

**AnMINUTES of the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the FRIENDS OF ASTON'S EYOT  
held on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> November 2022 at 7.30 pm at the Gladiators Club, Iffley Road,  
Oxford.**

**Present:** The Committee: Anthony Cheke (Co-Chair and meeting Chair), Ruth Ashcroft (co-chair) Laurence Burrell (treasurer), Susie Jakobsson (membership secretary) Charlotte Ellis, Rosemary Cameron, Adam Gibbon, Thelma Martin (minutes) together with 19 others, a list of whom has been retained.

**Chairman's welcome to the meeting.**

**1. Apologies** were received from Bernadette O'Reilly and Ash Stally-Chudasama.

**2. Minutes and matters arising:** The minutes having been circulated, there were no matters arising not on the agenda. Following proposal by Anthony Cheke and seconding by Laurence Burrell, the minutes were accepted nem. Con.

**3. Annual report and future plans:** Ruth Ashcroft presented the annual report, of which a copy is retained with these minutes. In particular, the grant of Gift Aid status by HMRC, website work by Ash Stally-Chudasama, Newsletter work by Charlotte Ellis, and the progress, nearly complete towards the signing of a lease with Christchurch College were highlighted. Gratitude was expressed to the volunteer groups who had carried out valuable work on the Eyot and to members for their continuing care of wildflower patches and help at work parties.

A trial pond had been constructed. There were plans for further ponds close to Long meadow, but the undertaking would require considerable fund raising.

Problems during the year had been chiefly the lighting of fires during a hot dry summer and inconsiderate cycling. Three unauthorised camps were found, one being persistent.

**4. Treasurer's Report :** Laurence Burrell presented his report, a copy of which is retained with the minutes. He explained a surge in donations as amounts given specifically to cover legal fees in connection with lease negotiations. An appropriate reserve of funds had been built up to cover emergencies such as an urgent need to fell trees which had become unsafe through Ash dieback. It was agreed to keep subscriptions at a minimum of £5 per annum. Gratitude was expressed to those who paid more.

**5. Election of Trustees and Committee members:** Thanks were presented to Adam Gibbon who was standing down both as a Trustee and as a committee member. Anthony Cheke, Charlotte Ellis and Thelma Martin were standing down as Trustees but offering themselves for re-election. The remaining Trustees remain in place. Rosemary Cameron stood for-re-election as a non-trustee committee member. All were proposed by Jackie Ingram and seconded by Janet McCrae, and the election was approved nem.con.

Anyone interested in joining the committees was invited to make themselves known and would be initially invited to a meeting.

**6. Wildlife and surveys report:** This was presented by Anthony Cheke. No formal plant survey had been carried out this year, save for any remaining Japanese Knotweed, b Details of fauna are set

out in detail in the Annual report. Nest boxes were well used this year, and some will need replacing.

**7. AOB and general discussion:** In response to questions:

- a) Trees might be more vulnerable to being felled by storms because of the summer drought.
- b) A Water Vole sighting was reported. They used to be quite common, but there are unlikely to be many as there are Mink in the area.
- c) members enjoyed the “Pottery Trail” through the plantation.
- d) The Eyot paths were not bridle paths, or public footpaths. They were permissive paths. Horses used to be more commonly ridden there than they are now, but were not considered to pose a problem. Zoe Bicat and her Mule had not been seen recently. Electric motor bikes are being ridden, which could well be a problem
- e) Drones were unwelcome as they disturb wildlife.

The formal part of the meeting ended at 8.45 pm, and was followed by the showing by Sarah McFadden of footage from the trail cameras.

Thelma Martin.