

DRAFT FOR APPROVAL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ACTON FIELD TRUST HELD AT 7 P.M. ON TUESDAY 11TH MARCH 2025

IN THE SMALL COMMITTEE ROOM, ACTON VILLAGE HALL

Present:

Chair: Christine Johnson, Treasurer: Nick Antill, Secretary: Jenny Antill, Julie Black, Barry Caradine, John Gibbens and 1 member of the public

1. Welcome by the Chairman

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2. The minutes of the meeting of Acton Field Trust held on Monday 4th November 2024 were agreed as a true record and signed by Chairman

3. Apologies There were no apologies for absence

4. Declarations of interest. None received.

5. Signage. Signage is needed for information about the field, and education. A sign is needed to identify ownership of the field at both entrances to the site. A quote is needed for post and notices. The Chairman to draft and JA to place order at Auto Innovations. Contact on signs should be Clerk of Acton Parish Council as agent of the Trustees. The Acton Field Trust Website will also include information.

6. Action taken since last meeting. Trees that are to be preserved have been tagged. Further action will be taken after a meeting to be arranged in three weeks time to further review the situation. JA to arrange date. BC expressed surprise at the number of birch trees to be preserved. The trees are short lived and vulnerable to falling over. English Oaks would be preferable. Unwanted saplings could be offered to a tree nursery (JB to investigate) It is important to keep the footpath clear and not allow trees to overshadow the allotments. It should be made clear to the public why the trees need to be removed, and strategy for the management of the field should be on the website. The Suffolk Woodland Trust have urged trust to encourage open space and maintain a field as opposed to a woodland. JB: Certain trees might be

registered on the Ancient Trees Register maintained by The Woodland Trust. An account needs to be set up and a verifier will then visit to consider each tree. JB to keep Committee informed of progress with verification process. Trees close to power cables cannot be protected by a TPO. The power company has the power to cut trees back as necessary but only subject to strict guidelines with which they generally comply. This in itself gives a good level of protection. Where trees overhang properties adjacent to the field the owner of those properties can legally cut the overhanging branches but not the rest of the tree.

- 7. Website.** The Committee agreed to go ahead with the establishment of a website for the Acton Field Trust. An introductory page created by JB has been provisionally agreed by the Chairman which will be circulated for approval by Committee. The cost will include the domain name registration, plus £90 to £95 for creation. The Chairman is to ask Steve Le Grys to provide pictures for the site.

- 8. Provision of Seating.** Simple seats are to be erected. JB to ask John Purser. The location of the seats will be agreed at the forthcoming meeting at the Field. The following possible locations were suggested: close to the Lightning Tree, by the wildlife area, at the middle of the new path across the field. Perching poles are also to be erected and Steve le Grys is to advise about location. A fixed point photography pole to encourage public engagement and education is to be set up at a spot to be agreed. The cost is about £25. JB to contact supplier.

- 9. Requests etc. from owners of property adjacent to the field.** A letter has been received from Mrs Wilkins of 19 Gotsfield Close who wishes the Trust to cut back a tree on the edge of her garden. Chairman to draft a response and JA to reply to Mrs Wilkins.

The owner of The Coppice wants to erect a wire fence due to problems with dogs in his garden. It was considered that a hedge would be preferable to a fence. Chairman to talk to the grandson of the owner who will do the work.

Concern was raised with regard to owners of properties adjacent to the field making entrances from their gardens etc. It was decided to write a letter to all adjacent householders asking them not to encroach on the field or to cut any vegetation other than that of trees and shrubs that they own. They are to be asked not to dump any garden waste in

the field due to the danger of importing non-native plants. It was agreed to send a letter to all householders to this effect. JA to draft and JB to circulate after approval.

10.Sustainable farming initiative grants. It was considered whether it was appropriate or economic to make an application for a grant for all or part of the field at this stage. It was decided to not go ahead at present.

11.Treasurer's Report. NA reported that funds at the bank totalled £4,540.65. This was after receipt of our second dividend at the end of February. He commented that the Unit Trust transfers dividends as received, rather than smoothing them across the quarters. The result was that the November dividend was £936.29 and the February dividend was £581.83. Our annual dividend receipt should be as expected, around £4,000, but the allocation between the quarters will be uneven. Schroders continues to be inefficient regarding the 'know your client' administration and repeatedly claims not to have received paperwork for which it has sent confirmation of receipt. NA persuaded it to release the second dividend payment but is still in correspondence with its back office to get the matter resolved

12. Comments from the Public. An e mail from Steve le Grys was read as follows:- 'Please can it be mentioned that as steward of the Nature Reserve, I am very pleased to see the hedge has been cut back. The extra light now coming into the NR from a thinner hedge will facilitate new growth and, I hope, more Orchids that I am trying to cultivate. Also the extra light will allow the lizards and other critters to bask in the warm morning light.'

John Gibbens would like to install a camera for surveillance of animals at his own cost. Committee agreed. An offer of bluebells was declined since it is preferred not to introduce plants onto the field from outside sources.

Date of next meeting.

Date of next meeting to take place at the beginning of July (JA to diary to make arrangements in due course)

The meeting closed at 8.10 p.m.

Jennifer Antill
Secretary.