

UPPER THAMES PROTECTION SOCIETY

Minutes of the Meeting Held at Aethelmar House, Cricklade (by invitation of Helen Goody) on 20th May 2014

Present:

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

Richard Rumming
Gerry Tamplin (observer)

Apologies for Absence had been received from Seymour Aitken and Arthur Webb.

Confirmation of the Minutes of the Meeting of 30th January 2014 : These were confirmed and signed as a correct record .

Matters Arising:

UTPS Community Initiative (involving children in river projects) After brief discussion, Chris Graham said that he would give consideration to the question as to whether the development of the scheme might be assisted by improvement in marketing. In addition, this might help to increase society membership. **Action CG**

WILD Project Richard Rumming stated that the meetings were inclined to be 'talking shops' and that attendee numbers were falling. A review of water flows in the Cricklade area had been discussed with the Town Council by Jenny Phelps and Petrina Brown. Richard also mentioned a Cirencester Agricultural University student living in Cricklade, who had become involved in detailed watercourse mapping. Jenny would be able to provide contact details. Attention was drawn to the aim of reaching consensus within the various Thames area interests as to future action.

Flood Wardens It was reported by Margaret Hunt that she had spoken with Cricklade Town Councillor John Coole, who was helping to coordinate a local flood wardens scheme. Richard Rumming would investigate this matter with the WILD Project and would let Margaret have the result. She would remain as contact with John Coole. **Action RR and MH**

Have Your Say on Waterways The consultation period had ended in December 2013. No results were yet to hand.

Fritillaries There had been many more flowers this year than in 2013 in the North Meadow nature reserve, probably due to the grass-cutting and grazing that had taken place last summer and autumn. Richard Rumming commented favourably upon fritillaries presence on the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust reserve near his farm. Helen Goody had taken STRIPLING copies to the fritillaries tea rooms at the Easter Bank Holiday, and though no tangible interest in UTPS had resulted, this was considered to have been a positive move. Richard was of the incidental opinion that Natural England had too great a tendency to concentrate upon its individual reserves - at the expense of considering wider environmental issues.

UTPS Website Chris Graham would discuss with Steve Greig the need for updating the website. It was agreed that in addition to STRIPLING, the committee meeting minutes should be posted.(to exclude financial information). Margaret Hunt would provide a copy at time of circulation to members. **Action CG, MH and SG**

Thames Path :

Margaret Hunt's recent contact with the Thames Trail officer had produced the following information:

Gloucestershire / Wiltshire Boundary Path Improvements (south of Kempsford) As a result of recent severe flooding, arrangements would be made to improve walking access – earlier considered to be unnecessary.

Grass Cutting of Path Verges Through Cricklade It had been confirmed that the first cut of the season had been carried out, to include trimming of bordering hedges.

Path Between Fairview Fields and Abingdon Court Lane Levelling and re-seeding was scheduled to be undertaken during the current financial year.

NOTE: The path is now signposted as the “Thames Path National Trail”, also as the “Thames & Severn Way”.

UTPS Meeting Speakers :

Helen Goody explained that the THAMES GUARDIAN magazine's local representative had not been able to attend the present meeting due to ill health. The suggestion was then made that as an UTPS promotional aid, a 'celebrity' AGM speaker might be sought. Committee members would reflect upon this between now and July – when Margaret Hunt would contact them. **Action All**

Treasurer's Report / Membership : (copy attached to signed minutes)

Membership currently stood at 60, and with 19 possible lapses, it might be helpful to run another contact mailing.

Accounts In summarising the up-to-date accounts figures, Carol Rouse pinpointed the fact that receipts had been greater than outgoings by £56.30 since the 2013 AGM.

Any Other Business :

Potential New Committee Member When questioned upon his reasons for having an interest in becoming an UTPS committee member, Gerry Tamplin responded that he had been “intrigued” by what he had read in past literature and by discussion at the AGM. As a result, he now wished to join the committee,. This decision was warmly welcomed by Chris Graham. As an aside, Gerry returned to the earlier WILD Project discussion, saying that he doubted whether it was realistic to expect future management of the Thames and its environs to be unanimously agreed by the differing interests.

UTPS Promotion STRIPLING might be distributed to various outlets where UTPS could be promoted, the Gateway Centre being one example. Helen Goody would give thought to the matter. This led to an offer from Chris Graham to write a promotional article for publication, upon which an interview for the RIPPLES magazine could also be based. The RIPPLES feature would be handled by Margaret Hunt, who was acquainted with the Cricklade correspondent.

Action HG, CG and MH

Date of Next Meeting:

Dates would be circulated later, with a view to the meeting being held in early September.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.25 pm. Helen Goody was thanked for her much appreciated hospitality.

