

FAVERSHAM FOOTPATHS GROUP

MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON 24th NOVEMBER 2022.

The Group's seventh AGM was held at 7.30pm on 24th November 2022 at the Guildhall, Faversham. Twenty Members were present.

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Trevor Payne (Chair) welcomed everyone to the meeting and admitted he was overwhelmed by the attendance number for this year, even though the weather was wet outside to say the least.

2. ATTENDEES AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Executive Committee Members All seven EC Members were present at the meeting, Trevor Payne (TP), Ann Ashton (AA), Anne Salmon (AS), Andrew Osborne (AO), John Coulter (JC), Julian Saunders (JS), Robin Sayewell (RS).

Group Members who were present of which there were thirteen in number, were : Richard Filipczak, Jane Runnett, Willemien de Koning, Ashley Sayewell, Allan Hogben, Stuart Harrison, Linda Harrison, Anne Osborne, Claire Sullivan, Mike Wilkins, Sue Taylor, Chris Taylor and Mike Cosgrove.

Apologies were received from Marion Ripley, Brian Caffarey, Jennifer Davis and Lesley Govier.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF AGM ON 18th NOVEMBER 2021

The minutes were approved.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF PREVIOUS AGM

There were no matters arising that were not covered in the Executive Committee's report from the previous meeting. The meeting noted the report.

5. REPORT ON WORK FROM THE GROUP SINCE THE 2021 AGM

See report below :-

6. FINANCIAL AND MEMBERSHIP REPORT BY TREASURER (Ann Ashton)

See report below :-

7. ELECTION OF NEW EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (EC)

The Group were advised as per the Agenda that the constitution specifies that the AGM must include the election of Officers and other Members of the Executive Committee. The EC shall comprise of three Officers (Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary) and four other Voting Members.

The EC can also co-opt not more than three additional, non-voting, Members. **Post Meeting Note** : Ms Willemien de Koning after discussions with (RS) has volunteered as a nominee to become a Non-Voting EC Member and will attend the January 2023 EC Meeting for Election. Willemien primarily has great interests in the Augustine Camino Route that passes the Town.

In the absence of other nominations for Officer or Member positions, the meeting agreed that the following Officers and Members should be elected/re-elected: Trevor Payne (Chair), Robin Sayewell (Secretary), John Coulter (Member), Andrew Osborne (Member), Anne Salmon (Member), Cllr Julian Saunders (Member).

Unfortunately, our Treasurer Ann Ashton previously reported she would be resigning her position after this meeting. The EC was therefore looking for hopefully a Group Member to Volunteer to take over the important role of the Group's Treasurer Vacancy. **Post Meeting Note** : Mrs Ashley CM Sayewell spoke after the meeting with (TP) and (AA) and has subsequently volunteered for the position.

8. ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION FOR 2023

It was agreed that the subscription should remain as £5 per member, with the continuing proviso that anyone joining later than the end of September in a calendar year should be deemed to have paid their subscription for the following calendar year too.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS RELATING TO THE GROUP

Richard Filipczak mentioned that he was experiencing communication difficulties with KCC over the Rail Crossing near Goodnestone ((ZR492). Post Meeting note : (RS) has written to KCC again over this.

10. Guest Speaker

As previously reported to the Group there was no Guest Speaker this year.

FAVERSHAM FOOTPATHS GROUP

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ON WORK OF GROUP

This report summarises briefly the main activities of the Group since the similar report produced for the 2021 AGM. The EC would welcome questions or comments at the AGM or in advance of the meeting.

a) GENERAL

The Executive Committee (EC) has:

- continued to maintain and update www.favershamfootpathsgroup.org.uk (It was reported that within the last week, we were successful in changing the Website Provider to a local administrating Company which will make considerable saving on the funds the Group expends for this facility).
- maintained membership of Ramblers and continued the Group's public liability insurance.

b) EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The EC has met five times since the last AGM, all meetings were held in the Guildhall. Minutes of meetings have been posted on the website (and delivered to members without internet access) and updates on the main developments have been supplied regularly to Members. Between meetings EC members have liaised as necessary by email.

c) CREEKSIDE PATH AT FAVERSHAM REACH/WATERSIDE CLOSE (ZF43)

The EC has continued to liaise with the KCC, who are currently investigating a more simplified design to enable further progress to be made. They have advised that they hope to complete the work in the current financial year, although it would be wise to expect some delay.

d) ENGLAND COAST PATH

It is pleasing to report that after considerable delays the Whitstable to Iwade section of the Coast Path was officially opened 26th October 2022. Members will be aware that the FFG has lobbied continually for this route to be implemented, including pointing out some signage errors just before the opening.

As previously reported, now that the route has been officially opened, all the features of the Coast Path, such as the public's right to access 'spreading room' areas between the path and the coastline, including all common areas in Faversham Reach and Waterside Close, have come into effect and that everybody can now walk along the creek side at these two areas and enjoy the views of the creek.

As Creekside paths such as ZF43 and the path in front of the Oil Depot development (Abbey Wharf) are opened the FFG will lobby Natural England to have the Coast Path diverted onto them.

d) **WALKS**

There have been eight walks since the last AGM. We are very grateful to Linda Harrison and Ann Ashton for organising these. The walks are a very popular part of the group's activities and attract new members, but they do require considerable thought and planning to organise.

e) **OTHER MATTERS**

The EC has also acted in the following main matters:

- 'Lost Ways' / 'Don't Lose Your Way' initiatives – There have been no requests for help made to the FFG by Colin Sefton of Kent Ramblers, although he is aware of our willingness to help if required.
- Designation of local footpaths - Unfortunately there has been little progress with this project this year. It is hoped to reactivate matters with the Town Council in the coming year. A possibility being to select two paths to take through the process to gain experience.
(RS) explained one path in particular, the application is for the adoption of the Tram Road that runs from Ham Farm to Ham Wharf at Oare Creek joining to ZF1. This also includes a small spur on to the road to the Shipwright's Arms that links up with ZF2 as it comes off the marsh.
- Replacement swing bridge – we continued to monitor progress but this project now appears to be caught in complex negotiations between KCC and Peel Ports.
- East Kent Recycling Ltd road at Oare Creek & ZF1 – The 'refuges' have been constructed on the road in accordance with EKR's planning permission. KCC/PROW have confirmed that they are still pursuing Bretts to create a dedicated footpath on the lagoon side of the road. The latest position being that KCC have a draft route for a lagoon side path. They are organising a meeting with Bretts that the FFG will also be invited to, prior to them holding an 'informal' consultation process.
- Cleve Hill Solar Farm – the site has recently been sold to another developer. Work is now expected to start in winter 2022 - 23.
- Faversham Neighbourhood Plan – the next formal consultation phase is expected to be held in early 2023. The FFG will make any necessary comments on footpath issues, but (JS) did mention it is likely that a Referendum on the matter will take place in September 2023

- Proposal for a footpath from Jubilee Way to the Recreation Ground/Railyard planning application – SBC Planning Committee approved application (21/502545/FULL) which only provides a pedestrian link from the development into the Rec rather than a link into the Jubilee Way estate as well, which the FFG and the Town Council had asked for.
- Walking and cycling provision in Faversham – The Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan which FFG members contributed to the development of, was agreed at the Swale Joint Transportation Board February 2022 and should now be recognised by KCC and SBC in developing highways plans and strategies. A public consultation on the plan took place in the summer, which was largely supportive of the plan. The key short-term priority of the Town Council in implementing the plan are to make it safer and more attractive to walk in the town by widening pavements at a number of key locations where traffic needs to be slowed– the recent work at Stonebridge Pond is the start. Progress at other locations is dependent on obtaining agreement from KCC as the Highways Authority and KCC success is obtaining funding through Active Travel bidding rounds.
- Proposal for a permissive path from corner of Vicarage Lane/Eastling Road to corner of Lorenden Park – Unfortunately no progress has been made on this issue. We will continue to press this with Cllr David Simmons who we understand is in contact with his Land Agent over the matter.
- Reporting footpath issues to KCC PROW. The group have reported a number of issues and have generally had a good response from the KCC PROW department.

FAVERSHAM FOOTPATHS GROUP

Financial and Membership Report as at 31 October 2022

Introduction

Membership of the Faversham Footpaths Group (FFG) becomes due on 1 January each year and as a result, financial records are kept using the calendar year as the financial year. For logistical reasons this report has been drawn up as at 15th October 2022. I foresee no reasons why the financial position should alter materially before the time of the AGM.

Accounts and membership 2022

During 2022 the group had an income of £350.00, most of which came from subscriptions with the remainder coming from donations and fees in advance. Our expenditure included web site hosting, insurance and a group subscription to the Ramblers Association and that came to £692.31. Included in this year we have needed IT support. This is being provided by Stephen Caffarey, to whom we have paid £240.00. The website costs have increased because the site has been upgraded, and made more secure. This has left a deficit for the year of £342.31, with an overall bank balance of £984.63

Membership renewal is down this year on previous years, but not everyone gives a reason. Members telling us why they have left have generally been due to ill health, or moved away. But we have gained 10 new members so the total number of members has remained constant. At the end of October 2022 the Group has 65 members, including ten new members, and 44 members paid their subscription electronically which is very helpful to the Group

Other actions

A Data Protection Policy and Privacy Statement have been in place since April 2019 in order to ensure that the Group is acting in line with the new Data Protection regulations.

Conclusion

The Group's income this year has not kept pace with expenditure. None the less we currently have an acceptable surplus of £984.63 in hand.

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Financial and Membership Report as at 31st October 2022

2022 INCOME

Subscriptions	315.00
Fees in advance	15.00
Grants	
Donations	10.00
Cash in hand	5.00

TOTAL 350.00

MEMBERSHIP

Membership end of 2021 65
Members at end of 2022 65

Renewed 2022 55
New Members 10

Current 2022 membership 65

Paying by Bk Transfer 44

2022 EXPENDITURE

Bank charges	54.42
Insurance	216.60
Ramblers Memberships	65.50
IT services/website	355.79

TOTAL 692.31

Surplus/(Deficit) for the year -342.31

Opening Bal at 1/11/2021 1,326.94

Closing Total at Bank 984.63
and in hand 31.1.22

Net assets 984.63