

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ACTON FIELD TRUST HELD AT 7 P.M. ON
MONDAY 4TH NOVEMBER 2024**

IN THE SMALL COMMITTEE ROOM, ACTON VILLAGE HALL

Present:

Chair: Christine Johnson, Treasurer: Nick Antill, Secretary: Jenny Antill, Julie Black, Barry Caradine, and 4 members of the public

- 1. Welcome** by the Chairman
- 2. The minutes** of the meeting of Acton Field Trust held on Tuesday 30th July were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman
- 3. Apologies** were received from John Gibbens
- 4. Chairman's Report**

The Chairman commented on the encouraging and valuable report received from the Suffolk Wildlife Trust; hedge cutting and taming of blackthorn carried out by John Doe, the increase in visitors to the site and their general satisfaction to date

5. Meeting with the Suffolk Wildlife Trust.

Julie Black reported on her two hour meeting with Cathy Smith from the SWT. The point of the meeting was to seek advice on the creation of a management plan. After the meeting we received a very useful document, which we had not expected. This report can be used as a resource for future planning by the AFT. Specifically mentioned was the proliferation of Ragwort. Cathy advised that since there is no grazing livestock within 100 metres, and that the cut from the field is not to be used for fodder, the AFT do not need to take urgent action which regard to Ragwort, but may want to reduce it voluntarily. Other topics discussed were brambles and hedge cutting, the creation of a pond and/or wetland areas, tree thinning, the transfer of some flower seeds from the churchyard. The projects suggested are not obligatory, but may be worth considering in the future. Overall Cathy's opinion

was that the AFT was on the right track and recommended a light touch approach to management of the land.

Cathy offered the opportunity to meet other wildlife groups, to access training and other resources such as wildlife recording. She hoped that the AFT would keep in touch with SWT

JB was thanked for arranging and reporting on the meeting.

It was agreed that the issue of tree thinning needs to be addressed. BC will scan and circulate a report from Babergh planning with regard to trees that was prepared at the time of proposed development of the site

JB will follow up on the question of whether AFT is eligible for a Sustainable Farming Initiative Grant for managing scrub grassland

It was decided to hold another meeting at the site to consider in particular the vegetation encroaching on properties adjacent to the field

6. Signage

It was agreed that signage is necessary to identify the Trust and its aims and also to include information on what is growing in the field. JG to be asked to progress this matter

7. Flooding

It was agreed that there is no immediate necessity to take action to mitigate flooding. The ditches surrounding the site belong to adjacent properties who have the responsibility of keeping them clear

8. Website

It was agreed that a website independent of the Parish Council's website was needed, but that a link to the site from the Parish Council website should be included.

Two options for creation and annual management of a site were proposed by e-mail by John Gibbens, giving the option of either a package purchased off the shelf at a cost of £95.00 or a quote from his son in law for the same services for £75.00. It was agreed to go with the offer from John's son in law. Thanks were expressed to JG for looking into the matter

9. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer had distributed a profit and loss account which showed that AFT had generated a surplus of just under £4,000, and that this equated to the balance on its bank account.

The investments pay a quarterly dividend. The first payment is due at end November and should amount to some £930, with subsequent payments at quarterly intervals.

There had been some lack of clarity with respect to fulfilling Schroders's requirements regarding 'know your client' regulations and it was agreed that we should ask Fiona Mullins to confirm that it had received the paperwork that we posted on 15 October, in the hope that this will have satisfied its requirements.

NA was thanked for his efforts in organising the paperwork.

10. Public Forum The following issues were raised by members of the public:

- a. The Warden of the Nature Reserve, Steve le Grys, expressed the wish for close co-operation with AFT in the light of the close proximity of the two areas. (It was agreed that Mr Le Grys should be invited to future meetings with the SWT.)
- b. Rotational clearance particularly with respect to ragwort and brambles
- c. Provision of a pond, to encourage frogs, lizards and great crested newts
- d. Perching polls for owls.
- e. Trees with tree preservation orders
- f. Co-ordination of the style and nature of the website with that of the Parish Council
- g. Provision of a gap between vegetation at the perimeter of the land and the boundaries of adjacent property owners.
- h. Access to the field by adjacent property owners for maintenance purposes.

Action items and matters arising from public forum.

An informal meeting at the field to be arranged to include both Trust members and the Warden of the wildlife area.

To consider at the next meeting writing to adjacent landowners with regard to access from their properties to the field

JB agreed to approach Babergh District Council with the aim of ascertaining which trees were protected by TPO's

Date of next meeting.

A date in February 2025 will be arranged

The meeting closed at 8.10 p.m.

Jennifer Antill

Secretary.