



Friends of Rowley Hills

Minutes of AGM Saturday 17th August 2019 at 11:00am Dudley Golf Club, Turner's Hill, Rowley Regis, B65 9DP

Welcome

MP opened the AGM at 11:10am and welcomed everyone in attendance.

Present

Committee Officers Chair – Mike Poulton MP, Treasurer – Robert Duncan RD, Webmaster - Jane Tavener JT

Committee Members Lynn Poulton LP, Andrew Cook AC, Josie Cook JC, Andrew Beaton AB

Membership Jim Rippin JR. Patrick Millard PM,

Apologies

Tom Hartland-Smith (Wildlife Trust)

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

Copies of the minutes of the AGM on Saturday 2nd June 2018 were circulated by MP and accepted by the committee as a true record.

Election of Officers

The Chair MP, Treasurer RD and Webmaster JT agreed to stand once again. The names of no other nominees were put forward.

Election of Committee

Committee members: LP, AC, JC, and AB agreed to continue.

The names of no other nominees were put forward.

Annual Reports

Chair's Report Delivered by MP

Treasurer's Report` Delivered by RD

Webmaster's Report Delivered by JT

Any Other Business

JC brought to the attention of the committee an article in the local Express & Star on 08 August. It states that to give more protection to nature conservation sites in Sandwell Councillors have agreed to upgrade the official designation of four green spaces in the borough, which can help protect them from unwanted development in the future. This has been approved by council chiefs. One of these sites is on Rowley Hills, Massey's Bank is dominated by semi-natural grassland and plantation woodland and is part of the wider Rowley Hills and is seen as ecologically important to Sandwell. The areas is to be designated as either, a Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation (SLINC), or Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC). The full report can be viewed at

<https://www.expressandstar.com/news/local-hubs/sandwell/2019/08/08/more-protection-for-nature-sites/>

BD stated that recently he walked the route for a walk he had planned for his climbing club. When he attempted to negotiate the short section of public footpath linking up the top of Portway Hill with Turners Hill and the ROW across the golf course, there was six feet high vegetation of rank grassland and Rosebay Willowherb completely obscuring the route. So bad had it become that he had to take a strimmer and clear a way through himself.

MP responded that he had brought this section of ROW to the attention of the committee of the Local Access Forum at their last meeting. He also stated that another problem in this section of ROW is that from whichever direction you approach from, there is no marker post to indicate where you are supposed to be heading for, and there is no clearly defined path.

This following reply was forthcoming from George Reeves, the Chair of LAF.

'I raised the issue of the missing/required marker posts and Gurdip will look into getting some up there, also he will contact the golf club and request some cutting work be done. By the way Gurdip is leaving to go to Coventry council so in the meantime while the council appoint someone else into his job we need to liaise with Becky Wilson.'

MP drew to the attention of the committee the Living Memories Live website <https://livingmemory.live/blog/> regarding the write-up of the school events held on the Portway Hill site in July involving pupils from Grace Mary Primary School, and St James's C of E School. Both days were very successful and enjoyed by the children that participated.

MP gave an update to the committee about the fly-tipping incidents that over the past few weeks had occurred on several occasions on land to the rear of Warren's Hall Nursing Home near Warren's Hall Riding Stables. The matter is now being dealt with by Sandwell Council and the Environment Agency.

The moth-trapping event arranged for Saturday 10 August on Portway Hill unfortunately had to be cancelled at short notice due to high wind. We are hoping that the event can be rearranged for some time in September subject to the availability of the event leader.

With no other business forthcoming the meeting was formally closed at 12:15pm