

# UPPER THAMES PROTECTION SOCIETY (UTPS)

## Minutes of the Meeting Held at Brook House, Cricklade on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2015

### Present:

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

Seymour Aitken  
Richard Rumming  
Gerry Tamplin  
Arthur Webb

**Absent:** Steven Tabbitt

**Confirmation of the Minutes of the Meeting of 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2014** These were confirmed and signed by Chris Graham as a correct record.

### MATTERS ARISING FROM THE ABOVE MINUTES:

**UTPS Committee Initiative Update** The point made at the previous meeting - the need for the initiative to be taken forward by a volunteer other than Helen Goody – was returned to. In particular, contact with the Ashton Keynes teacher mentioned was seen as being important. Richard Rumming thought that he might be able to assist if publicity material could be provided. Chris Graham and Margaret Hunt would draft a message to be sent to the Ashton Keynes and Cricklade Schools in advance of action Richard might take. **Action CG and MH**

**WILD Project / Upper Thames Steering Group** Chris Graham and Richard Rumming, as members of the Steering Group, were able to keep abreast of developments. Progress was being made in connection with a pilot scheme in the north of the area covered, where surveying had been taking place on large acreages, rather than on small areas of pasture land. The Environment Agency was reported as being especially pleased to find that landowners' initiatives to reduce river pollution were being effective, and it was noted that actions in general were now based more upon communal efforts than in the past. Thames Water, however, was currently delaying the carrying out of its environmental responsibilities because of uncertainty as to which of these would be externally funded. Chris Graham would circulate an information note on promotion to committee members. **Action CG**

### MATTERS ARISING FROM THE 2014 AGM:

**River Churn Project** Margaret Hunt would contact Petrina Brown, WILD Biodiversity Officer, for her latest report. **Action MH**

### Thames Path Issues:

**Path Improvement** Committee members thought well of the work that had been done to level and improve the surface of the Thames Path in the Hatchetts area of Cricklade, and also praised the article on the subject that had appeared in the *RIPPLES* magazine for June 2015. Margaret Hunt was asked to send letters of appreciation to the Thames Path National Trails Team and the Cricklade Town Council. The latter body had provided funding and had obtained an additional grant from Wiltshire Council. **Action MH**

**Ploughed Path** In response to a query by Gerry Tamplin about a stretch of the Thames Path in the Castle Eaton environs, Richard Ruming gave it as his opinion that the path alongside the river had not been included in the ploughed area, but that users were walking on the cultivated land because the path had become overgrown. Margaret Hunt would make a general enquiry as to responsibility for footway vegetation removal. **Action MH**

**River Blockages** This matter was being addressed.

**Cricklade Section of Path** There had been no problems since the end of the seasonally muddy period. Steven Tabbitt had, however, promised to deal with any issues of which he was notified.

**UTPS WEBSITE:** Gerry Tamplin will liaise with Steve Greig as regards advertising input.

**Action GT and SG**

### **STRIPLING:**

**Grant Aid** (papers attached to signed minutes). Helen Goody was applauded for her success in obtaining a £36.00 grant from the Cricklade Wayland Estates. This would be used to pay for the printing of additional copies of STRIPLING - to be used for promoting UTPS to the wider community.

**Articles for STRIPLING 2015** Topics recommended for inclusion were:

Action on River Blockages

Facilitation Fund Initiatives (Jenny Phelps)

Spring Watch on the Upper Thames (Ben Welborne, Cotswold Water Park)

Dance Common Report for Year (Gerry Tamplin to make contact with a speaker)

**Action GT**

Fritillaries Review (North Meadow and elsewhere in the locality)

Helen Goody would research articles, with a view to the 2015 issue of STRIPLING being compiled in September for publication early the following month.

**Action HG**

Arthur Webb reported the recent death of former UTPS committee member Martin Neville.

Seymour Aitkin undertook to contribute a STRIPLING obituary, based on his long UTPS working relationship with Martin.

**Action SA**

**TREASURER'S REPORT / MEMBERSHIP / SUBSCRIPTIONS:** (copy balance sheet attached to signed minutes)

**Report** Carol Rouse gave the most recent balances as follows:

Deposit Account statement to March 2015     £2,355.82

Current Account statement to January 2015   £ 348.13

Cash in hand at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2015               £ 109.31

**Membership / Subscriptions** There were currently 66 live UTPS members and the annual subscription per head remained at £2.00.

Carol reminded the meeting that UTPS promotional material might usefully be displayed at the monthly Cafe Event in Kempsford, which would probably next take place in September.

**NEXT MEETING DATE:** Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> September was agreed, the meeting being held at Brook House by invitation of Seymour Aitken. Steven Tabbitt would again be invited.

**Action MH**

### **AGM DATE / SPEAKER / TOPIC:**

**Date** This would be held in the Cricklade Jenner Hall on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> November. The date would be entered in the JH booking diary.

**Action MH**

**AGM Speaker and Topic** Subjects suggested were:

Thames and Severn / Wilts and Berks Canals

WILD Project, Jenny Phelps as speaker

Update on surveys for mammals in Upper Thames area, Wiltshire Wildlife Trust

The favoured option was that of Jenny Phelps to speak upon the WILD Project

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS:**

**EU Referendum** Gerry Tamplin raised the question of the possible economic and environmental implications of the UK leaving the EU. This was briefly discussed.

**The Thames Below the Dual Carriageway Bridge** This matter was brought to the attention of the meeting by Richard Rumming, who had observed silting-up when walking the path, also the fact that a swan's nest had been disturbed during maintenance work. Gerry Tamplin mentioned that because there was open access to the A419 at this point, walkers' dogs faced a serious hazard. Safety fencing was required.

**Summer 2015 World Wide Fund For Nature Magazine** Margaret Hunt handed around an article featuring Charlotte Hitchmough of Action for the River Kennett, who had been speaker at the UTPS 2012 AGM.

**Facilitation Fund** Committee agreement was sought by Chris Graham with regard to his move to affiliate UTPS to the funding initiative. This involved a number of environmental groups involved in monitoring the area between Lechlade and Somerford Keynes. The grant application was submitted in May. Committee members endorsed this action.

In the absence of further business, the meeting closed at 9.15 pm, Seymour Aitken having been thanked for his hospitality.