

The Friends of Nore Barn Woods – July 2022 AGM Chairman's report

Our last AGM was held in August 2021, just as we were coming out of lockdown. Since then we have got back to full operation, with monthly work parties. In fact, the May work party was attended by 20 volunteers, our highest count in 20 years.

Anti-social behaviour:

Lockdown led to an upsurge in footfall through the wood, but also anti-social behaviour within the wood, including 43 bonfires in 2021 and 13 so far in 2022. Vandalism has also occurred, with the Conservancy information board being uprooted and the picnic table being damaged. The Friends have cleared up and repaired any damage after all incidents. The Friends have also repaired the seats of the picnic table and are awaiting timber to replace the table top.

The pond:

Work has started to improve the pond. The pond was created by the Chichester Wildfowlers over 40 years ago, and they have offered to restore the pond. This will include cutting some of the reed bed, and felling one major tree which is shading the pond.

Other conservation work:

Coppicing work has been carried out in the west of the wood by tree surgeons. The Friends have cleared the area completely to support wild flowers whilst the trees grow back.

We have continued to maintain and extend the hedges along in the south and west boundaries of the wood.

A cuckoo was heard in the north wood on 17th May. Bluebells were especially good this year. Back in 2006 we started a programme to remove Spanish bluebells and plant over 5000 native bulbs.

A bat detector was located in the wood for several weeks in April/May. This recorded frequent visits from the rare barbastelle, which may roost locally, and 9 other species of bat.

Financial:

To tidy up our finances, some of our restricted funds have been moved into the general fund with the approval of the donors. We acknowledge that we have more than normal funds in our account. We would have liked to improve the paths around the wood, but at £35,000 this proved too expensive for our funds. We are still discussing several projects with the Council that will cost less but still a significant amount.

Publicity:

Tabards have been purchased to improve our visibility in the woods.

Membership:

2021 ended with 86 members subscribed.

Thanks:

Thanks are due to all members and volunteers for their continued support, and to the Committee.

Thanks are also due to David Linington for his continued maintenance of the website and to Pam Ewing for providing workday refreshments.