**­­­South Yare Wildlife Group**

**Minutes of the Meeting Held on Tuesday 20 September 2022 at Wheatfen**

Present: Peter Armitage, Rodney Aldiss, Linda Tansley, Jake Zarins, Susan Goldsmith and Cathy Terry.

1. **Welcome and Apologies.**

PA welcomed those present and received apologies from Jim Bradley and Andy Jarrett.

There was a suggestion that a committee Whatsapp group be created to make communication easier and phone numbers were supplied for PA to action.

1. **Minutes of Last Meeting.**

The minutes of the last meeting were accepted as a true record.

1. **Matters Arising From the Minutes of the Last Meeting.**

Schools link update - JZ has met the headmaster and felt that the relationship needed formalising. The Swift talk that had been schedule for 19 September had been postponed to October.

New Leaflet – Rodney has a box of the newly produced leaflets. 300 were ordered and PA will distribute to the committee members. The leaflet amalgamates and replaces three former leaflets and it was obtained in time to be used at the Loddon event.

The Loddon event was felt to be very successful and was good at engaging both families and young people. It had involved a lot of work but it was generally felt it should be repeated with the venue being book as soon as possible, preferably for a date just after the end of the summer school term. Repeating the Poringland event was also discussed.

It was agreed that a plan for 2023 events should be discussed in October/November.

Future events:

Wild Ken Hill – October 19th – the posters have been printed and are ready for distribution.

Joe Harkness – November 16th – Claxton.

Winter Walk – December 4th.

JB has put minutes on the website.

JZ still has some rattle seed available.

1. **Treasurer’s Report.**

RA reported that the group has a balance of approximately £15,100 now that the last of the grant has been received.

Imminent expected expenses are payments for the posters and first aid for the Loddon event. PA gave RA some cash to be paid in (£53). It will be necessary to make a donation for the room for this meeting.

The group has 70-80 members which bring in £7-800 in membership fees per annum. Once the grant money has gone, that is the only funding the group will have.

There was then a wide-ranging discussion regarding financial matters including:

* Charging for events – the charge differentiating between members and non-members.
* Request for donations at events.
* The financial limit on speaker fees was thought to be £50 plus travel expenses.
* It will be necessary to continue looking for project grants.

PA to contact Henry to check the arrangements for the Wild Ken Hill talk.

1. **Future Events.**

RA felt that the group need a publicity officer to publicise events.

Wild Ken Hill – October 19th

RA to collect posters and the distribution was arranged.

The event will be in Eleven Says and Radio Norfolk and the EDP will be notified.

RA to take money at the door.

Speaker introduction – to be decided.

JZ felt that farmers should be specifically targeted in the promotion of the event.

For future events there was a suggestion that a raffle should be considered and the use of Eventbrite to sell tickets, which PA will investigate.

Joe Harkness – 16th October.

The title is not known and PA will check that the venue has been booked.

Winter Walk – 4th December – the pub has been booked for post-walk refreshments.

There was then discussion regarding possible events for the New Year. There was a suggestion that workshops should be considered rather than just talks. Possible subjects for presentations could be Wild East and the Grasshopper project if we take part. Rupert Read has offered to give a presentation on climate change.

Ideas were requested for discussion at the next meeting.

1. **Large Marsh Grasshopper Reintroduction.**

This was a wide ranging discussion regarding the group’s possible financial input to the project, which would be in the region of £2500.

All equipment will be provided and five keepers will be required to nurture the grasshoppers from egg to release stage. They will be given full training and biosecurity rules, particularly with relevance to pets and flea treatments used. The sites will be Ducan’s Marsh and Wheatfen and two consecutive releases are planned at each site. There have already been three years of releases at Dersingham and Ken Hill. The project is linked in to Natural England and NWT. Surveys will be undertaken to assess the success, or otherwise, of the releases.

The only concern raised is that the reason for the grasshopper’s extinction in The Broads is not known.

It was felt it would be a good project for the group to be involved in and, if well publicised, it could raise the group’s profile.

There was a suggestion that webcams could be set up so that, particularly, schools could get involved and see the progress of the grasshoppers as they develop.

Questions were raised with regard to the length of the project and how management for the grasshoppers would affect other species on the sites being used, and whether there would be any possible detrimental effects.

There is a need for a decision to be made soon as permissions need to be obtained from Natural England in order for the project to commence in 2023.

RA proposed that the group support the project subject to our queries being addressed and JZ is to communicate with the relevant parties to progress.

1. **Teenage Conservation Group.**

PA had contacted Rose regarding the group’s questions raised at the last meeting and he had had no response as yet and therefore those questions had not been answered.

The feeling of the meeting was that there was some sympathy towards the project but that the preference was for funding to be used to support children from families who do not have the funds to pay for activities.

PA is to contact Rose and request she attend a meeting of the group to discuss her proposals and request for funding.

1. **Website.**

There are still concerns that the website not easy to access and is confusing for committee members to edit. Jim has put considerable effort into trying to keep it up to date and ensuring news, events and the minutes are on the website, but it is not user friendly. PA read out an email from JB giving 3 possible ways forward; paying someone to manage the site, moving the website to a different page, or carrying on as we are with more training for people.

RA recommended that the committee investigate the Framingham Earl Parish Council website, which is run through WIX, and which their clerk finds is easy to make additions and changes to.

It was felt that the group needs a better website and it may be worth paying someone to set something simple up which can then be easily amended by committee members.

1. **Any Other Business.**

PA reported that the Rockland bird hide group is still meeting but has not progressed very far as the funding and future ownership situation is very complicated.

CT reported that a lot of seed rich hay had been transferred to Richard’s field.

1. **Date of Next Meeting.**

Tuesday, 08 November, at Wheatfen.