

The Friends of Therfield Heath and Greens (FOTH)

AGM Wednesday 26 July 2023 The Ballroom Old Bull Inn Royston 7.30pm

Attending committee members

Holly Christie (Chair)

Ray Munden (Treasurer)

Ann Smith (Secretary)

Sally Marchant (Membership Secretary)

David Bubbins

Jane Dottridge

Bryony May

Sarah Ramsay

Attending members

David Allard

Liz Beardwell

David Beardwell

David Hatton

Mr and Mrs Ian Hirst

Ann Keep

Nick Keep (chair of conservators)

Angela Louch

Joan Munden

Marguerite Philips

Janet Rossignol-Bubbins

Claire Swarbrick (conservator)

Cat Wright (Heath ranger)

Pam Wright

Mike Wright

Non-member (invited)

Becca Edwards (community/partnership officer North Herts council)

Apologies for absence

Jane Briggs, Ruth Brown, Richard Clayton, Gina Ferrari, Philip Mayne, Pauline Rowe, Derek Scrivens, Jessica Stewart, Joy Walker.

i **Welcome and introduction** by the Chair. (The Agenda had previously been circulated by email and 2 paper copies as requested.)

Holly thanked everyone for attending. The Old Bull Inn was thanked for providing The Ballroom without charge. The Friends paid for tea, coffee and water to be provided and attendees were asked to help themselves. Holly encouraged questions throughout the proceedings.

ii **Apologies**

8 apologies were given via email, 1 verbal apology was passed on that evening. 23 members, including the committee, attended meeting the quorum of 10.

iii **Approval of minutes from the 2022 AGM** (previously circulated by email and 2 paper copies as requested.)

Following her comment on the 2022 minutes (AOB g), Angela Louch asked what the Therfield Village response was to contact by FOTH. Ann Smith replied that their response was positive. FOTH continued to have an article published monthly in the Therfield and Kelshall Magazine. A request had come from Therfield First School asking for advice and ideas for running a litter pick with the children which was happily provided. FOTH event posters, both paper and digital, were provided to the parish clerk for advertising in the village and on the village website. Information on village history had been provided to Ann Smith and Janet Rossignol-Bubbins to help towards their work on the Heath history timeline.

The minutes were approved by Angela Louch, seconded by Ray Munden

iv **Chairs report** (previously circulated by email and paper)

Holly talked in more detail on the variety and success of events. The En Plein Air art sessions and photography course emphasised the beauty of the Heath. So many families turned out for the Easter Egg hunt that a volunteer had to go to a local shop to buy more eggs. The Yoga session, held for the first time in 2023, was very successful and FOTH received a lot of positive feedback from those who were new to yoga and those new to being on the Heath. FOTH took part in the Queens Green Canopy tree planting and had an official tree planting ceremony attended by the Deputy Lord-Lieutenant Richard Beazley and his wife. Janet Rossignol-Bubbins was thanked for her previous work as chair and on the committee. The Heath Café was thanked for providing its venue free of charge for the successful FOTH quiz. Holly also thanked those members of the committee who are also involved in other community networks which are relevant to FOTH. The members were also thanked for supporting the events. Grants have been awarded to the conservators, which have yet to be used. In the future Holly aims to engage people from different groups, with the possibility of some free events.

Ray Munden thanked Holly for the professional report that she had produced.

v **Treasurer's report.** (Previously circulated by email and paper)

Ray Munden read out his report. He emphasised that FOTH had raised £1700 through events and that FOTH had a substantial amount of money ready for the conservators to spend.

Claire Swarbrick thanked FOTH for everything they do, she particularly loved the yoga. Claire asked which groups are FOTH not reaching and how can the conservators and FOTH do more to reach those groups.

David Bubbins reminded everyone that FOTH maintains the goalposts on Sun Hill Common which is used regularly by children.

Holly and Janet informed everyone that two teenagers had joined litter picks, one working towards his scout badge, one working on his Duke of Edinburgh award.

Janet Rossignol-Bubbins and Cat Wright have prepared a power point presentation on the Heath. FOTH need to approach different groups to see how they can work together.

Angela Louch asked who is prepared to give talks to local groups, e.g. WI and in surrounding villages. The FOTH committee need to plan who is available and how many talks can realistically be given in a year.

David Beardwell asked if the North Herts scheme to provide free trees to householders was still ongoing and would this be suitable for providing trees to the Heath. Various people provided the answer that the scheme is ongoing, however the trees provided are whips (very young trees) and not suitable for planting on the Heath. Any decisions on tree planting on the Heath are made by the conservators.

David Hatton asked what special measures were in place to protect the willow tree (Goat willow) as it was essential to the life cycle of a rare moth. This question was answered by Nick Keep, Claire Swarbrick and Cat Wright as it is in their jurisdiction. Earlier in the year Cat and her volunteers had cleared scrub from under and around the willow to lessen the competition from other plants.

David Hatton made the observation that he had observed and recorded the singing of a male quail bird on the Heath in July. This is a very rare occurrence and it is great to see the Heath attracting such birds.

There was a suggestion that an outdoor mini gym trail be set up on the Heath. It was decided that this was something that the Conservators would need to deal with. Cat Wright said that it would be a long term project which would involve the Planning Inspectorate.

David Hatton suggested that FOTH have information on its website on how people could leave a legacy to the charity. People were in favour of this idea. FOTH to investigate what relevant information needs to be included in the website.

iv Election of committee members

As there was only one nomination per vacancy there was no need for voting to take place.

Nomination for Chairperson, Holly Christie. Proposed by Ann Smith, seconded by Ray Munden

Holly Christie elected as Chairperson for The Friends of Therfield Heath and Greens

Nomination for Treasurer, Ray Munden. Proposed by Jane Dottridge, seconded by Sarah Ramsay

Ray Munden elected as Treasurer for The Friends of Therfield Heath and Greens

Nomination for committee member David Bubbins. Proposed by Sarah Ramsay, seconded by Joan Munden.

David Bubbins elected as committee member for The Friends of Therfield Heath and Greens

Nomination for committee member Jane Dottridge. Proposed by Sally Marchant, seconded by Holly Christie

Jane Dottridge elected as committee member for The Friends of Therfield Heath and Greens

Nomination for committee member Sally Marchant. Proposed by Cat Wright, seconded by Sarah Ramsay.

Sally Marchant elected as committee member for The Friends of Therfield Heath and Greens.

AOB

Cat Wright thanked the FOTH committee and members for their help and support in her role as ranger on the Heath.

Ray Munden announced that FOTH are merging with the Royston Wildlife Group. There will be a press release soon with further details and he would appreciate the FOTH members support in this new endeavour.

Meeting officially ended 8.05pm.

Members socialised in the Ballroom until 8.55pm.