

2019 Minutes of Rugby Group of WWT AGM Feb 5th 2020

Present : - Phil Parr (PP); Karl Curtis (KC); Pete Hanby (PH); Tracey Smith (TS); Jane Pallot (JP); Steve Wright (SW); Carl Jones (CJ); Jill Dwyer(JD); Chris Armitage (CD); Richard Beswick (RB); Malcolm Hall (MH); Neville Weston (NW); Ray Hodges (RH); Margaret Richards (MR).

Agenda

- 1. Apologies**
- 2. Matters arising from last year's minutes**
- 3. Treasurer's report**
- 4. Reports from the reserves**
- 5. 2020 new plan for the Cutting**
- 6. Efficient use of NF visits**
- 7. Landsdowne Allotment Group request for hedge laying training**
- 8. Garden Centre Voucher**

Rugby Branch of WWT was awarded a £20 garden centre voucher at Rugby in Bloom awards.

What should we spend it on?

9. Change in Committee Members
10. A.O.B

1. **Apologies** from Jon Bourne, Ken Monk and Derek Lill.
2. Matters arising from last year's minutes.
The minutes were deemed to be a fair account.

3. **Treasurer's report** See attached Accounts for 2019 done by Jon Bourne
RH said that the Rugby Group for many years had received £500 from Chris Worman MBE (CW) from Rugby Borough Council (RBC). So considering how much extra work we did the previous year, and taking into account inflation, he asked them for £650. We were pleased to receive the increase. There were plenty of suggestions on how to spend the money: - flower seeds, bird seeds and whips of hazel, hawthorn, guelder rose, buckthorn, spindle....., contracting Phil Betts to create another scrape, drainage for Swift Valley, brushcutter.....?
Karl said he may be able to get some whips and will ask for 200, 100 each for Swift Valley & Ashlawn. Bernard's sell whips in bundles of 25.

4. **Reports from the reserves.**

KC said that The Warwickshire Flora Group is looking to survey some Rugby reserves. The Warwickshire Flora group - <https://bsbi.org/warwickshire>

Swift Valley; See attached report NW.

NW said it was important to know what the Trust wanted us to do on our Rugby reserves. KC said that the Trust was very pleased with the work achieved on Swift Valley.

Newbold; See attached report from RB.

RB took on the leadership of Newbold Quarry Reserve and started running work parties from February 2019, and did 4 sessions before a summer break resuming in October. RB said that a new management plan is needed for Newbold Quarry now.

PP said SW finding an Ivy Bee at Newbold Quarry was one of the highlights of 2019. It is an autumn species recently new to UK that emerges when Ivy comes into flower and prefers nesting in free draining south facing slopes. PP first discovered it on the Viaduct Cycle route at Forum Drive entrance in September 2014, but didn't find it this year so think it must be breeding nearby, maybe here at Newbold. We would like people to do more recording at Newbold in 2020, especially butterflies, moths, amphibians and insects including the Ivy Bee. John Rix lives near the quarry and has been sending us very useful butterfly record for years, but it would be good if someone was prepared to take on a Transect Walk which is a more scientific method of recording. It would need a minimum of 4 visits a year following a set route. NW congratulated RB for restarting workparties and the impressive progress made by his small team of volunteers. We all agreed.

Ashlawn Cutting; See attached Conservation Report by PP

MH, CJ and PH started work on the hedge laying by Little Farm. The owner was so pleased with the work that he donated £100 to the Cutting which was spent on whips planted throughout the Cutting. Amongst tasks done by our work party team was the removal of laurel which was dominating the west bank near the Hillmorton Rd Bridge (the limit of the Trust's responsibility). RBC was very slow to deal with abandoned tents and associated mess where people had been living between Hillmorton Rd & Pytchley Bridges. This side of town is the responsibility of Scott Ballard. In the end we lost patience and despite potential health hazard removed the tents and litter ourselves. PP is in the process of updating maps for the reserve but keeping the same key and using new media tools.

PP said Pytchley Marsh needs to be cleared of some of the willow re-growth and some big stumps treated to kill them. KC said Peter Thorne & George Green had the necessary qualifications, and the best time to do it is in early summer (July). They would drill holes in the stumps and inject the herbicide. It wouldn't necessarily be done at a Nature Force visit, more likely just one of them coming and meeting us on site.

KC is chasing Severn Trent about the sewage leak just north of Pytchley Bridge close to the marsh. He will contact them saying the Trust plans to work in the

marsh on the relevant date and request assurance the water quality will be safe.

Cock Robin Wood; See attached report from Derek Lill (DL)
The report was read to the meeting and the copy passed round.

5. **2020 new plan for the Cutting**

KC said that many reserves run by the Trust need new plans at the same time and Alexis Evans (AE) at the Trust is working through the log jam with new plans. KC said that the Trust was very pleased with the work carried out at all the Rugby sites, so carry on as usual.

6. **Efficient use of Nature Force (NF) visits**

<https://www.warwickshirewildlifetrust.org.uk/TakePart/volunteer/volunteering-outdoors/nature-force-schedule>

In 2019 NF visited Ashlawn Cutting too early in the grass cutting season meaning that it needed to be cut again. We hope to get all grass cutting done by December each year. We need better communication in order to get more efficient use from the much appreciated help from the NF Volunteers. KC said it's the Trust's 50th Anniversary this year and they would like us to help with an article featuring how the Rugby Group grew. Dr. Deborah Wright from the Trust will contact us for information on this. Wendy Knott (Volunteer Coordinator at the Trust) is to run training reviews for work party leaders and those interested in what the job involves. Karl left meeting after expressing his appreciation of our Rugby volunteers and the work we do.

7. **Landsdowne Allotment Group** request for hedge laying training

Theresa Stanley from the Allotment Group asked for help to repair holes in the hedge around the allotment.

CJ, PH, and MH our resident hedgers are unsure what this involves. CJ will follow this up because there is only 3 weeks to the bird nesting season.

8. **Garden Centre Voucher**

Rugby Branch of WWT was awarded a £20 garden centre voucher at Rugby in Bloom awards.

What should we spend it on?

Suggestions so far are

Bird feeder/s to give to British Trust for Ornithology for their surveys at Ashlawn

Bird food to donate to BTO

Bird nesting box for Ashlawn.

It was decided that RB should use the voucher to buy a bird-feeder to give to BTO

9. Change in Committee Members

MR is standing down as secretary.

JD was nominated by NW and seconded by RH, everyone agreed, so JD was duly elected and takes on the role of our secretary. JD said she did work for Friends of East Rugby Group in securing funding from The Friendly Bench for one to be installed in Hillmorton and said that she would be happy to contribute to any funding bids that the group wanted to put together.

She would like us to have a Wildlife Stall at their fair on Hillmorton Recreation Ground, Featherbed Lane on 9th May.

Others were keen to do this.

The other committee members were re-elected.

10. Any Other Business

Jerry Roodhouse has invited us to man a stall at the GEC Fun Day.

Butterfly Conservation (BC) looks after Malpass and Newton sites.

It was suggested that we have quarterly meetings, the AGM and 3 others throughout the year.

Thank you to all those who attended the AGM. There was no other business so the meeting was closed.

Minutes written by MR.