

UPPER THAMES PROTECTION SOCIETY

Minutes of the Meeting Held at Brook House, Cricklade on 9th July 2013

Present:

Chris Graham (chairman)
Margaret Hunt (secretary)
Carol Rouse (treasurer)
Helen Goody (STRIPLING editor)

Seymour Aitken
Steve Greig
Richard Rumming
Arthur Webb

New committee member Richard Rumming was introduced.

Confirmation of the Minutes of the Meeting of 12th February 2013 These were confirmed and signed as a correct record, subject to minor changes to the accounts information.

Matters Arising:

Thames Path Improvement Update It was reported that the footbridge between the field with riding jumps and North Meadow, which was expected to be provided later, was already in place. For his future reference, Richard Rumming asked Margaret Hunt to e-mail him with the Thames Trail officer's telephone number. **Action MH**

Cotswold Waterpark Trust Committee Chris Graham reported that in response to his letter to the Trust, he had been informed that the committee remained in limbo. Arthur Webb would represent UTPS when it was revived. Steve Greig mentioned pressures upon otters in his area.

Cricklade Neighbourhood Plan It appeared that because there were few residents prepared to assist with taking Plan consultation forward, a topic-group focus was not a realistic option. Margaret Hunt would keep Chris Graham *au fait* with ongoing action. **Action MH**

UTPS Committee Initiative Update Helen Goody remained keen to involve children in appropriate river projects, with Steve Greig offering to help provide contacts. Schools within and outside Cricklade would be invited to participate. **Action HG and SG**

WILD Project Launch Event UTPS had been represented by Helen Goody and Richard Rumming, who provided feedback to the meeting. Arising from this, there was seen to be a need to bring together agencies with an interest in water matters to which farmers could go for advice – particularly from the angle of clarifying the divergence between waterway clearance for navigation purposes and the maintenance of vegetation and fallen trees as wildlife habitats. A lengthy discussion ensued, at the end of which Chris Graham asked how UTPS could be involved. This led to the response that it could usefully disseminate information, bearing in mind that scenarios could change with time. Helen Goody was asked to write an awareness-raising article for the next issue of STRIPLING, also for the Cricklade Chronicle. **Action**

HG

Richard Rumming had been in contact with Jenny Phelps of FWAG South West in connection with flooding of agricultural land. He and his fellow-farmers might seek grants to fund environmentally-benign silt and tree removal from rivers. **Action RR**

Treasurer's Report (attached to signed minutes)

The figures included the current UTPS assets, amounting to £2794.77 (in Deposit and Current accounts and as cash).

Membership Update

£79 had been received as subscription renewals during the year.

Arthur Webb suggested that the £2 per annum membership fee should not be increased, but that opportunities should be sought to raise money for individual projects. This would be further considered at the next committee meeting.

AGM Speaker

Various talks were proposed, topics including otters, Environment Agency responsibilities, an update upon canals and integration between agencies. After discussion, it was agreed that Ben Welborn be invited to speak; he had an interest in the Water Park, and being involved with the WILD Project, could update local people on this and, in passing, could cover issues relating to wildlife and latest developments in the Park. A proposal to ask a member of the the Cotswold Canals Trust to initially address the committee would be reviewed at the next UTPS meeting.

Steve Greig offered to speak to Ben Welborn in the light of the concerns of the former about the otter population at Hannington. **Action SG**

AGM Date

A Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday evening during November (or maybe late October) would be selected when a speaker had been identified, the schools half term holiday week being avoided.

STRIPLING for 2013

A variety of short articles were planned, to include the Chairman's Annual Report and an updating Thames Path contribution from Margaret Hunt. **Action HG, CG and MH**

Printing and postage would be referred to Chris Graham nearer the time of production.

UTPS Website Steve Greig reported that there had been few visits to the site during the past 18 months. He would add a member-joining facility, and would include the 2012 and 2013 editions of STRIPLING if a PDF was made available.

Canals Restoration In response to Richard Rumming's enquiry as to progress, Chris Graham confirmed that works are continuing along various sections of the route..

Hatchetts Farm, Cricklade In response to a concern expressed by Helen Goody in connection with the forthcoming sale by auction of this semi-derelict riverside property, a monitoring role was seen to be the only one that UTPS could play.

The meeting closed at 9.25 pm, Seymour Aitken having been thanked for his welcome hospitality.

