

UPPER THAMES PROTECTION SOCIETY (UTPS)

Minutes of the Meeting Held at Aethelmar House, Cricklade on 26th January 2017

Present:

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

Steve Greig
Richard Rumming
Gerry Tamplin

An **Apology for Absence** was received from Arthur Webb, who was visiting his son in hospital following a serious cycle accident.

On welcoming members to the meeting, Chris Graham congratulated Richard Rumming on having recently been presented with the FWAG Silver Pintail Award.

Confirmation of the Minutes of the 2016 AGM These were confirmed as a correct record and signed by Chris Graham.

Matters Arising from the AGM:

Review of AGM Format With a view to ensuring that future AGMs would finish at an earlier time than had been the case in 2016, it was agreed that only one speaker would be invited. The 7.30 pm start would not be changed. Carol Rouse would provide members' e-mail addresses to Margaret Hunt, who would then gauge the success, or otherwise, of the 2016 event and seek to gain opinions on changes.

Confirmation of Minutes of the UTPS Meeting held on 15th September 2016: These were confirmed as being correct and signed by Chris Graham.

Matters Arising from the 15th September 2016 Minutes:

Upper Thames Steering Group Chris Graham outlined the Group's remit, adding that he represented UTPS on the committee and that Richard Rumming attended meetings on behalf of the NFU.

WILD Project Update The latest funding had come to an end, but financial contributions to additional actions would be sought. Petrina Brown had been confirmed in post, and was in regular contact with Helen, Cotswold Park Council liaison officer.

River Churn Project Petrina Brown had provided a video of North Meadow, which would be shown at the end of the present meeting.

Thames Path Update It was reported by Margaret Hunt that although the Fairview Fields path improvement and that between North Wall Road and the grassland area alongside Hallsfield remained in a satisfactory condition, the resurfaced stretch between Bailiffs Piece and the West Mill Lane stables had become very muddy indeed. This would be brought to the attention of Steven Tabbitt, Thames National Trail Officer. He would also be notified of Gerry Tamplin's concerns about the condition of the section of the path in the Water Eaton area. Diversion of the Thames Path to river banks in the vicinity of Inglesham Bridge, Hannington, the airfield and Kempsford was raised by Steve Greig, who was very keen to see it happen. It was pointed out, however, that this route conflicted with the approved line given ministerial consent in the themed 1990s. The meeting agreed that this matter should be raised with Steven Tabbitt and Swindon Borough Council Planning Department. A STRIPLING article might assist with opening up the debate.

North Meadow Walk with Petrina Brown A date would be finalised with Petrina (either on a Saturday or Sunday morning or a weekday evening), and an enquiry would be made as to whether she would welcome the attendance of other UTPS members. If the answer was in the affirmative, Margaret Hunt would seek e-mail addresses from Carol Rouse and would issue invitations. Petrina would be asked to indicate specific factors that she intended to pinpoint on the walk.

Preparation of UTPS Promotional Leaflet Chris Graham was compiling this at the present time, and would bring the finished version to the next UTPS meeting.

North Meadow Rivers Enhancement Film Due to short notice of the date, Chris Graham had been unable to attend the filming to provide UTPS input.

Visit to Cricklade with Otter by Daphne Neville After rejecting the idea that she should be invited to meet UTPS members in advance of Petrina's walk in North Meadow, it was decided that it would be more suitable for her visit to Cricklade to be a special occasion, preferably involving children. Margaret Hunt would seek Daphne's contact details and would communicate with her.

UTPS Website Review This was debated at length, the chief participants being Chris Graham and Steve Greig. Initially, Steve was firmly of the view that rather than acting in a 'managerial' capacity, his updating task should remain as that of making additions in response to information sent. It was felt, however, that as part of the Committee, some delegated powers could be passed to Steve so that content was kept up to date. Steve then gave the history of his involvement with UTP - as a direct result of his father having inaugurated the Society. His current boating activities prevented him from being as active in website matters as was required. Steve was unenthusiastic about the opening of a Twitter page. With regard to the posting of AGM minutes on the website, it was ruled that this item should not stay in place for more than six months. Steve advised that the front page of the website was all that was needed and that it should always be up to date. Chris confirmed that he would rewrite the front page. Steve would then consider how he could reflect the concerns and requirements of the committee.

Treasurer's Report and Membership Update (copy report attached to signed minutes) Carol Rouse gave the Deposit and Current Account balances to the present date as a total of £2,946.00 Expenditure since September 2016 had been £94.65. Current membership stood at 65. In answer to a question by Gerry Tamplin, Carol reminded the meeting that members were informed of subscription renewal at each AGM via STRIPLING. She personally contacted lapsed members.

Any Other Business:

Greggs Small Environment Grant The company offered environmental grants for a variety of local purposes (to a maximum of £2,000 each). Applications could be made on line, Richard Rumming would investigate the matter with Petrina Brown. In connection with this, Richard wondered whether UTPS might provide funding for a project on the Thames or Churn. He made special mention of the need for repairs to the bridge near the Cricklade rugby pitch, where the river turns right before passing under the A419. He would also discuss action with Petrina.

Grassland between Hallsfield and North Meadow Chris Graham reported that the new owner had very generously donated this area to Cricklade Town Council for recreational purposes.

Stones Farm Planning Application Committee members were asked to decide whether they wished a UTPS response to be submitted in respect of the proposed development of 140 houses. The decision was due in eight weeks time. The matter would receive attention. Chris Graham confirmed that he was conflicted.

Date for next UTPS Meeting This would be held on Thursday 8th June 2017.

The meeting closed at 9.20 pm, after which the **North Meadow Video** was shown. Helen and Stefan Goody were thanked for acting as hosts.

