

Minutes of HFRG AGM held in Hursley Clubhouse 10:30 2nd February 2025

Attendees

Pam, PeterN, MikeH, DaveS, PaulH, PaulC, SueR, SueL, Ginnie, Eric, Colette, Marina,

Apologies for Absence

Glynn, Tina, SimonC, SueJ, PaulS

Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 10th February 2024 had been circulated prior to the meeting.

Matters Arising from Last Meeting

MikeH pointed out that he had not changed his surname.

An Andonstar microscope had been purchased as part of the legacy from John Rose and had been used at several meetings and exhibitions.

We have bought a few FSC leaflets to see how useful they are.

Membership emails are now going to Dave.

“Fungus of the Month” is still a WIP but Marina hope to get things moving soon.

Flexible permits for FE sites are still a WIP.

We still don't have a Group Dropbox.

Election of Officers

The current office holders were re-elected without objection:

Treasurer: DaveS

Chairperson/BMS Liaison/ Recorder: Eric

Program organisers: Eric, Tina

Committee Members; Paul

Summary of 2024 Activities

Eric gave a report on the 2024 activities, which is attached

Finances

Dave presented the accounts which are attached.

Peter pointed out that the room hire costs looked high and Eric suggested that the booking fees for the BMS GLM and NFBF conference may have been included. Dave and Eric to investigate and report back.

Editors Note: The suggestion above turned out to be correct and updated accounts were distributed.

Dave reported that Lloyds are about to introduce a fee of £4.25/month. We have looked at alternatives and, while Barclays still offer what looks like a similar account FoC, there is no guarantee that won't introduce one soon (or at least once a sufficient number of Lloyds customers have moved over!). We therefore fear that there is little option but to just cough up.

Even so, there are no plans to change the charges of £10 for individual and £12 for family membership. As Peter asked for clarification regarding their span, membership runs from January-December but people joining in November/December are credited with the following year's membership. One effect of this flexibility is that quoting exact membership numbers is more difficult but we are currently at just under 40.

Peter asked whether ex-, non- or lapsed members should still be on the distribution list and the general opinion was that being there may encourage them to re-join.

However, there was consensus that regular survey attendees should be asked to join.

SueR asked about the status of "Field Mycology" and Eric explained that his understanding was that it would become an on-line offering available FoC to members for 12 months after publication and open-access after that. There were also plans to allow people to pay for printed copies.

Marina asked about the requirements to join the BMS.

We were paid £150 for our work at Hilliers and we received £40 for a Zoom talk Eric gave to the BNSS.

We have received an annual grant of up to £1,500 to cover sequencing costs of NF samples but the amount may be adjusted based on usage.

HFRG currently have funds to cover sequencing costs from the rest of the county but will expect the BMS or the groups involved to cover the costs of other samples.

The PCR costs are currently being covered by donations from other groups.

Communication

Phil has done a great job of maintaining and updating the website – but he is in Tasmania and we should look for a more local succession plan. Marina has offered to help but the supplier's policy of restricting access to a single userID does not help in the least.

What we SHOULD do is try to move to a new platform but this is not something Phil feels that he has the bandwidth to do.

To add to the workload, the dire warnings that come up on some browsers when anyone tries to access “non-secure” (http:) sites like ours may be putting off visitors and it was agreed that we (Phil, again :-(should look at what we would need to do to add SSL.

It was suggested that having the BMS offer to host group webpages could be very useful service.

There is perceived to be a general public interest in Fungi” and, given the issues above and many people's focus on social-media, it was thought that using Facebook more might be a way to engage more potential members.

Potential threads included advertising events, posting trip reports and linking to “snippets” from the news, although, as Peter pointed out, many of these are behind paywalls or may contain information we would rather not endorse.

Marina will look at what can be done.

Marina also suggested that we could supplement our current technical library with books aimed at beginners and particularly children.

...and some more hand-lenses for use on public walks might not be a bad idea but we do need someone to make sure we get them back at the end!

Recording

Pam has worked very hard (again) to record what was identified in the field and then entering them into FRDBI and would really like some help. There was a discussion about alternatives, including audio recording but whatever is used needs to allow entry into FRDBI.

The point was made that an effort was made to photograph all specimens worth collecting, which some care being taken to help cross-reference the photographs with the collection...

2025 Programme

People were requested to forward details of any new sites which might be worth considering, keeping in mind that we need to know where we could park and who to contact to arrange permissions.

It would also be helpful if we can have as much flexibility as possible so we can include some dates in the program with “Location TBD”.

Russ is may still be hoping to talk to FE about making surveying in the Forest more flexible and there is plenty of Franchises to look at so we really need places further north.

We hope to run the Reptile Centre event the end of October – ie the beginning of half-term.

Eric has contacted Hilliers but not had a reply.

We have been invited to join the Nature Festival at Gilbert White House on 11th May. It would be nice to join in but may not want to have to hump the whole exhibition across their haha.

Marina suggested creating a “minimal” offering that was more portable.

AOB

SueR brought along a spare monocular microscope that may be of interest to someone and she will bring it to the first microscope workshop on the 8th.

SueR reminded people about ordering embroidered clothing.

The meeting closed at 12:15..