

FoNNR AGM – 26/2/24 – MINUTES OF MEETING

(Taken by Secretary)

Attendees:

- Dean Griffiths – Chair
- Vanessa Smith – Vice Chair
- Ady Collins – Secretary
- Daniela Kutzmutz – Treasurer
- Phil Lemon
- Robert Monk
- Christina Dimes
- Alan Smith
- Paul Needham
- Nicki Rolls
- Laurence Mann
- Karen Mann
- Sophie Griffin
- Anna White
- Patricia Morgan
- Andrew
- John O'Brien
- Ben Driver

Apologies:

- Nicky Fields
- Jo Bonner
- Dave Wexford
- Richard Frank
- Siera Cooper

no AGM for some significant time.

Minutes of previous meeting: Due to reasons beyond our control, there has been no AGM for a significant time. The minutes from the 2021 AGM can be found on the website. (insert link)

Reports & Accounts

- Chair's Report – Images shared of chronological images of the site from 1945 to 2015. (*site started as a recreational space for the new estate, that ran down but was still used by the community*). The project is to allow re-engagement with the river and the community. Current images also shared of the site. Site has been closed for the past year (main constructions phase) to allow the site to mature. Still waiting some settling in and maturing of the wildflower meadow. Natural habitat (forces people to engage with nature and "get feet wet" at same time). Carbon footprint kept to a minimum (no spoils taken off site), including the on-site (long term) treatment of an invasive species (Japanese Knotweed). We are still negotiating with the Environment Agency regarding changes and improvements, who are very excited about the

project. This is an ongoing and evolving project, and there are many opportunities for community engagement within the evolving project. Site owned/managed by LBH. 6 weekly meeting with LBH, *but also working with other community and wider groups (FoRCE, London Zoological Society, RSPB, Kings College, Cardiff Uni, Kew Gardens, etc (get more details from Dean)*. Positive migration and *engagement* by wildlife. RSPB doing monthly bird surveys (not yet available, but this will soon be shared because we want community engagement). FoNNR will be hoping to develop a wide range of aspects (not just observing, but capturing images, wildlife, overlap with arts programmes, we have some artists involved, including research, surveys) – this all relates to how NNR is evolving. Conservation and Research – starting conversations with local schools, working with DoE programme, working with our junior members. Ongoing works and volunteering – Some works on the site that still needs to be completed. Looking for some volunteering input between now and the summer (because we are setting up the formal opening in June, coinciding with the River Cleaning Day – making it a full weekend). Particularly required is enhancement of the entrance area. Second vision goal (beyond the Nature Reserve) is the Northcote & Crane Ecology Centre, which will operate as a hub for the wider array of engagement work with other organisations and the Community (co-ordinating with the Horticultural Society) to refurbishment of the current hut and expanding to include a Physic Garden and other elements. The building is already progressing (design, initial funding for the 1st phase - £40k total, with first £20k coming through shortly once CSO's are finalised). This program will cover electrics, solar, roof, cladding etc etc). Further funding will continue to develop this.

- Financial Report (as of 26th Feb 24) – FoNNR bank account has small modest amounts of money coming in regularly from members. Seeking to look at expanding the opportunities for community members to contribute. Future potential for fundraising. We are in profit and have finally resolved current balance of £261 at the moment, but £20k funding will be credited shortly.
- Ongoing Funding & Fundraising -
- Initial details of Formal Opening event on 8th/9th June 2024 – subtle but a weekend of engagement with the site. High Tide on Saturday is 5pm. Potential for a wide variety of events (dawn chorus, bats at dusk). Some input from LBH and their Rangers, and we are overlapping with some culture and ecology, potentially Skiffle band, as this is linked to the history of Rock and Roll evolving on the River Crane. Looking for Ecology specialist to attend and potentially an entertainment celebrity. FoNNR will be developing a long list of volunteering opportunities, which will also allow small groups to gain access to the site (with a purpose). We want to start building up the momentum.

Some questions asked at this stage, which are captured in the Q&A session below.

Election and Appointment of Committee members and additional roles

- Chair – Dean Griffiths nominate by Ady and seconded by Karen – no other nominations. Carried.
- Vice Chair – Vanessa offered to stand again. No other nominations. Carried.
- Secretary – Ady nominated by Vanesa and seconded by Ben. No other nominees. Carried.

- Treasurer – Dani nominated by Vanessa and seconded by Ady. No other nominations. Carried
- Other roles offered: John O'Brien offered to provide guidance and advice to FoNNR.

John O'Brien (working on Thornbury Park) discussed various funding opportunities – suggested that he operate as an advisor for funding opportunities.

Thriving Community fund

Local Councillor funding (£1k from each local Councillor & keep reoccurring each year)

Discussions around potential around changes to the group to become a CIC or other, regarding insurance etc. Group together. We should also consider registering as a Nature Reserve. Habits and Heritage were a great help to John advising on setting up as a CIC. Nurseries/Forrest Schools love to bring children to Nature Reserves. Artwork sales (cards). Childrens fundraising (cakes sales) especially on Rugby days.

Members proposed resolutions: Nothing received.

Newsletter to shortly go out, which will include details on Volunteering Opportunities. Requested for immediate volunteers to assist with the website layout and identity, newsletter and general admin. Sophie volunteered some time to help develop the website.

Some questions asked at this stage, which are captured I the Q&A session below
Q&A:

- Q: River Clean newsletter about to go out – can opening information be included.
- Q: Will the site be open 24 hours. Hounslow intend for their sites to remain open, but
- Q: will there be CCTV camera's – no, but LBH have mobile CCTV camera's that can be moved as needed. Security can be reviewed for enhancements. We have been discussing this with the community all through the project, but it is likely to be self-policed. Site is designed for dual use with dogs (dead hedge divides the site). Designated Village Green, so needs to remain accessible, but people also need to take responsibility. The site will find it's balance – it's about balance and finding compromises.
- Is there a kitchen in the Ecology Centre? It has water so potentially can have basic refreshments for volunteers.

AOB:

Nothing raised