

# **FRIENDS OF ABBEY FIELDS**

## **THE TWELTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**Held on Wednesday, 23rd July 2014 at the Senior Citizens Club,  
Abbey End Car Park, Kenilworth**

The Chair welcomed the members present, and the visiting speaker Jan Cooper.

1. **Apologies** for absence were received from: Joanna Illingworth, Anne and Tony Gilmore, Sandra Whitlock, Sue Garrett, David and Di Wilson.
2. The Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2013 were approved.
3. Matters arising:
  - Joanna Illingworth had updated us on the continuing saga of cycling through Abbey Fields. She had reported several near misses with cyclists, and it appears that Cllr Dave Shilton was trying to get park wardens for the WDC's parks who would be authorised to deal with dog walkers and cyclists who don't stick to the rules.
  - Susan Tall had brought up the subject of something to commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the start of World War One – she would have liked to see poppies in Abbey Fields. The Chairman reported that there were now poppies amongst the flowers around the Children's new Play Area and some more Poppy seeds would be spread along with other wildflowers by the 8<sup>th</sup> Kenilworth Guides who had applied for a seed pack from Grow Wild UK and received permission from the WDC to spread them on Abbey Fields this Autumn, with the help of FOAF. It has also been brought to our attention that the Royal British Legion would be holding 'A Field of Poppies' daily from 3<sup>rd</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> August in the Royal Priors Shopping Centre.
4. **The Election of the Committee** for 2014/2015  
Pat Smith confirmed that she would be stepping down from the Chair but was willing to continue to act as Secretary. She welcomed Keith Rockett, who had been helping the Committee for the last few months and had agreed to act as Chairman with the backing of the rest of the Committee. Sam Sexton had very kindly taken over the duties of Membership Secretary over the course of the last year as well as the Website. It was therefore proposed that the Committee should continue as follows:  
  
Chairman – Keith Rockett  
Vice-Chairman - Dave Pettifor  
Secretary– Pat Smith  
Treasurer – Gordon Mitchell  
Events/Litterpicking – Dave Rickers  
Newsletter – Linda Pettifor  
Membership Recruitment – Joan Rockett  
Membership Secretary/Website – Sam Sexton

The Committee was nominated, seconded and approved by those present. Keith Rockett introduced himself to those in attendance and asked the outgoing Chairman for her report.

5. **Chairman/Secretary's Report**

It had been a difficult year trying to play different roles on the Committee but thankfully with Sam Sexton offering to act as Membership Secretary as well as the Website, it had been eased somewhat. Now with Keith Rockett on board she would be happy to stand down in the knowledge that FOAF would continue in his good hands. The calendar sales had been successful once again, although very hard work, led by Dave Rickers, who had found a good apprentice in Sam Sexton. We had reaped the benefits of our Autumn planting with excellent displays in the Wildflower Meadow, around the Play Area and the Butterfly Garden. There were even some Fritillaries in the wild area behind the tennis courts. She gave special mention of three members – Roz Comins, Heather Alford and Alison Wiggins, who had volunteered to help with the stand at the Lions Show as without them we wouldn't have been able to go ahead with the event as some members of the Committee had been unable to attend. In grateful thanks flowers were presented to them. We have agreed to future planting this Autumn in the Wildflower Meadow (our final phase) and around one of the trees on Abbey Hill, and we will be planting Snowdrops in the Play Area in the Spring.

6. **Treasurer's Report**

Gordon Mitchell explained that although the figures did not vary very much from last year's balance, an awful lot of money had been spent improving Abbey Fields but also we had received a lot of donations in memory of Kenilworth people, including our founder Adrian Rowe-Evans. We had also received a large donation from Emmerson Press in celebration of their accreditation for environmental work. This had been spent on two trees in the Play Area and the flowers surrounding it. A detailed list of these donations and payments was presented on the back of the formal accounts. Due to the healthy balance he proposed keeping the subscriptions the same for the coming year; this was approved by those present together with the acceptance of the accounts.

7. **Membership Secretary's Report:**

We now have 156 members plus 1 corporate member. Unfortunately 39 members and 1 corporate member have not yet renewed their membership. He asked to be advised if anyone known to be a member had died.

8. **New Website:**

Sam Sexton explained the set up of the new Website as per the latest Newsletter, and the creation of two new contact emails for the Membership and the Secretary. These would hopefully soon be in regular use, although PS explained that at the moment she was still emailing from her old address. Jim Dunlop asked if it was recorded how many times the site had been accessed. SS said that he would investigate this, although at the moment the majority of 'hits' would be himself!

9. **Newsletter:**

Linda asked if anyone wanted anything to be put in the Newsletter she would be grateful for their input. Heather Alford commented on how good it was, which was agreed by all those present.

10. **Forthcoming Events**

Dave Rickers said that we would be continuing with our three main events this year, being the Bird Walk, Bat Walk and Moth Evening, but these would now be joined by a Meadow Walk. Although it had taken place on a dismal day this year, we still had 10 in attendance and were very pleased with how many wildflowers were found. Next year it will be held a few weeks later to see what more we can find. The Bird Walk had been well attended (26) now that it was at a more reasonable time of 8am, and the Bat Walk had proved very popular (28 attended), especially with the rescue bats being brought along for all to see. We have a final event this year – the Moth Evening to be held at 9pm on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> August – meet in car park and wrap up warm! He reported that that

WDC were still litterpicking the Fields twice a day, which made an enormous difference, and with our Litterpick once a month, when a regular 12-15 volunteers clear out the nooks and crannies that the WDC miss, the Fields are looking a much tidier place.

## 11. Any Other Business

- Jon Holmes stated that the Meadow would be getting its annual cut soon along with the Acid Meadow area below the Memorial Bank. Jon produced some photographs of the Harebells that grow on the Acid Meadow area. He was asked about the work being done at the High Street entrance of Abbey Fields – this was where Severn Trent had been isolating the waterpipes so that in the event of the water being turned off, not such a wide area would be effected. He was also asked about the Builders bags that had been left by the Barn and the Swimming Pool Cafe – the WDC were trying to get these removed although it was proving to be difficult.
- Jim Dunlop asked Jon Holmes if he thought that there was a water leak at the Ford end of the Lake where the Fritillaries grow as it was still very wet there. Also at the bottom of Memorial Hill before you cross the bridge by the Swimming Pool had a similar problem. JH stated that he believes this is ponding water and is not due to a leak at all.
- Norman Stevens asked whether a narrow pathway could be cut through the Meadow from near the Reform Church down towards the Bridge; JH said that he would look into this although it would mean losing some flowers.
- Emmerson Press had asked of the possibility of including some Fitness Equipment to encourage the joggers to use Abbey Fields. Ann Blacklock stated that when the Play Area survey had been done, several people had been keen that such equipment be included. The majority of those in attendance thought it would be a good idea. Jan Cooper stated that she would not like it too near the Barn. Jon Holmes said that they would not be allowed to put it too near the Children's Play Area due to some legislation.
- Jon Holmes stated that it was proposed that 16 Lime trees would be planted to fill in the gaps.
- JH also mentioned that now that the ground was hard work could be done on the trees, some of which will have to come down to make them safe. Unfortunately this means that some areas of the Fields would have to be cordoned off for health and safety reasons. Where possible the cut down trees would be left to encourage the wildlife.
- Sam Sexton reported that he was now one of the editors of the Our Warwickshire website – [www.ourwarwickshire.org.uk](http://www.ourwarwickshire.org.uk) and he would be grateful to know if anyone had any ideas for the site.

Tea was taken.

**Our guest speaker**, Jan Cooper, gave an excellent talk on the The Castle & The Church. A very enjoyable end to the evening.