

Minutes of the 23rd Annual General Meeting

The Friends of Bedgebury Pinetum

Midday, Sunday 15th November 2015

1	<p>Welcome:</p> <p>The Chairman, Malcolm Kerr (MK), opened the meeting and welcomed all the Friends. He also welcomed Patrick West (PW) of the FC.</p> <p>It was noted that a total of 20 members were in attendance, plus Katherine Jary (KJ) and Luke Wallace (LW).</p>
2	<p>Apologies:</p> <p>All the trustees were present with the exception of Keith Webber, Keith Brookbank and Michel Paine, all of whom sent their apologies.</p>
3	<p>Matters arising from the minutes of the 22nd AGM:</p> <p>During the 22nd AGM, the members considered an alteration to the charitable objectives. It was noted that the Charity Commission subsequently felt that the new objectives were narrower than the original objectives and did not permit the change. Legal advice has confirmed that the original activities of the charity are consistent with those agreed by the members. At the solicitors' suggestion, the revised statement of objectives agreed by the members is now being used as a statement of intent by the charity.</p>
4	<p>Minutes of the 22nd AGM:</p> <p>Both sets of the minutes from the 22nd AGM (originally held on November 11th 2014 and adjourned to 28th November 2014) were approved by the members in the meeting, and were then signed by MK.</p>
5	<p>Chairman's Report:</p> <p>MK presented his report on the activities of the charity in 2014/5 and to date (appended to these minutes).</p> <p>In his report, MK thanked the trustees who retired this year (Keith Noakes and Paul Jenks) and Rosemary Mayhew who would be retiring at this AGM, for their years of service to the charity. The business of trustee reappointment and retirement was deferred until later in the meeting.</p> <p>There were no questions from the members.</p>
6	<p>Forestry Commission Report:</p> <p>PW presented his report (appended to these minutes) on the use made of Friends grants in 2014/5. He also outlined some of the current and future FC and Friends-funded projects on site.</p> <p>PW thanked the Friends team and trustees for their support.</p> <p>Colin Snow asked PW whether he was Chris Reynold's replacement. PW explained that he was Dominic Robinson's replacement and that John Allen was now the site's Operations Manager.</p>

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	<p>Colin Snow asked whether the charity should in fact now be referred to as the Friends of Bedgebury (dropping Pinetum) because of the support provided by the charity to the whole site and not just the Pinetum. MK and KJ explained that support was provided to the whole site in order to meet the charity's objective of connecting people with trees through conservation, education and recreation. As members are now users of the whole site (and not just the Pinetum as in the past) it was appropriate that our grant funding be applied to the whole site in order to engage our whole member audience with trees.</p> <p>Colin Snow asked whether the wider forest area generated an income for the FC. PW replied that there was some commercial timber income generated.</p>
7	<p>Treasurer's Report:</p> <p>JG presented his report (appended to these minutes) on the charity's finances for 2014/5.</p> <p>The trustees then approved the 2014/5 financial statements by a unanimous vote of those present. MK then signed the trustee report and the balance sheet. The members then approved the 2014/5 financial statements for filing with the Charity Commission.</p> <p>Colin Snow expressed concern about the high cost of the sponsorship opportunities on offer. KJ explained the reasons for the changes and outlined the range of schemes now on offer and those planned for 2016. MK explained that the new schemes had been set up following research and advice received from Edinburgh Botanic Garden, Kew and Westonbirt.</p>
8	<p>Election of Trustees / Committee Members</p> <p>All existing trustees listed below offered themselves up for re-election with the exception of Rosemary Mayhew who offered her resignation by reason of retirement. The reappointment of the trustees listed was approved by the meeting.</p> <p>Malcolm Kerr (MK) – Chairman John Gordon (JG) – Treasurer Elspeth Hill (EH) Nick Pink (NP) Emma Reid (ER) Keith Webber (KW) Keith Brookbank (KB) Michael Paine (MP) Emily Goodall (EG) Mina McPhee (MM)</p>
10	<p>AOB</p> <p>Colin Snow asked whether the practice of holding the AGM with a summer BBQ would be reconsidered in the future. MK confirmed it would be considered.</p>

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Colin Snow asked whether any form of formal recognition for the work of Gerald Williams was being considered. MK confirmed it was. KJ confirmed that donations received in his memory this year (£2.5k) had been applied to the US seed-collecting expedition with the agreement and approval of Lindel Williams.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 12.50pm.

The members were then invited to hear Dan Luscombe and Luke Wallace talk about the FC's recent US seed-collecting expedition before heading out for a guided walk in the Pinetum with them both.

Signed.....

Dated.....

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