



Friends of Ecclesall Woods

Newsletter October 2016.

www.friendsofecclesallwoods.org.uk



Hawthorn Berries, or Haws

This is my last Newsletter, and my resignation as editor goes with my resignation as Chairman. Lorna too has resigned as Membership Secretary because of ill-health. I am sure all the members of FEW wish us both well.

For the moment, membership is being dealt with by the Treasurer, John Fitzpatrick.
Phone 2360989.

Wild Play
October Half Term

the wildlife TRUSTS
Sheffield & Rotherham

Woodland Wizards, Witches and Wildlife!



Come and join us for spooky fun in the woods!
At The Woodland Discovery Centre,
Ecclesall Woods, Abbey Lane,
Sheffield, S7 2QZ

Repeated sessions:
Tuesday 25th October 10-12
Tuesday 25th October 1.30-3.30
Wednesday 26th October 10-12

Suitable for families with children of all ages
£3 per member / £5 non-members
Under 2's free with a paying sibling
No charge for adults

All activities take place outdoors.
Please wear suitable footwear and clothing

BOOKING ESSENTIAL
For more information and to book go to
www.wildsheffield.com/whats-on
Or call 0114 2634335

Sheffield City Council

The Wildlife Trust or its partner organisations may use photographs taken at this event for publicity purposes. We hope you are happy with the service we provide. If you are unhappy with any aspect of our work or would like to talk to someone independently and in confidence, please call: Liz Ballard (Independent Person and Safeguarding Lead), Sheffield Wildlife Trust on: 0114 2634335. Registered charity no. 700638. Registered company no. 2287928

Protecting **Wildlife** for the Future

Wildlife Trust and SCC events for half-term.

These have been much enjoyed in the past. Let your children enjoy the outdoors!

I have been asked by the Committee to insert this piece.

“Retirement of Linda Evans
Chair of FEW

Linda has been our longstanding chairman for many years and it is with regret that she will be retiring at our AGM in November.
She has worked tirelessly for FEW and the future of the woods as a place of recreation and interest for all to enjoy. She has a real understanding of the history of the woods and how they have been used by people over time. Her knowledge of all things ecological is phenomenal and this knowledge has helped to develop the woods alongside preserving their heritage for future generations to enjoy. There are many new exciting developments planned for the woods and we do hope that she will continue to share her expertise with them in the future.
Thank you Linda for all you have done for Ecclesall Woods.”
Irene May and the Committee

Our membership secretary, Lorna Baker, has recently resigned because of her continuing illness. I am very sorry about this, and angry that this unforeseeable condition has attacked someone who was always so well. She has been on the committee for, I believe, at least 20 years as Membership Secretary. Her presence on the committee was always positive about FEW, and holding others to account for their misbehaviour or failure to perform. She had an uncompromising voice, thorough knowledge of the Woods, long acquaintance with the history of FEW, and positive attitude and actions. Her regular walks with monitoring of conditions and vandalism were needed for repair and maintenance of the Woods condition. We will miss her greatly.

Linda Evans, Chairman

AGENDA for AGM.

Please note that the AGM this year will be held at 7.00 pm on WEDNESDAY 17 November 2016, in the Woodland Discovery Centre.

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of last AGM
3. Chairman's Report and resignation
4. Financial Report and Accounts
5. Membership Report
6. Footpath Report
7. Ecology Report
8. Archaeology Report
9. Elections if there is more than one candidate for any office
10. Any Other Business
11. Date of next AGM

THE MINUTES

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2015 THURSDAY THE 12th NOVEMBER 7.30 PM, AT THE GRAVES WOODLAND DISCOVERY CENTRE.

Dr Patrick Harding gave an illustrated talk on the oak tree in legends, history and natural history This was followed by questions and discussion
The AGM followed

The AGM

1.Apologies Dave and Chris Garnham Monica Rorison

2.Minutes of the last AGM were accepted as a true record

Proposed Sue Jackson

Seconded John Baker

3.Chairman's Report Chairman Linda Evans

The chairman reported that it had been a quiet year

The information boards that were set up last year have had various cycles of repair.

The footpath group has more members and has done some amazing work

Environment Week walks were done as usual.

3 walkers attended the archaeology walk led by Geoff Hartland

16 people attended the bluebell walk led by Sue Jackson

Toby Pillatt has continued his experiments with white coal

Linda has produced 4 newsletters and she would desperately like some feedback on them please

4.Financial Report and Accounts Treasurer John Fitzpatrick

John Fitzpatrick presented the accounts

He was pleased that the HLF grant money had been cleared from the FEW account

There is a £500 surplus

Dore Village Society had very kindly donated £450 towards 4 information boards

The accounts were available for inspection

5.Membership Report Lorna Baker

Lorna Baker reported that membership is down to 99 households

We are not keeping the new and young members -this may be due to a lack of information about the group and what it does.

She is willing to order FEW fleeces which may help to publicise the group

Discussion ensued: Do people understand what FEW does?

Suggestions for publicity: Paul May suggested a blitz on publicity -on a particular date a few members to talk to people about FEW as they walk their dogs

Use Facebook, Streetlife , leaflet houses immediately surrounding the woods

Articles in local magazines the church magazine etc

Steve Terry to advertise FEW at the 10K run at the weekend 14/15th November

6.Footpath Group Report Leader Jane Beresford

Jane Beresford thanked her volunteers and the rangers who often turn up to help and said how much the group enjoy their work

This year the footpath group has been maintaining the woods at their current levels rather than starting any new projects. Usually there are 2 teams of volunteers Litter picking, clearing drains and cross beams, digging pathside drains, clearing fallen trees and generally cutting back overhead branches and brambles from all paths takes place every week Drains have been cleared and brambles and branches removed Some uprooting of Cherry Laurel and Himalayan Balsam has taken place but this practice is now open to debate

There have been some unexplained barren areas in wood 3 so in conjunction with the ecology group 2 areas are to be fenced off in the new year with accompanying signs to let the public know what is going on. Following the fencing growth will be monitored in these areas.

In the new year some resurfacing of paths will take place and 3 areas of erosion in Limb Brook will be examined to see if rebuilding the stream bank or gabion baskets will solve the problem

7.Ecology Report Marilyn Small

Sue Jackson Irene May and Marilyn Small continue to represent and coordinate the group

The woods are divided into 23 areas and if any one would like to take on an area to help with our surveys they would be very welcome.

The survey for 2014 was the mapping of dank boggy areas with minimal vegetation and the recording of species in these areas. (golden saxifrage and enchanter's nightshade both very prevalent in these areas)

The survey for 2015 was the presence of invasive species- Japanese Knotweed, Cherry Laurel and Rhododendron which are all on the list of plants to be controlled. From reports that have come in so far in most of these plants are well controlled and in many areas of the woods none is present. The footpath group has done sterling work in this area.

Sue Jackson and Liz Emm continue to monitor the flora and fauna of the donkey field. More garden escapes have been found. The new pond has had frogspawn and the vegetation around it has grown considerably.

Marilyn has liaised with Matt Barlow the mapping officer at the council and now the maps used for surveys are on the council computer system

16 people attended the bluebell walk led by Sue Jackson

The footpath group has identified some areas mainly in wood 3 that are becoming barren due to overuse

Any measures we take to reduce footfall will be monitored to see if there is recolonisation by specific woodland plantlife.

8 Archaeology Report

There was no report.

9. Any Other Business

Lorna expressed disappointment in the destruction of some trees by wigwam building groups and the pulling up of ferns to cover the dens

Dogs swimming in Colliers Pond was an issue as hatching frog and toad spawn would be affected by this activity.

Jane to broach with Rangers

Linda to continue as Chair as there were no volunteers

Katherine Hartland spoke on behalf of everyone at the meeting thanking Linda for all her hard work especially when she really didn't want to continue acting as Chair

Thank you Linda

10 Date of Next AGM

Wednesday November 9th 2016 Please note this is now Wednesday 16 November 2016.



I went for a walk in the woods one day. Outside it was a bright sunny day. Inside the woods, and off the paths, it was dim. It was silent, it was indifferent. It was very green and full of plants growing as fast as they can. It was scary! We've started thinking of woods as benign, fun places where we can play. This isn't all the truth, not even a large part of it. Woods and forests and the natural world in general can do without us. But can we do without them?

Meanwhile, I went to Westonbirt Arboretum at the end of August. Nice berries, very similar! A sorbus, a prunus, a hawthorn species, and a rose.



There are no reports from the Footpath Group and the Ecology Group in this Newsletter. They will be reporting at the AGM.