

# Friends of Hopwas Wood



Issue Number 17

April 2016

## Annual General Meeting

The AGM will be held on **WEDNESDAY 20<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2016** commencing at **7.30 p.m.** at the Coton and Hopwas Social Club, School Lane, Hopwas. The meeting will elect the committee for the coming year and reports will be presented for the past year including an update of current activities affecting the Wood. It is important that there is a good attendance by Members so that views can be aired and the current working of the Friends discussed to ensure that the elected committee has a clear mandate for action.

In accordance with the Constitution, nominations for Members of the Committee should be submitted to the Secretary 72 hours before the meeting and supported by at least two Members and bear the signature of the person nominated indicating their willingness to stand.

**The meeting will start with a talk by a representative of the Ministry of Defence about their recent activities in the Wood and its future use. The business part of the meeting will then follow.**

### Agenda:

1. Welcome
2. Talk by representative of MoD
- Business part of the meeting**
3. Apologies
4. Minutes of previous AGM (See below)
5. Chairman`s Report
6. Treasurer`s Report
7. Election of Committee
8. Subscriptions
9. Any other business

The following are the minutes of last year's AGM:  
*Apologies received from Messrs. Widdas, Dead, Mattison, Barnes, Burchall, Kirk, Watkins, Handley, and Jackson.*  
*Present were R. Vanstone, L. Bushell, B. Stubbs and 24 members.*  
*Minutes of previous meeting, having been circulated, agreed*

and signed, approved by meeting 24-0. **Chairman's Report:** Thank you to Committee for all their hard work and to members for coming to the meeting. The Minerals Local Plan does not include Hopwas Woods, and we have monitored the Plan. At the end of 2014 the present owners applied to SCC to put the Wood into the Plan. We informed all members and the Tamworth Herald and the matter became a national issue and consequently the application was withdrawn. Lafarge will merge with Holcim (Swiss) becoming the biggest cement maker, but part of the firm will be sold off to an Irish firm, and part of that sold off is expected to be Hopwas Wood. Neighbourhood Plan: Wigginton and Hopwas Parish Council applied to Lichfield District Council to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan, to include a policy to protect Hopwas Wood as ancient woodland in perpetuity. This will be put to LDC and then to referendum, which to be carried will necessitate more than 50% of the vote, but will make protection slightly better. The membership is now 125 (as a result of the application of Lafarge/Tarmac) as the committee cannot progress without members. **Treasurers report:** Current status: £1845.49 in hand. The current committee stood down, as there were no nominations received, the current committee i.e. R. Vanstone, M. Handley, L. Bushell, B. Stubbs, T. Jackson, K. Anderton was re-elected by 24-0.

## Membership & Subscriptions

The membership and setting subscriptions for 2015-16 was discussed at the last AGM and it was agreed that an annual subscription of £5 should be paid by each Member.

The following is the current conditions as per the constitution regarding subscriptions:

*"Subscriptions shall be payable to give a true representation of the Membership. The Annual General Meeting shall determine the level of subscriptions and the date for payment for the next year. Notification of the subscription amount and the due date agreed at the AGM will be sent to each member. Any Member falling more than three months in arrears shall be excluded from membership subject to adjudication by the Executive Committee and notice of such action being given in advance to the defaulting Member. A Committee Member falling in default under this rule shall forfeit Committee status forthwith."*

A request for subscription payments was included in the September Newsletter. However some 36 members did not pay their subscription by the end of 2015 as requested. As we are bound by our constitution their membership has now lapsed. However we do value the support the Friends receive and understand that it is not unusual to forget to pay the subscription. Therefore at the last Committee meeting it was agreed that we should send this Newsletter to everyone that was a member as at September last year. If anyone has inadvertently forgotten their subscription payment we are happy to receive the same before the AGM in April and thank all of you that continue to be members.

One of the easiest ways of communicating with members is via e-mail therefore if you are on e-mail and have not already given us your address, then please send your email address to Martin Handley at [mhandley@aol.com](mailto:mhandley@aol.com).

### *Neighbourhood Plan*

As you know Wigginton and Hopwas Parish Council have been developing a Neighbourhood Plan for the parish, which will give local people more say on planning decisions and will have statutory weight if it is adopted. Importantly the Plan includes a policy for the protection of Hopwas Wood. The Plan was submitted to Lichfield District Council at the end of last year and has been examined by an independent assessor and found to be sound subject to various amendments. The Plan will be amended accordingly and then submitted to full Council for consideration prior to the carrying out of a referendum. If more than 50% of voters vote `yes` for the Plan to be adopted, it will become a statutory document for consideration when development is proposed within the parish.

### *Minerals Core Strategy*

As reported in the last Newsletter, Staffordshire County Councils' new Minerals Local Plan was consulted on last summer based on the following timetable:

#### **Minerals Local Plan Programme - August 2015**

Published final draft Plan for formal consultation	10 June to 31 July 2015
Present the Plan with/without modifications to Full Council	December 2015
Submit the Plan to the Secretary of State for examination	January 2016
Examination by Inspector	Spring 2016
Inspector's Report	Autumn 2016
Present the Plan to Full Council for adoption	Autumn/Winter 2016
Adopt the Plan	Autumn/Winter 2016

The Committee will continue to monitor the progress of the Local Plan particularly through the examination process.

### *Tarmac*

As you are aware, Tarmac, which was owned by Lafarge, have been bought by an Irish building company CRH. CRH is an international building materials group, employing c.93000 people at c.4000 operating locations in 37 countries worldwide i.e. BIG. This has a number of implications as we do not know what view CRH will have over the future of Hopwas Wood. We have been endeavoring to make contact with Tarmac.

### *Web Site*

As you are aware we have a web site with a domain name of [friendsofhopwaswood.co.uk](http://friendsofhopwaswood.co.uk). The site has a number of pages as follows: Home, About Us, History, News, Newsletters, Photos, Apply for Membership, and Constitution. The News page is a key part of the site as it provides details of activities as they occur. Please visit the site if you have not already done so.

### *History of the Wood*

We continue to find as much as we can of the history of the Wood so that we can keep the web site up-to-date. We try to find interesting historical facts about the Wood and in this respect we would be very grateful if anyone has interesting facts that we could include in the site. If so please contact the Chairman via e-mail.

### *Feedback*

It is hoped that this newsletter has been informative and a further newsletter will be published September 2016. The Committee would welcome any comments and views from Members and these can be forwarded to any Committee Member.

### *Current Committee Members*

Chairman: Ray Vanstone([rayvanstone@btinternet.com](mailto:rayvanstone@btinternet.com))  
 Vice Chairman: Lorna Bushell  
 Secretary: Barbara Stubbs  
 Treasurer: Martin Handley  
 Tom Jackson  
 Keith Anderton