

HUGS AGM 23rd March 2024 – Notes and Actions

Attendees: Caroline Hunt (Chair), Cynthia Napper (Treasurer), David Rickeard (outgoing Secretary), Heather Comina, Bob Knight (RSPB), Karen Saxl (Butterfly conservation), Ian Lishman Leishman (West Hagbourne)

Apologies: Felicity Topping, Mary Napper, Fiona Bean

Key points and Actions

1. Approval of minutes from 2023 AGM – **approved** [*see supporting documents below*]
2. Treasurer's report – presented by Cynthia Napper [*see supporting documents below*]
 - a. Noted that Square Space website fees are quite high, and we should aim to utilise the website more to ensure value for money [*see later ideas on communication*]
3. 2023 Summary from the Chair – [*see supporting documents below*]
4. Election of Committee members
 - a. Chair - Caroline Hunt re-elected [proposed by Heather Comina, seconded by Cynthia Napper]
 - b. Treasurer - Cynthia Napper re-elected [proposed by Caroline Hunt, seconded by Heather Comina]
 - c. Secretary – the committee thanked David Rickeard for his contributions as outgoing secretary over the previous years; Heather Comina elected as Secretary [proposed by Caroline Hunt, seconded by Cynthia Napper]
 - d. West Hagbourne representative – Ian Leishman agreed to continue as West Hagbourne representative for the coming year
5. Planning discussion for 2024 [*suggestions for follow up noted in italics; actions in bold*]
 - a. Projects and activities
 - i. Wilcher Close – *Heather suggested mulching of trees and shrubs with ramial wood mulch to feed the trees and improve water retention – Action Caroline* to follow up with SOHA on supply of mulch
 - ii. Wilcher Close – Community engagement activity e.g. bee boxes or sunflower seed sowing – Action Caroline to follow up with SOHA and Wilcher residents
 - iii. Guides – *local guide group could assist with Wilcher activity, railway path or cemetery meadow – Action Caroline* to follow up with contacts from Guides
 - iv. Restore project – *Mark Sutherland has approached HUGS to assist with creation of wild meadow at Restore - Action Cynthia and Caroline* to coordinate further
 - v. Railway triangle – *suggested 4-5 cuts per year, 1/3 at a time with cuttings to be removed – Action Caroline* to follow up with schedule
 - b. Events
 - i. Film nights – *Felicity Topping has suggested hosting film nights on topics such as wildlife gardens; HC also suggested Six Inches of Soil film possibly in collaboration with other local groups – Action committee* to discuss further

- ii. Morning in the Meadow – *Caroline has proposed we hold this on 15th June in the Cemetery Meadow and invite local groups e.g. Photography club, outdoor painting club, guides – Action Caroline to share further details; Ian to assist with advertising in West Hagbourne*
- iii. Church Teas in July/Aug – *Caroline commented that this was very popular last year and a good opportunity to raise funds; agreed we should do again but will need more volunteers to help – Action committee to discuss further*
- iv. Church Fete in July – *Agreed we should have a stall again; would be good if we could donate a raffle prize, need to decide on activity to run– Action Committee to discuss further*
- v. Christmas tree competition – *Agreed we should support this again, hopefully in collaboration with DGS Science club – Action Caroline and Heather to coordinate*
- vi. Moth Breakfast – *Felicity has suggested she could host this; would need a fairly secure location, possibly Butts piece allotment or Cemetery Meadow – Action committee to discuss further*
- vii. Bird talk/walk – *Option to arrange a local bird talk and walk was discussed but considered to be challenging; agreed to explore option of linking in with local RSPB events – Action committee to follow up with Bob*
- viii. Swift and Bat boxes – *Cynthia is exploring options for installing Swift and Bat boxes in EH and WH; Father Jason is keen to have some at the Church – Action Cynthia to follow up with Ian, Bob and Father Jason*
- c. Communication and engagement strategy
 - i. Open gardens - *Flyers for EH and WH open gardens events on theme of wild beauty; may be possible to have a stall at WH event– Action Caroline and Ian to coordinate*
 - ii. No Mow May – *suggest we have posters rather than flyers; messaging needs to be soft with focus on simple things people can do in their gardens – Action committee to follow up*
 - iii. HUGS Website – *need to increase use of website; suggested to have monthly blog posts which can be linked to EH Parish Mag, WH Newsletter and local Facebook groups – Action committee to discuss further*

6. AOB

- a. Bob raised the topic of Hedgehog Highways and encouraging people to leave gaps in fencing - *group agreed to include this in communications and perhaps have a blog article on this topic and add links to online resources; wildlife cameras could be used to monitor presence of hedgehogs – Action committee to discuss further*
- b. David mentioned the recently updated Neighbourhood plan and whether this could be linked to a local nature recovery plan with a focus on valuing what we have e.g. protecting mature trees. He also mentioned that EH Parish council has published a Climate and Biodiversity Crisis strategy document and invited comments from the group.

- c. David made the group aware of a DEFRA consultation on food labelling and encouraged them to comment – *see link* - <https://consult.defra.gov.uk/transforming-farm-animal-health-and-welfare-team/consultation-on-fairer-food-labelling/>
7. Wrap up and next steps – The committee will compile a set of minutes for circulation and comment and then work on further details of the plan for the coming year which will be shared via the website

Supporting Documents

- a. Minutes from 2023 AGM
- b. Treasurers report 2023
- c. 2023 Summary from the Chair
- d. Report on EHPC activities 2023