

Paul Smith's action concerning the safety box led to a general discussion as to how safety equipment should be managed when there were several small groups working at different locations. Various suggestions were made, such as a list of peoples mobiles being taken at the beginning of the working party so that there was a contact within each group; a smaller bag or rucksack with basic first aid, high viz etc being carried by each group; the main safety items being close to the group that was using items such as strimmers. Further discussion followed, and it was agreed that the welcome sheet should be read out to visitors, and everything be collected up back at the car park from the different groups at the end of each session. As each working party is different, it would be difficult to have hard and fast rules for this, so the above would be given a try and reviewed at a suitable opportunity.

67. Financial report including banking arrangements

Angela Faherty (Treasurer) explained that the VAT refund (587.66) had been received from the Parish Council, and that she would like a breakdown of how this figure had been arrived at for her records.

The current balance totals £6373.18, but cheques have been written for S Eyles, and also the EA permit, which will leave a balance of £5382.58.

It was agreed by all present that the EA permit cheque be made out to Mrs Pogmore, so that it does not appear that Mark has signed a cheque to himself. This was due to the necessity to make the payment by credit/debit card directly to the EA over the phone. The signing of the cheque was witnessed by all those present.

Angela asked if it was necessary for her to keep the second page of each statement, which is simply the bank's standard information. All agreed that this was not necessary

68. Budget – 2017/2018

This is unchanged from the last meeting as the contractor's quote had only arrived two days earlier, so the committee had yet to agree what they wished to have done. The budget will be updated when this has been sorted out.

69. Future funding and management of the fen

Mark gave a report as follows:

Circumstances regarding funding for the fen are likely to change significantly. The rules for Stewardship Grants have changed yet again, and I have had a very recent conversation with Diane Monsey about this, and it seems that projects of small acreage are likely to be ignored, in what will now be a competitive bid. NE are not happy about this and are currently looking to see if they can make an application to include many of the small projects like ours as one application in order to get some money for them. However it is very uncertain at present, and she will remain in touch with me as things develop.

MP
16/3/18

This is likely to be a significant blow for the fen management and we will have to research and make applications for grant funding through any other sources that we can find. There is money out there, but local authorities (and a Parish Council Committee is one) are frequently excluded from these schemes.

Additionally, I attended NWT educational day on Grass and Fen Management in the summer, and the NWT people were amazed that Boughton Fen did not have a recognisable group to run it. Indeed, the course was called *Free Habitat Management Workshops for Land Owners, Managers and Community Groups*. Similar concerns were expressed at the Biodiversity awards. There are a number of advantages in becoming a management group, or trust, many of which are also registered charities (Will need to check with NE if a charity can apply for Stewardship).

Grant funders tend to look more favourably on these organisations, particularly as many place much emphasis on community benefit and volunteering, all of which we do now, but are not instantly recognisable as such.

There are numerous local groups managing land and environments owned by councils, churches, river authorities and so on. Regardless of their title, they have trustees which usually involves a number of local people with appropriate interest and expertise, and a nominee from the land owner. Many of these are also registered charities, and frequently work with organisations such as NWT as well as the landowner. All have won awards for their efforts.

Examples are:

Southrepps Common Trust

West Runton Nature Society (managing West Runton Common)

Friends of Earlham Cemetery

Scarning Conservation Volunteers

Aylmerton Pond Restoration Group

Trinity Broads Volunteer Group

Friends of Boyland Common

Little Ouse Headwaters Project

Gaywood Valley Conservation Group

Of course all the larger management organisations fall into the same sort of arrangement, on a much larger scale

Eg The Wildlife Trusts, Wildfowl & Wetland Trust. Hawk and Owl Trust, RSPB, BTO

He then asked for the committee's agreement to contact a couple of these organisations to see how the process went, and to look into the pro's and cons of such an arrangement.

MP
16/3/18

It was agreed that he should make these enquiries

70. Autumn/Winter work and working parties

Autumn/Winter work

Work to be carried out on Sunday's working party was agreed. Some repair work was needed to mesh on the boardwalk, in particular the steps; and also an inspection of the boardwalk to be carried out. The walk tidy up would be completed; and other areas for scrub clearance etc were discussed.

Mark and Dave had met with Carl Charters to look at the trees that everyone was concerned about. He has priced to tidy up the two large willows and remove the large willow on lower fen. Mark will arrange the permit from Natural England for middle fen, and the rest will be in the permissible annual volume, and will not need a permit as they are not in the SSSI. There are also some trees leaning very badly over the river which require work to make them safe. Carl has quoted £500 for the tree work, and other scrub clearance on a daily rate. Mark will put his figures against the budget to see what else can be achieved this winter.

Working parties

It was agreed to try to hold working parties after Christmas on 7th and 21st January, and 4th and 18th February. This would leave a little time if the weather was bad to rearrange a date.

Date of next meeting

Next meeting date is:

16th March 2018 (set previously)

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 7.50pm.

MP
16/3/18

Appendix 1

**ACTION LIST STATUS BY BOUGHTON FEN COMMITTEE
MEMBER (EXCLUDING PAST COMPLETED ITEMS)**

ALL

Number	Group	Action	Date rec'd	Complete by	Status
1	All	To try to ensure that safety during working parties is maximised as discussed and report back for further review	08.12.17	Next meeting	New

No current actions.

DAVID COOPER (DC) & ANDREW FAHERTY (ACF)

Number	Group	Action	Date rec'd	Complete by	Status
1	DC & ACF	Review Health and Safety documents – complete review and create Accident Report sheet	25.09.17	Next meeting	Ongoing
2	DC	Arrange for final maintenance of walk for the season	15.09.17	Next meeting	Complete
3	DC	Obtain price for work trousers	15.09.17	Next meeting	Ongoing

DAVID COOPER (DC), ANDREW FAHERTY (ACF) AND MARK POGMORE (MP)

Number	Group	Action	Date rec'd	Complete by	Status
1	DC, ACF, MP	Check if the outfall water level needs to be adjusted	15.09.17	Next meeting	Ongoing

ANGELA FAHERTY (Ang F)

No current actions

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MARK POGMORE (MP)

Number	Group	Action	Date rec'd	Complete by	Status
1	MP	Contact Bonnett's re amendments to Outfall safety, platform & rail	17.03.17	Next meeting	Complete
2	MP	Meet with DC & ACF to look at viability of installation of outfall	17.03.17	Next meeting	Complete
3	MP	Liaise with Stephen Eyles re summer cut	19.05.17	Next meeting	Complete
4	MP	Obtain copies of contractors' written confirmation that they have the required public liability insurance	15.09.17	Next meeting	Complete
5	MP	Ask Carl Charters if he can check the health of the old trees on the Fen	15.09.17	Next meeting	Complete
6	MP	Speak to Diane Monsey (NE) regarding how many more payments are due to be made under the HLS agreement	15.09.17	Next meeting	Complete
7	MP	Contact Balfour Beatty volunteers for Working Parties	15.09.17	Next meeting	Ongoing
8	MP	Contact the EA to ask for help with river bank work	15.09.17	Next meeting	Complete
9	MP	Contact management groups of similar projects to make enquiries regarding pros & cons of forming an organisation of this type	08.12.17	Next meeting	New
10	MP	Sort out budget for work with Carl Charters and make necessary arrangements to engage him and apply for tree permit	08.12.17	Next meeting	New

TOM ROBERTS (TR)

No current actions

PAUL SMITH (PS)

Number	Group	Action	Date rec'd	Complete by	Status
1	PS	Maintain first aid kit & safety box – obtain eye wash	19.05.17	Next meeting	Complete

MP
16/3/18