

Minutes of the 2nd Annual General Meeting of Suffolk Tree Warden Network

Held at The Community Hall Ufford, Sunday 28th April 2019

The meeting commenced at 1.30pm chaired by Frances Jannaway, Chairman of the Suffolk Tree Warden Network.

1. Apologies for Absence

John Ibbeston, Paul Sutton, Martin Cripps, Maggie Grenham, Barry Earthy, Jeremy Quinlan, Lindsay Dann, Nick Eade, Anders Linder, Christine Smith.

2. Minutes of The 1st Annual General Meeting held on 14th April 2018 at The Red Feather Club, Denham

A summary of these was read out by Peter Holborn, Secretary. A proposal to approve these minutes was put forward by Alistair Graham-Kerr and seconded by Rosemary Jones, and was carried without objection. The minutes were duly signed by the acting chair, Frances Jannaway.

3. Chair's Report

Thank you Peter for reading a summary of the minutes of our first AGM. This sets the scene but is now history. Since then, the small but dedicated STWN committee have been building on the undoubted success of last year's celebratory Spring Forum & AGM at the Red Arrow Club & Redlingfield Wood.

There have been a number of themes which members of the committee have been discussing and making decisions about at the 6 meetings held during the year.

Identifying and communicating with Tree Wardens effectively – we have developed a database to enable us to keep an up-to-date list of tree wardens in each parish. It is stored online so that members of the committee can easily access it to contact tree wardens.

Richard and Jeannie have worked hard to get this right and make sure it is in line with with the new General Data Protection Regulations.

Attracting new Tree Wardens

There are over 500 parishes in Suffolk. STWN still has the aim of having a TW in each town/parish or group of small parishes.

Many STWs have been TWs for a long time and are now stepping down – we need younger people to take their place.

The current number of TWs on the STWN database is more than 170. The number of TWs varies with area (see map). There are about 120 TWs in Mid Suffolk and Babergh, 42 in East Suffolk and 12 in West Suffolk. Not all of them are active and there may still be some who we are not in contact with.

Over the last year, several members of the committee have been working on a leaflet/information sheet to send to parish councils to encourage them to appoint a TW. This had some success with several parishes appointing new TWs in East, West and Mid Suffolk. Judy Clements one of the coordinators of the East Suffolk TW group sent an email to all parish clerks in East Suffolk last year. The response was good. The number of Tw's registered with STWN went up from 23 to 42.

We gained two new, young Tw's when they came to the tree planting event at Wickhambrook in November last year.

There is still a lot to do.

We probably need to use Social media to attract young people to be Tw's – but we lack people with the time and skills to do this. Any offers would be gratefully received.

The 6 District Councils in Suffolk are merging into 3 this year: East, Babergh/Mid and West, with the resultant cut backs. Babergh/Mid Suffolk DCs are the only ones who are members of The Tree Council. Recently, Suffolk County Council has become a member of The Tree Council - thanks to Gary Battell for organising this.

Public Liability Insurance

This became a huge problem when we realised that the STWN committee was not covered by insurance if any of us wanted to hold a training event. Thanks go to Jeannie for helping sort out this can of worms - there is a lot of misinformation out there.

Members of the committee are now covered to hold events. Tw's who carry out activities such as tree planting are NOT covered unless their parish council has cover for this, some do but many don't. You need to check with your parish council before doing tree work especially if you are working in a place with public access.

Possibility of cover through Zurich and The Conservation Volunteers (free membership this year) but there will be conditions attached. We will look into this.

Main events/training workshops

STWN has organised and/or helped organise 5 workshops and training days in 2018:

- **Gallowsfield Wood, Haughley** – tree ID and woodland management day – 15 July. Organised by Gary Battell and Peter Holborn. There were more than 30 Tw's from all over Suffolk.
- **Tree ID + TW role workshop, Thornham Magna** – 16 September lead by FJ and RJ. 20 Tw's.
- **Tree seed collecting** – Weybread, 23 September organised by TW Sally Mittuch.
- **Greg's tree planting at Peacocks Farm, Wickhambrook**, West Suffolk, 24 November. Tree Council x 3 + SCC x 1 + Woodland Trust x 3 + STWN – 8 STW's plus 2 new Tw's Stowmarket + local people x 7 with 4 children. Celebrated the Charter for Trees and People and centenary of end of WWI. Trees came from Woodland Trust's More Woods scheme partly subsidised by them. Planted over 800 trees in one day.
- **Woodland Trust free trees** to Tw's and landowners/farmers – December 2018. Gary, Edwin, Frances and Richard Jannaway made up packs and delivered trees to Tw's. Next year need to have more TW volunteers involved.

Suffolk Tree Wardens website

The website is managed by Richard Jannaway. Most of the site is accessible to anybody and is intended to promote trees and tree wardens. It needs new stories and updating

regularly to make it a valuable resource. Use the site to share your activities and projects and encourage TW's in other parishes.

There is also a members area with information specifically for TWs. You need to register to get access to this where you will find information such as links and phone numbers for 'Who to contact about Trees'.

Working with other organisations

Working together for trees, landscapes and communities is our mantra.

Gary Battell has again been instrumental in introducing me and thereby promoting STWN to a wide variety of contacts including **Suffolk County Council** – Matt Hullis for external funding, **Woodland Trust** – Edwin Van Ek – free trees, **Tree & Landscape Officers Group** (Norfolk & Suffolk) – contact with Tree/Landscape Officers, **Barcham Tree Nursery** (Ely) – possible event venue; **Small Woods Association** may well organise training for Tw's in collaboration with the Tree Council. I have also been in contact with Sue Hooton – chief ecologist (Essex and formerly Suffolk CC) and county recorder Black Poplars and Martin Sanford at SBIS: This last contact has resulted with Gary's and Nick Newton's help that the missing Hedgerow Surveys have now been retrieved.

Tree Council National Tree Warden Coordinators conference – Birmingham, 28 June 2018 – FJ gave presentation about STWN. As a result of the conference the Tree Council has set up a Pilot TW advisory group – East Anglia representative is John Fleetwood - Broadlands network, Norfolk.

Funding

So far funding has not been an issue for STWN, thanks to Gary Battell (Woodland Advisor SCC) who has arranged for significant SCC grants to be made over to us. John Russell will tell you all about this in his Treasurer's Report. This has meant we have been able to purchase tree planting tools, pay for website hosting, banners and other material to promote STWN, put on training events and workshops, etc.

STWN committee – currently has 8 members with Gary Battell as invited non-executive advisor.

Thanks go to the executive committee whose support and enthusiasm has been essential

- Peter Holborn - founding member, secretary and area coordinator for taking minutes of meetings, his vast experience and knowledge. Unfortunately Peter is stepping down from the committee and area coordinator after this AGM. He has assured me he will still help with training and other events STWN may put on in future.
- John Russell – Treasurer – for managing our accounts and for giving common sense advice
- Jeannie Buckingham for her unstinting work on GDPR, giving practical advice, thinking out of the box and her enthusiasm for trees and tree wardens.
- Richard Jannaway – for managing the website, helping tree wardens with IT problems and making the STW database and for supporting me.
- John Ibbetson – for providing sensible no nonsense advice and for making the name badges. Sadly he can't be with us today as he is ill
- Steven Phipps for his enthusiasm and encouragement
- Mike Smith for his practical knowledge and experience of tree work

- Brian Such for working with his local primary school and getting them involved with trees. Brian came on the committee at the 2018 AGM but resigned last year due to pressure of work.
- Gary Battell – whose unswerving support and encouragement has been vitally important to me personally and to the continued development and success of STWN.

So we would like at least two new Committee members and one area coordinator.

Future

We aim to up the profile of STWN with other organisations, local authorities and parish councils by supporting STWs and putting on several training events each year. To achieve this aim, STWN needs to work together with other bodies and organisations. We have already started the process of ‘working together for trees, landscapes and communities’.

I hope we have your support and help in achieving this aim.

4. Treasurers report

John Russell presented the Annual Accounts which showed the STWN started the year with £2,130.30 and finished with a balance carried forward at 31.03.19 of £1,340.73. A further grant of £4,000 has come from Suffolk County Council since these accounts were closed to give a current balance of £5,340.73. The Accounts were approved by the meeting, proposed by Colin Hawes, seconded by Christine Fisher.

5. Election of Members of the Executive Committee

The following nominations were put to the meeting and were **ELECTED** as follows:

Chairman: Frances Jannaway, proposed John Russell, seconded Rosemary Jones

Secretary: no nominations

Treasurer: John Russell: proposed Terry Peake, seconded David Payne.

The following were elected on bloc by the meeting: Richard Jannaway, Steven Phipps, Jeannie Buckingham, John Ibbetson, Mike Smith following nomination by Colin Hawes and seconded by William Cook.

Two (2) new Committee Members were elected, Simon Ambrose and Jeanna McCarthy, proposed by Alistair Graham-Kerr, and seconded by Jeannie Buckingham.

Signed..... Date.....