies:	Tim Fairhead
	Pauline Wilson

### 1. Introductions / apologies

### 2. Minutes from last meeting

Minutes circulated by e-mail following last meeting; agreed.

### 3. Matters arising

- Tool purchase / lockup roof repairs: RA is to meet Chris Belcher next week to assess the lockup roof and can then report back regarding repair costs (the interior of the lockup was noted to be very wet during preparation for Forest fun time). We can then assess whether to proceed with the entire planned tool purchase (at a cost of £569.26). SH reported back on the process for applying for an Area Forum grant via SGC to fund the tool purchase. The deadline is 17<sup>th</sup> November, but initially the group will need to register requiring a governance document (constitution), equality and diversity / safeguarding policies and a recent set of accounts. The policies will need to be written: SH is happy to do this with reference to the templates available via SGC. RA stated that other friends groups have recently been successful funding tool purchases via Area Forum grants and is happy to help us prepare our application; JH is also happy to help with this.
- Fundraising: Potential sources of funds for the group were discussed again. It was agreed to approach Waitrose to participate in their "green token" scheme – JH will kindly do this, and will also speak to the store regarding the litter problem at the Chipping Sodbury end of the wood. Tim Fairhead may have a suitable contact for this.

- Photography competition: this is still felt to be a good idea to encourage members of the public to submit more photos for the website. DB suggested several categories for different age groups including both conventional photographs and mobile phone captures. This would require several prizes – we could potentially approach Waitrose. It was decided that this should be deferred until the new year, and could be publicised via avenues such as the Boundary magazine and possibly the Chipping Sodbury festival brochure.
- GM/DM fed back to the group regarding the SGC volunteers' celebration event they attended on our behalf in June. This is now planned to be an annual event and is well worth attending. SH confirmed she has been using some of the resources now available to friends groups via "The Hive". RA mentioned another upcoming event open to friends groups run by the Friends of Lincombe Barn Park and woods in September – SH has received some information about this by email and will forward it to the group.
- Wall repairs at Quarry Rd end – these are still outstanding – RA will assess this next week.
- Training opportunities: SH has forwarded information to the group regarding Safe use of tools training being run by SGC on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> October – ideally over time we should all plan to attend this. There are also places remaining for first aid training in November which DM may attend if she is available.

Actions: RA, SH, JH, DM

#### **4. Review of recent events**

Two recent events held since the last meeting were reviewed. The first was the Evening Chorus walk led by Ed Drewitt. This was felt to be a very good event, which was both enjoyable and well attended. We would be keen to run this again in future, possibly for a small voluntary contribution to fund Ed's fee.

The second event was the family event held in August "Forest fun time"; this was also very successful. GM/DM noted at least 38 adults and 61 children attending on the day, and all of the adults and children appeared to have a really good time. We received good feedback both verbally and by email following the day. We would all be keen to run this event annually, and this should be easier now that it has been done once; however it was noted that all members of the committee contributed a lot of time and effort to make the event a success. JH will email some feedback to Hanson's thanking them for their financial support and including some photographs. Hopefully they might then be prepared to support it again in future.

The only remaining public event for 2015 is the Moth Discovery evening on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> October as part of the SGC Discover festival. We will plan to hold this in the forest glade as used for Forest fun time; the meeting point is the Quarry Rd entrance so participants will need to walk a short distance to the glade after meeting at 8pm. SH will liaise with Ray Barnett regarding how long he will need to set up and the help he will need: DM, GM and JH have all kindly offered to help out on the evening. JH will be first-aider and SH will draft a risk assessment. SH reminded everyone that they need to register via the SGC website in order to attend: currently there are 45 places left.

Action: JH, SH, all (attending moth evening if possible)

## **5. Winter work season**

RA is unable to attend the planned workday on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> September, therefore it has been agreed that this will not be run as an official workday but that group members who are available will meet at the Hanson's social club at 10am to undertake a litter pick at the Chipping Sodbury end of the wood where JH has recently observed a lot of litter. We will also ensure the forest glade is tidy for the upcoming moth evening. SH will provide JH with the lockup key as she is likely to arrive late. RA will kindly provide some strong black bags for use on the day and arrange for these to be collected from the Hanson's gate once the workday has taken place.

The following dates were agreed for workdays for the rest of the season:

Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> November

Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> November

Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> January

Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> February

Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> March

These will run from 10am-12 noon, and the usual meeting place will be the Melrose Close entrance to the woodland. Work to be undertaken will be decided by RA in due course.

Workdays will be publicised via local avenues such as the Boundary magazine / MyYate website (EM) as well as posters at the woodland entrances once the moth event has taken place (DB). All agreed that publicising workdays widely is important in order to try to attract new volunteers as undertaking practical woodland work is a key reason for the group's existence.

Action: EM, DM, RA, all (attending workdays where possible)

## **6. Insurance arrangements for the coming year**

SH informed the group that our current TCV insurance policy is due to expire on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2015. All agreed that we should renew this for another year as nobody has yet been able to undertake the training that would allow us to sign a volunteers' agreement with SGC. SH will look into this.

Action: SH

## **7. Annual Newsletter**

It was previously proposed that we should again produce an annual newsletter to distribute to the streets immediately surrounding the woodland, thereby increasing awareness of the work we are doing. The aim would be to fit this onto a double-sided sheet of A4, Content could include reviews of our public events, woodland work carried out, information about Spanish bluebell clearance and also an appeal for more volunteers. EM and SH will work on this, aiming to distribute before Christmas. DB can arrange printing, and DM and GM kindly offered to help distribute the newsletters once produced.

Action: EM, SH, DB, DM, GM

## **8. New venue for meetings**

Unfortunately the Quarry Club is to close in the new year so a new venue for meetings will need to be found. SH mentioned that Tesco in Yate are advertising a community space that is free to hire: she will look into this. If unsuitable or unavailable, EM previously compiled a list of other venues with costs. Another option would be to use a room in a local pub (as suggested by DE).

Action: SH

## **9. AOB**

SH reminded everyone that we should be keeping a record of volunteer hours worked for submission to SGC. Please could everyone let SH know an estimate of the hours they have worked for the group since the start of July (mainly Forest fun time). In future we will need to keep a log of attendees at workdays for this purpose. RA advised that this evening's meeting should also be recorded as 18 volunteer hours.

JH mentioned that there is another Hanson's liaison meeting taking place in December which she has kindly offered to attend on our behalf.

DM raised the issue of the gate at the Greenways Rd entrance to the woodland which is open – this could potentially allow motorcyclists to access the wood. RA will look into this.

Action: SH, JH, RA, all

## **10. Date of next meeting**

Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> January, venue TBC