



Friends of Dubwath Silver Meadows

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MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING Held at Bassenthwaite Sailing Club on Wednesday 16th November 2011 at 7.00 pm.

The meeting was attended by 13 members.

1. **Apologies for absence:** Dianne Cannon, Mark Tilzey
2. **Minutes of the Annual General Meeting** held 15th November 2010, previously circulated, were agreed as a true record and signed off by the Chairperson.
3. **Matters arising:** There were no matters arising.
4. **Chairperson's Report**

The Chairperson gave an overview of the first year achievements at the reserve and gave thanks to all the friends and volunteers who have supported Dubwath Silver Meadows throughout the year:

March – There was a general tidying of the site with gravel removal from the entrance, pruning of growth and boardwalk sweeping.

April – The Celtic shelter turf roof was repaired.

Bike racks were fitted outside the reserve. Thanks to Keith Atkinson.

May – The Dawn Chorus was a huge success, thanks to all the experts who attended and to Barbara Petecki for providing an excellent breakfast.

Cumbria Amphibian and Reptile Group visited, a report is still awaited.

June – Celtic shelter wattle and daub was repaired, this required two work parties. Thanks to all volunteers for their hard work.

July – Threlkeld School made a visit to the site.

Willow weaving work party carried out repairs to both willow hides.

August – A Bat Evening was arranged which was immediately fully booked. Thanks to Sally Phillips for an interesting and informative evening.

September – A patch of invasive alder trees was removed. Thanks to Mark Tilzey for advice on this.

Donation boxes were made and gifted by Alistair Brewis, thanks were extended to Alistair.

Bird ringing and surveying has been ongoing throughout the year. Thanks were expressed to Neil Henderson and his colleagues. The bird ringing report will be made available on the website, at year end.

The bird feeding has been a success throughout the year. A new regime has been introduced to cut costs. A special thank you to all on the bird feeding rota for turning out in all weathers.

Future targets:

A new store for bird food, to be purchased, must be weatherproof and rodent proof.

A permanent trail on the boardwalk to enhance the experience for visitors. Information boards, possibly with images relief cut into wood to enable rubbings to be taken.

Species identification/interpretation boards at various points around the site to be explored.

A brown road sign for the reserve on the A66 trunk road and signs within the reserve.

Ecologist Mark Tilzey has agreed to lead two walks in May and August on the subject of 'Trees, flora and fauna of Silver Meadows'. Actual dates to be advised.

The provisional date for The Dawn Chorus is Sunday 6th May 2012. Experts to be contacted and date to be confirmed.

The Bat Evening will hopefully be combined with experts from the local Amphibian Society. Provisional date is set for Friday 3rd August 2012, to be confirmed.

The provision of an appropriate seating area for school/other large parties, possibly with cover for bad weather.

Our website continues to grow and will be enhanced by the addition of educational downloads and photographs. Ongoing updating of website.

Questions from the floor:

A problem last year with the cattle was reported, is there a telephone number for the tenant farmer if required? This has been addressed and a telephone number is now displayed on the entrance gate.

Is it possible to expand the pond to attract more wildlife? This to be discussed at a future Committee Meeting.

5. Treasurer's Report

A copy of the financial report is attached for information and is also available on the website to download.

Costs not on our accounts

Bird feeding: At present (latest information available to me, is as of the end of September 2011) we had £689.50 left. At this rate of use we should be ok until roughly this time next year.

Website hosting: Keswick Web Design was paid £472.50 upfront in November 2010 to host our website and register the Dubwath Silver Meadows domain. This is supposed to be for seven years.

Comment on account:

Our income was approximately £700 and we have spent about £170 during the year. We have earmarked roughly £200 of the £541.53 for a new container for bird feed. Insurance costs will need to be monitored as these are liable to be similar next year.

In future:

It will be noticed that our total income last year was roughly the cost of bird feed for the year. We will need to be careful to monitor bird feeding costs in the next year so we do not become fixed on raising money to feed birds!

Thought needs to be given by the Committee on the possibility of becoming a registered charity. This would give us the benefit of gaining gift aid on donations and exemption from paying VAT, however

we need to check this out as there are several hoops to jump through – the constitution may need some changes and it would mean accounts being checked by a professional person.

6. Election of Officers:

All the current Committee were willing to stand for re-election with the exception of Jill Damment who has resigned as Bird Feeding Co-ordinator.

Chairperson - Rick Petecki

Secretary - Sue Turner

Treasurer - Alastair Yates

Environment Agency Liaison Officer - Michelle Donoghue

Website Officer - Mike Turner

Education Officer - Dianne Cannon

Maintenance/Health & Safety Officers - Barbara Thomson/Glenys Pyke

Habitat Adviser - Mark Tilzey

Pat Ackred was co-opted onto the Committee as Fund Raising Co-ordinator.

Sue Turner has agreed to take over as Bird Feeding Co-ordinator.

All the above were nominated and seconded and in the absence of any other nominations were elected en bloc.

Any other business:

Mike was asked for an update on the website. Information was given on the most popular pages and hits on the website. These were 'How to find us' and the site map. Other popular pages are 'Flowers and Birds' and The History of Silver Meadows. Plans are ongoing to update the site and to continue this throughout the year.

Next AGM:

Wednesday 14th November 2012, 7.00 pm. Venue to be advised.

The meeting closed at 7.45 pm.

Treasurer's Report November 2011

Friends of Dubwath Silver Meadows

Summary of accounts for 2010 -2011

Income		Expenditure		Comment
Start balance:	£0.00			Account opened 18th Nov 2010.
Subscriptions	£170.00	Secretary expenses (includes some equipment)	£122.02	It has not proved possible to separate out some early donations / subscriptions.
Donations:	£105.00	Equipment expenses	£47.58	
Individual:	£75.00			
Embleton Parish Council	£100.00			Many thanks to these groups for their support.
Bassenthwaite Sailing Club	£100.00			
Maryport Natural History Society	£20.00			
Keswick Natural History Society	£20.00			
From Environment Agency:				
Monies for Insurance ^	£2,870.00	Insurance for first year	£343.64	
Monies for equipment	£120.40			
Interest on account	£0.73			
subtotals:	£3,581.13		£513.24	
		Carried forward to next year: *	£3,067.89	
Totals	£3,581.13		£3,581.13	

^This is supposed to cover Public Liability insurance for 7 years.

* £2526.36 of this is ring fenced for insurance costs.

Actually available: £541.53