

Group Meeting Wednesday 30th August 2023 6.30 pm
Skipton Town Council Offices
Town Hall, High Street, Skipton BD23 1FD

Present: - Chris Rose, Liz Simson, Alan Simson, Lynne Adams, Steve Adams, Mark Williams, Paul Irven, Lucy Irven, Steve Warren, Ed Whittaker and Jenny Dean.

Guest Sam Riley-Gunn Aire Rivers Trust

1 Welcome and Introductions

Chris welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Sam.

Unfortunately there has been a fire in the Wilderness this afternoon, set by some young people. The Police arrived quickly on the scene. The main damage is to the dead hedge as branches were pulled out and set on fire.

2 Apologies

Alison Stewart and Ed Whittaker

3 Minutes from last meeting held on the 7th June 2023

The minutes were approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

4 Financial Update

Jenny updated the group that access to the Bank Account was in progress, and would arrange a meeting with Lynne and Steve when they come back from holiday.

Spending since the last meeting was £129.10 for the Public Liability Insurance and £32.00 for the domain name for 3 years. The Council has paid these costs but will be reimbursed by the Friends of the Wilderness when the account can be accessed.

5 Aire River Trust Volunteers

Sam Riley-Gunn attended on behalf of the Aire Rivers Trust. Sam explained his role and how we can work with the Aire Rivers Trust. Sam advised that the Trust could give advice on conservation, both in the water and the area surrounding.

Sam invited group members to attend a training session he is running on the 7th October at the Three Links Club. This is part of the Great Aire Outfall Safari. Places on the training can be booked on www.tinyurl.com/greataireoutfallsafari

Sam also asked the group if he could use the Wilderness for some beck wades, which the group were happy to agree to.

There was a discussion about the Willow Tree at the duckpond. Sam advised that as it is a main river that is liable to flood, the environment agency has a responsibility to address the issue of the tree. The group could do the work themselves, subject to applying for the relevant permits.

Action: Jenny to contact a tree surgeon and ask them for their opinion on the tree to use as evidence to contact the environment agency again. Jenny will also ask about the Ash tree that is next to it, and the dead elm in the Wilderness.

6 Working Party Day

Thank you to Steve for his valuable updates on how things are going in the wilderness, and for keeping track of what is growing.

There was a discussion regarding the dead hedge and how to best repair it. Steve has some willow cuttings that could be incorporated into the hedge.

Action: Jenny to speak to Mark and Dale for some advice on securing the dead hedge

Other maintenance that needs to be done is the cutting back the brambles not removing them as they provide a habitat for insects and are good for the biodiversity of the site. Some ivy also needs trimming back.

Working party date Sunday 24th September 10am. Bring Wellies, gloves etc

Second date Saturday 14th October 10am.

7 Website Update

To discuss next time.

Action: Jenny to liaise with Alison and Steve and start to pull together photos etc from the old site.

8 AOB

The steps are still in need of repair, particularly the top corner near the steps on the Otley Road side.

Action: Jenny to look at getting some quotes for professional repair of the steps, and then the group can look at potential funding options.

Community Payback will hopefully be available to be used again soon.

Next Meeting 25th October 2023 at 18:30pm