

Friends of Hopwas Wood

Issue Number 13

April 2014

Annual General Meeting 10th Anniversary

Unfortunately it has not been possible to arrange the Annual General Meeting in April. The AGM is now due to be held on **WEDNESDAY 14th MAY 2014** commencing at **8.00 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. As mentioned above it is 10 years since the Friends of Hopwas Wood was formed and it is hoped that the Friends will go on for another 10 years providing a watching brief over the Woods and protecting it from development for the benefit of future generations.

Following the business part of the meeting there will be a talk by Derek Crawley from the Staffordshire Mammal Group who was our first speaker back in 2006.

Committee Activities

The Committee has met on three occasions in the last year to discuss matters relating to the Wood. We welcomed Keith Anderton onto the Committee and the main matters discussed have been membership, the notice board, the thinning works carried out by Tarmac Lafarge and the pending thinning works by the Ministry of Defence (MoD), the Neighbourhood Plan and the forthcoming Minerals Local Plan consultation. As reported last year Tarmac are now part of the Lafarge company and whilst this will have no impact on the ongoing management of the woodland we are conscious of the pending Minerals Local Plan and the approach the company will take to projected sand and gravel requirements and the reserves needed to meet demand. If anyone has any concerns or queries, they should contact Nick Atkins, Estates Manager. T.01902382083;M.07702635323;Email.Nick.Atkins@tarmac.co.uk

Minerals Local Plan

Staffordshire County Council considered a report into the preparation of a new Minerals Local Plan last year and the new Plan, when adopted, will replace their current plan. The new Plan will set out the vision, objectives and spatial strategy for future mineral related development within Staffordshire over the next 15 years.

Work on a replacement Minerals Local Plan started in 2005 but was deferred in 2009 to allow progress to be made in preparing the Joint Waste Local Plan. The Waste Local Plan has now been adopted and work is in progress on preparing a new Minerals Local Plan.

Current Programme	
Consult on Draft Plan	March/April 2014
Consult on Proposed Submission Draft Plan	November/December 2014
Submit Plan for examination to the Secretary of State	March 2015
Adopt the Plan	March 2016

This will be discussed at the AGM but if you want to read the recent report on the matter please visit <http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/environment/planning/policy/mineralscorestrategy/home.aspx>

Neighbourhood Plan

In February last year the Wigginton and Hopwas Parish Council applied to Lichfield District Council requesting the Parish of Wigginton and Hopwas be designated a Neighbourhood Area for the purposes of producing a Neighbourhood Plan. Neighbourhood Plans can be used to protect local amenities such as Hopwas Wood, decide where local housing and other development should go and can influence how traffic and recreation is managed. Following formal designation a steering group has been formed and the Friends Chairman is currently a member of the group. To date there has been two public consultation meetings and the steering group has been looking at the issues raised and started work on producing a draft Plan. Once the

Plan has been prepared it will need to be submitted to Lichfield District Council for examination and if accepted it will be subject of a referendum and if more than 50% vote `Yes` the Plan will be adopted. If you have any queries regarding the Plan please contact the Chairman.

Wild about Tamworth

Wild about Tamworth is a joint initiative between Staffordshire Wildlife Trust and Tamworth Borough Council, involving local people in improving the wild spaces of Tamworth for both people and wildlife. An annual "Wild about Tamworth" event is held every summer in the Castle Grounds which the Friends have attended for a number of years. While we are not aware of the date for the event this year we will be having a stall to promote our activities. If you are interested in getting involved please let the Committee know.



Membership & Subscriptions

Following the request for the payment of subscriptions by the end of December 2013 there were a number of members who had not paid their subscription and in accordance with the Constitution which was amended at the last AGM those non payers have been removed from the membership list. The membership currently stands at 70 a reduction of 31 from last year's membership. The membership and setting subscriptions for this year will be discussed at the AGM. As the membership is declining a letter is being distributed to households in Hopwas in the hope that that some will see the benefit of supporting the Friends.

Web Site

As you are aware our web site with the domain name of friendsofhopwaswood.co.uk has been running for a year and has resulted in us gaining new members. 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. If you have not looked at the site yet please do and let the Committee know what you think at the AGM.

The Committee are conscious of the fact that not everyone has direct access to a computer but that a

number of Members do have e-mail addresses and it would be helpful if information could be sent direct to members via e-mail so if you have an e-mail address please pass it onto the Treasurer Martin Handley (mhandley1@aol.com)



Feedback

It is hoped that this newsletter has been informative and a further newsletter will be published in the summer. 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 ([Tel:07773971077](tel:07773971077) or rayvanstone@btinternet.com)

Vice Chairman: Lorna Bushell

Secretary: Barbara Stubbs

Treasurer: Martin Handley (mhandley1@aol.com)

Tom Jackson

Keith Anderton

