

## FONBW - Minutes of the 2004 AGM

The first Annual General Meeting of "the Friends of Nore Barn Wood" was held on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2004 on the foreshore in the woods. The meeting was attended by 12 people in fine, sunny weather.

Bruce Darby presented his Chairman's report (see separate text).

A local resident (Susan Wiltshire) questioned why Havant Borough Council were not funding the woods. Bruce replied that HBC were funding the supply of saplings and path construction, but FONBW would need to fund public liability insurance and the costs of affiliation to BTCV.

Geoff Nash presented his Treasurer's report (see separate text). Geoff summarised the report by saying that the society is basically solvent. Income was £100 from the Emsworth Horticultural Society (for which FONBW are deeply grateful), £2 found by George Wenman, and £25 subs at £1 per person. Expenditure was on books, BTCV affiliation, and insurance

A motion to accept the accounts was proposed by Shirley Wenman and seconded by Joanna Kemp. On a show of hands the motion was carried.

Elections:

The existing post holders were prepared to stand again, and in the absence of any other nominations, the following were proposed:

Chairman - Bruce Darby

Treasurer - Geoff Nash

Secretary - Roy Ewing

The proposal was made by Joanna Kemp and seconded by Joan Wyatt. On a show of hands the 3 officers above were elected. The ordinary committee members were prepared to stand again and others may be co-opted to strengthen the committee.

Any Other Business - none.

The meeting closed at 1200.

### The Chairman's Report

Welcome to our first AGM since our formation in 200V, and perhaps the first of any AGM to be held under the sky in a wood, and, we have to hope, in conditions where we can hold your attention long enough to get through the agenda.



Our purpose is to do all we can to conserve and make more pleasant for the general public these woods. I say these woods because there are two, north and south. I am as delighted, as I am sure we all are that the conservation and preservation of existing green spaces was clearly wanted by those who took the trouble to return the questionnaire to the Emsworth Design Statement. So we clearly have a responsibility, shared with HBC, who own the wood, and partly also with the Chichester Harbour Conservancy, who because of

the wood's position on the harbour shore, have a licensed interest in its welfare.

We would like to think that the public have a responsibility too, and we feel we can raise their awareness of this by improvement, and the knowledge that the woods are being looked after, which I don't think anyone would disagree, had not been evident until recently. The much improved footpaths have shown that this has changed, and we mean to make other obvious changes, though of course these will take time to show up.

So what are these other changes? Hard for the casual observer to detect, apart from the cutting of the hedge on the north side and path improvements. We have planted about two hundred hedglings in the gaps, some the winter before and some last winter. Saplings have been planted at various points around the south wood during both winters; some gorse on the west side, and a grove of whitebeam where coppicing has also been done. Our attempt to create a glade in the middle of the wood in the 2003 winter was foiled by persons unknown, who removed and burnt the stockade which was intended to prevent access to the glade in order that new growth could develop. So we learnt a lesson there, and any cut wood is in future going to be chipped. We are also keeping an eye on sea defense.



A great deal of the ivy entangling trees has been cut at the stem, but in order to give a habitat for birdlife this work has been suspended. Some love ivy and have made their feelings clear, so we must respect that. HBC will cut the grass once in the summer, and will put up a new notice to draw attention to the necessary restrictions. But we are nevertheless concerned about vandalism, and for enabling better control and enforcement we are trying to get HBC to enact suitable Bye-laws. But the process is seemingly a slow one and may not come, if at all, in time for this season. The Police are in favour, and the HBC Legal department is working on it.



So the work goes on, and as a framework to follow we have a five- year plan. Our monthly winter Work Days will continue, with occasional days in the summer to attend to new planting, clearing refuse, and any other needs, such as detailed mapping. Our financial situation is dire, though I have to acknowledge some very timely donations from The Emsworth Horticultural Assoc. and the Emsworth Food Festival which have enabled us to meet our annual charges. Apart from that we have not even been able to buy equipment. This is a situation we have got to improve instead of being in penury and relying on windfalls. Various sources of funding are

being sought, not least by increasing membership. I am ending now, but not before expressing my thanks to Andy Skeet of HBC for his support and contribution, to Anne DePoitier of the Conservancy for her help and support, to David Linington of Emsworth Web Designs for setting up and running the Website, and to the Committee and willing Friends who have done so much to make the progress we have. Thank you.