



From the Minutes of the AGM of the Friends of Leap Valley Meeting 23rd Jan 2023 held at Marys

Those present were: Mary Lewis, Angie Flack, Pete Statham, Denis Brown, Ian Knight, Leonie Wilkinson and Fred Ballard.

Apologies from: Andrew Jordan, Sarah Pearce, Louise Davis, Ann Beven, Mike Bettel, Isobella Browne, Peter Davey, Sarah Beetham.

AGM

Election of Committee

Existing committee were all re elected.

Chair:	Mary.
Secretary:	Angie.
Treasurer:	Andrew.
Workday Manager:	Pete.

Finance Report

Our Treasurer informs us that to date we have £159.23 in our account.

Review of Constitution and Volunteer Agreements and Risk Assessments

The volunteer agreement is due to be reviewed in the Spring. There is an ongoing problem being looked into at SGC that the Insurance only covers 16 to 80 year olds. This is of concern for our ageing workforce.

Risk assessments are thorough and routinely carried out.

First aid box is regularly checked and is all up to date.

Two members have attended an Outdoor First Aid Course in the last 6 months.

WORKDAY UPDATES

Activities over the last few months to 16/01/23

Involvement in upgrading of the wetland area. Preparing site, attending site meetings, liaising with SGC officers etc.

Repair and resiting of bug hotels.

Bramble management and general brush cutter work.

Raise crowns, weed and maintain specimen trees in the valley.

Sweep paths to remove leaves and debris.

Plant two donated apple trees in the orchard. No space for any more in the orchard.

Plant two trees in the valley part funded by a SGC grant. A *Davidia involucrata* (Handkerchief Tree) and an *Amelanchier canadensis*.

Repairing our previously laid hedge along the edge of the wetland with trimming to thicken up and dead hedge to fill in.

Future activities over the next few months

Repair, maintain and create hedges with or without Hedgerow Heroes input. This organisation showed interest in using the valley for hedgerow activity but has not to date returned.

Move and or plant out saplings in the nursery areas. Weed nursery areas.

Weed and maintain newly planted trees. Pruning where necessary.

Brushcutter and hedge trimming activity.

Remove litter and rubbish generally.

Ensure stream flows reasonably.

Lift, split and replant snowdrops.

Involvement in future wetland work.

Committee and users of the valley show interest in there being more seats. This will be reviewed at a later date with a view to funding.

SGC Wetland Project

The activity at the end of last year in the wetland is paying off in as much as the irrigated trenches are indeed bringing in more water at flood times into the wetland. The new bund is helping to retain this water for longer periods. There is still more work to be done and apparently we are awaiting the Environment Agency for the go ahead with this.

The fence that was taken down for the digger to enter the wetland needs replacing and the path has also suffered damage. The fence on the south side of the stone

bridge also needs attention as the water at flood times has eroded the bank and the fence needs extending. Revetments to the path at the bridge are needed. SGC says this is all in hand!

It will be interesting to see how the plants in the new bund grow in the spring. We still think Dutch drains are the answer.

South Glos Friends Forum Meeting

Mary and Angie attended this meeting held at the Bean Tree Cafe in Page Park. A very busy evening had been arranged with four SGC officers giving comprehensive talks on projects including Hedgehogs, Biodiversity, Climate Change, Nature Emergency and Community Engagement.

Three of us attended the SGC thankyou to volunteers evening at the end of last year at Winterbourne Medieval Barn. There were very interesting speakers, audience participation and a wonderful buffet.

Bird Box Survey

All twelve boxes had nests. The two nearest the wetland contained mud too. It was suggested at the meeting that Leopard slugs may have been responsible. Two boxes are getting old. We have agreed to maintain just ten of the twelve boxes in the future. We will try to ensure that some boxes can be viewed from seats.

Tree Survey

Ian kindly maintains the tree survey for the valley and is able to update this when necessary. It has been able to be viewed on our website.

SGC has a good Plotter via their website via the Tree Planting Programme. Due to Ash dieback the council (using a ratio of two trees planted to every one taken out) have and are continuing to plant many more trees in the area. We see there is a plan to plant an Oak, Sycamore, Hornbeam and a Black Walnut in the valley near the children's play area.

Website

Our Website hosted by Simple site has been migrated to another site which we feel is not fit for our purpose. Ian has very kindly said he will help us set up a new site and is working on that for us.

Wildlife news

Very healthy foxes have been seen in the valley and surrounding gardens. There was an otter seen up at Charnhill, the originating source of our Leap Stream, eating fish from ponds! The only way it could have travelled there is up the stream flowing through our valley. When we get a new Wildlife camera we will deploy it again to try for evidence.

The Egret is regularly seen as is usual in the winter months.

A flock of Redwings was seen early in December. Mistle thrushes have also been seen around the area. A very large flock of Goldfinches was seen too. Rats are in gardens backing onto the valley but not witnessed in the valley itself.

It is National Hedgehog day Feb 2nd. Then the week of May 1st to 7th SGC is holding Hedgehog awareness week. There will be more info on that nearer the time but we hope to engage the local community to encourage them to have holes cut in the bottom of fences so the hogs have more food opportunities.

Date of next meeting

In May but the date is yet to be set.