

FoRGE Annual General Meeting March 16 2023

Present – Dave Steele, Judy Steele, Josie Sanderson, Steven Randall, Val Chantry, Elly di Paeztron, Mick Trinder, Gary Stocker, Gareth Wyatt, Barbara Wyatt, Julia Cooley, Jane Ingall, John Ingall, Judith Perry

Dave Steele introduced the AGM

Minutes and financial report of the last AGM held on April 7 2022 via Zoom were approved

Activities Report

Footpath group

Judy Steele reported on footpath group activities, which had been restricted by the weather several times in the past year.

She explained that the group is a partnership with the County Council Rights of Way department which gives us insurance as long as we have a trained first aider with us.

We have had several new volunteers which is really welcome.

Waymark Discs have been renewed and two posts replaced. The county had replaced three roadside posts immediately before the meeting.

Vegetation clearing happens mostly in summer, with disc replacement and renewal in the winter.

Several paths are not clearly marked and this was reported with a meeting with the county rights of way officer scheduled.

Wildlife planting

Josie Sanderson told the meeting about FoRGE's involvement with volunteers helping to plant and to join with the Wildlife Trust and Parish Council creating a hedge and wildflower area in the playing field. FoRGe has also provided nest boxes at the primary school.

FoRGE News

Julia Cooley talked about the increased costs of producing FoRGE news, but a local firm had offered a keen price.

More deliverers are needed particularly for Crown Hill Gardens

Advertising helps towards the costs of the magazine and more advertisers are needed

Tree fostering

Barbara Wyatt told the meeting that the fostered trees, part of the Queen's Canopy initiative for the Jubilee, seemed to be doing well and should be available for planting either this winter or next. Planting spots to be finalised.

Events

Judy Steele summarised events for the past year.

Plant Sale

This was very successful and was held in multiple venues last year. Funds are used to help with the costs of the newsletter and talks if donations don't cover costs.

Wildlife gardening get -together was held at Naomi Northey's house

In October **Mark Elliot** explained how the app **iNaturalist** could help to record species of all types of wildlife – insects, plants and flowers – found in the village.

This was followed by a talk by **Olivia Williams** about the forthcoming hedge and wildflower planting [see above]

Canal entrance on Southam Road

After six years of work, largely by Dave Steele, it looks as if the entrance will be built as part of a towpath improvement scheme largely funded by Sustrans. We have also raised funds via village donations standing at £1300 and the Parish Council have secured £41,000 Section 106 money from local developers. We have been assured that the work will be completed within the next 12 months, probably this summer.

Vegetation has been cleared so birds will not be disturbed during the work. The smallholder has given permission for some of the adjoining land to be used as a depot. FoRGE's role in brokering the whole project was ignored by Leamington Courier.

The benefits of the project include:

- accessing the towpath as a route to work
- walking and cycle access to leisure and amenity of local green-spaces
- accessibility for all - working adults, children, the elderly, disabled and leisure cyclists
- connection to National Cycle Route 41
- improved biodiversity of the canal corridor
- safe access to local services for users of the canal network

Finance report

Dave Steele presented the balance sheet, below and posted on the website.

Question from the meeting

There was a question about footpath W123 leading up from Lewis Road which is a subject of some controversy. We explained that this is not part of FoRGE's brief, although the footpath group are aware of the situation. We will help where we can, but the parish council is continuing to pursue the issue.

Document Storage

FoRGE documents available online: <http://bit.ly/forge-documents>

Forge Financial Report to March 2023

Accounts 2021-22			Balance		
	Expenditure	Income			
	b/f from 2020-21		£1,815.71		
Expenditure	Printing	-£348.00	£1,467.71		
	Hall Hire	-£30.00	£1,437.71		
	Speaker's Fees	-£30.00	£1,407.71		
	Sundry Expenses	-£31.16	£1,376.55		
Income	Ad Sales		£60.00	£1,436.55	Ring fenced
	Plants Sales & Donations		£801.45	£2,238.00 >>	for Canal Access
	c/f to 2022-23			£2,238.00	£1,326.50
					General Funds
					£911.50

Accounts 2022-23			Balance		
	Expenditure	Income			
	b/f from 2021-22		£2,238.00		
Expenditure	Printing	-£339.00	£1,899.00		
	RSPB Bird Boxes (School)	-£46.95	£1,852.05		
	Hall Hire	-£45.00	£1,807.05		
	Speaker's Fees	-£50.00	£1,757.05		
	Sundry Expenses	-£20.02	£1,737.03		
Income	Ad Sales		£80.00	£1,817.03	Ring fenced
	Plants Sales & Donations		£733.09	£2,550.12 >>	for Canal Access
	c/f to 2023-24			£2,550.12	£1,365.91
					General Funds
					£1,184.21