



## MINUTES OF THE 2014 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of MANHOOD WILDLIFE AND HERITAGE GROUP

8<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2014

6.30. PM AT Selsey Town Hall

Courtesy of Selsey Town Council.

**Present:** Dr. Anthony Preston (Hon Sec & Trustee) AP., David Scott (Hon Treasurer) DSc; Joe Savill (Trustee) JS; Gina Scott (Trustee) GSc;

See attendance list for others

- 1) **Welcome:** The chair opened the meeting at 6:30pm and welcomed all to the AGM indicating that there was an attendance form that needed completing for AGM administration purposes and hoped to finish on time after which there would be the illustrated lecture by Jane Reeve – Water Vole Officer, followed by light refreshments.
- 2) **Apologies:** Apologies were received from; Bruce and Sheila Wilkinson, Maggie Smith. Bob Norris, Jill Sutcliffe,
- 3) **Minutes of Last AGM Meeting:** The Hon Sec indicated that the minutes of the previous meeting were circulated to all members last November. There were slight typos and amendments, which have been made. The Hon Treasurer reported an error on page three, which indicated a deficit of £84812.00 last year; this should have read £4812.00, the Hon Sec then stated that this had been corrected. As there were no further corrections the members were asked if there were any matters arising. As none were forthcoming the minutes were passed as correct and signed by JS for the Chair.

#### 4) Reports and updates:

- a) **Chairs report;** Jill, as indicated above, was absent from the meeting due to illness and Joe Savill said he was sorry for this as he wished to thank her for her fantastic task as chair and her enthusiasm and time input to the task and he wished for our thanks to be duly noted. JS went on to outline the change in the management structure of the group indicating that most of the audience would already be aware of this. He pointed out that Jill stood down as Chair at the end of March 2014 but emphasised that just because he was standing and speaking to the audience, it did not mean that he had taken over the role of Chair of the Group but was speaking in his capacity as Chair of the Management team and in fact it might be another member of the Management team speaking next year. What was decided when Jill stepped down was that none of us could fill her role as she had carried it out having put in the enormous amount of her own time. It was decided, therefore that the Management team would lead the Group. In the past, JS indicated, the role had been down to one individual; but it was felt that in some ways this was not sustainable. So the Management team is going to lead the Group. JS indicated that most of the Team were in the audience tonight and asked the meeting if there was anyone who did not know who that group were. All did. JS then outlined the structure of the Management team; three Trustees, then David Scott, Treasurer, Dave Haldane, Carole Hampton, Peter White, Dr. Bill Martin, Trevor Gibson Pool, and Dr. Jill Sutcliffe. Other people sometimes attend the Management Team meetings such as Tom Broughton who looks after the MWHG website, Val Gatehouse who is the new Health and Safety Officer whom JS thanked for taking on that role, which made up the Team. JS stated that the Trustees are on the Management team but their responsibility is not as a hierarchical overseer but their overall responsibility is that of monitoring the strategic direction of the Group, also for compliance; to make sure we, the team, are compliant with all the responsibilities such as health and safety, and general care for all the volunteers. There are also the financial aspects of the group for which the Trustees have responsibilities. JS went on to indicate that there is an 'action plan' for the Group as a whole and thus the main role of the Management team is to co-ordinate that action plan and to see that it is implemented. JS also indicated that a Members section is being developed for the web site and the action plan will be on there, together with the minutes of all the Management meetings, so that we are seen to be democratic and open to all our members. JS also mentioned that there were also Team Leaders meetings; as the MWHG Group works on the principal of sub-groups such as Manor Green Park, East Beach Pond, and the ASH group, to which different people attend – these very much forming the working groups, who do the practical action on the ground and get the things done. He stated that Dr. Bill Martin leads the Team Leaders. JS went on to talk about Nicola Timney, she is going to help us get onto 'Facebook'. It is apparent that we as a group do need to be on it. The key point of it is that it will direct more

people to our website, thus more people will know about us and our activities. JS stated that Nicola had done a lot of work on this and thanked her for her efforts. Joe then went on to suggest if anyone wanted to join the management team as we are always looking for more expertise to be drawn into it , which now only meets eight times per year; he intimated that they would be most welcome. They should just get in touch with him or any member of the team.

JS then opened the floor for questions. None were forthcoming.

- b) The Hon. Sec. then asked the audience if they had heard of South and South East in Bloom. Most had but he went on to state that he had been asked to attend the prize giving at Brighton and announced that the Group had won three awards. Manor Green park Sensory Garden gained a level 5 Outstanding award, the top award. Manor Green Park itself, gained a Gold award. AP emphasised that the efforts of the Manhood Wildlife Group were significant in Selsey gaining the very prestigious Biodiversity Award; we were the only winners of this award the highest to be achieved (round of applause). Selsey itself gained a Silver Gilt and Highly commended awards. He praised the work of the group and indicated that Gill Jennings had said because of the number of awards we had gained the Town Council would have to get a bigger cabinet. AP went on to state that at the Management meeting we had agreed to elect a president or seek to elect a president and intimated that some time ago he had suggested approaching Richard Williamson and pointed out that some members may have remembered his talk at the previous AGM but that he also came down to Manor Green to plant a tree in remembrance of the end of the First World War. So he has been very helpful and committed at this end of the peninsula. I therefore suggested if we might ask him if he would consider becoming our President and the Management team said we should make an approach. So the Hon.Sec asked the audience if anyone knew of any reason why we should not make the approach. Someone asked if an approach could be made to George Clooney first but AP said he would write to Richard first to see what the response would be.

The Hon.Sec. said everyone had been sent a copy of the Annual Report but there was also a copy on the chairs. He stated that the Management Team would like to thank Pam, Carole, Richard and David for their hard work in putting the document together (round of applause). He indicated that members should also have a copy of the Accounts, where eight stood for a pound sign but David would take the meeting through the document. We would then on completion have to approve them. AP duly handed the floor to the Treasurer to read his report.

c) **Treasurers Report;** Thanking the Hon.Sec. David Scott then presented his report. He stated that this was the second year we had to prepare the accounts in this way which is a requirement of the Charities Commission. He intimated that more funds had passed through the accounts than in previous years therefore he remained indebted to Richard (Whittle)for guiding us through the process and indeed for again preparing the accounts in the format you see before you. DS also thanked Pam Barnes and Carole Hampton for the help in converting the large document and publishing the current document which was not an easy task. He also went on to thank Wendy Peters from Workspace Accounting Limited who looked at the documents and was the Independent Examiner of the accounts which, he informed the meeting, is a statutory requirement. He drew the meetings attention to her report on page 5. He then indicated that none of this would be possible without the assistance of Gill Jennings who has always looked after us so well from Selsey Town Hall, looking after the paperwork, the accounts, bills of payments that keep us running. She always provides information on a monthly basis so that is possible to provide a running report for the Committee to tell them how the finances are. Last year's deficit has become a healthy positive balance, this is due to firstly to the second instalment of the Heritage Lottery Fund grant for the Water Vole Project of £20,000, we had none from them last year as we were working on the previous years money but the current sum brings the grant to £45,000 for the project which continues now until March 2015; when the final £5,000 will become available. Secondly Jill Sutcliffe has work tirelessly to secure funds from Earnest Cook, WSCC, District Council, Manhood Peninsula Partnership to fund the other large project we have planned, which is the Wetlands Project, due for completion in December. David indicated that Jane Reeve had informed him that other Parishes are getting involved, which will hopefully enable the work to carry on. Bill Martin has also been able to secure a Heritage Lottery Grant for £6400 for the Sidlesham Land Settlement Association project; which should follow on from the success of his Sidlesham Walks booklet. DS pointed out that all these grant funds are restricted, and they have to be spent on the projects for which they are claimed. In some cases we gain the funds retrospectively so we have to ensure we have the funds available within our own account until the relevant fund comes in. In addition to restrictive funds we have funds which we have designated to groups within the overall Manhood Group. Details of these will be found in the movement of funds within the accounts (page 7). David then asked for questions from the floor. He did clarify that it was important to maintain unrestricted income to cover funds that cannot be charged to the project this year. We have been fortunate to receive ongoing support from Nature's Way Foods who provide us with money every year. There has also been the £3,500 income from the Madestien Glasshouse Inquiry appeal, which had been a long drawn-out affair. Lastly there was an enhanced sum arising from our Service Level Agreement with Chichester District Council which was related to part three of the agreement relating to work on the Manhood Peninsula, from which we do to

get funds, which appears to be growing each year as we do more. Smaller groups of income comes from WSCC and our sales of leaflets. The total income for the year comes to £60,000 which sounds like, and is, a lot of money. But, much of it is restricted and we could not sustain our activities without local support which we have. We are also aware that the both the Water vole and Wetlands projects will come to an end and they are important not only for the water voles but securing the Manhood from flood risk, we therefore trust that funds can be raised for the Wetlands project. So, despite some uncertainties, our finances bear little resemblances to 2012/3, income up, expenditure up, and a healthy excess with assets of £67,908 at year end, which is very healthy, although it is mainly restricted and earmarked for those projects indicated. So we do remain in good shape and despite some uncertainties in our future we are in good shape at year end and remain so. If the funding does not come through for the future major project we will, however, be back to basic day to day projects so we must remain vigilant but we are ok. David then asked the meeting to adopt the accounts so that the accounts can go forward to Companies House and Charities commission.

- d) **Hon. Sec.** Thanked David and asked for questions. As none were coming an adopter was asked for adoption of Accounts;

Proposer; Peter White Management Committee, seconder; David Haldane Management Committee.

- 5.) **Elections** - The three Trustees, Joe Savill, Dr Jill Sutcliffe, Dr Anthony Preston and David Scott Hon.Treasurer officially stood down but, to maintain continuity, Joe Savill, Dr Preston and David Scott were prepared to continue in office if no other proposals came forth. Dr. Sutcliffe had declared to the Management Team that she wished to stand down as a Trustee and had previously completed the appropriate forms. Gina Scott {member and Management Committee member} had made it known at the Management meetings that she was willing to replace Dr. Sutcliffe if there were no other volunteers wishing to take on the role. Prior to standing down the Hon. Sec. asked if there were any other proposals from the floor for the vacant official positions, as none had been received by post or by email.

As there were no nominations, the Hon. Sec. asked for a proposer and seconder to return the three trustees and Hon. Treasurer to the posts vacated;

Trustee

Gina Scott

Hon. Sec. and Trustee

Dr. Anthony Preston

