



Friends of Combe Valley
Combe Valley Countryside Park
Café & Discovery Centre
Freshfields, Bexhill,
East Sussex, TN38 8FB
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Please reply to William Ackroyd
501 Bexhill Road
St Leonards on Sea TN38 8AT

Minutes of Annual General Meeting held on December 6 2022

Present:

Trustees: Pete Clarke, William Ackroyd, Chris Dadswell, Will Kemp, Emma Ramsden, Cliff Willard, Jay Brewerton, Virginia Vilela, Elise Liversedge, Karl Beaney

Speakers: Pete Hunnisett, Annie Brown

Members and invitees: Julie Willard, Heide Roberts, Hazel Timpe, Shelley Pletsch, Lindsay Lycett, Evelyn Murray

1. Welcome and introductions – by Pete Clarke
2. Apologies: Stevie Collins, David Stevenson, Virginia Pullan, Tony Collins
3. The minutes of the AGM of December 8 2021: Proposed Chris, Seconded by Cliff - approved.
4. Annual Report: This had been circulated in advance.
 - (a) Pete introduced the Annual Report, mentioning in particular the container and the extensive work fitting it out, so that it is now ready as a tool store and workshop for FCV and Groundworks; the conservation work in the park, clearing paths and litter picks; the flower meadow, all involving working with Groundworks
 - (b) On events reference was made to the Queens Jubilee, which Julie reported was a lovely day with many local families coming who were new to the park, also the walks led by Pete Hunnisett which were popular and the Great Big Green Event in September
 - (c) Emma talked about and the work she is doing through Groundwork and FCV: the Nature Detectives project had 8 events, with more planned for the current year, involving 163 children, 93 adults. Plus outreach work with local schools, involving 335 children, 40 adults.
 - (d) Cliff noted the involvement of local scout and cub groups with FCV, including carrying out conservation work together. A local group with mental health issues came to make bird boxes
 - (e) Pete noted that the wardens had clocked up around 1000 hours during the year, and the contribution by volunteers for all the work of FCV was noted.

The adoption of the report was proposed by Julie, Seconded by Chris, accepted unanimously.

Friends of Combe Valley is a Registered (in England) Charity Number: 1163581

5. Report on finances with the annual accounts to September 30 2022 by William:

The final report following the independent examination by Lorraine Brown of Rother Voluntary Action had been circulated:

Restricted funds	£8,273
Cash funds	£1,493
	Total £9,766
Equipment	£10,932
Creditors (CIC)	£2,031
Liabilities (CIC)	£48

The adoption of the report was proposed by Julie, Seconded by Chris, accepted unanimously.

6. Election of trustees

Pete Clarke's term as president had come to an end: he offered himself for re-election and had been proposed. He was elected unanimously.

Karl Beaney and Will Kemp had completed their terms on the Board of Trustees and had been proposed for re-election

There being no other candidates it was proposed that both should be elected en bloc and they were elected unanimously.

7. Talk by Annie Brown, consultant contracted by Groundwork under the Green Recovery Fund, until March 2023; the two maps to which she referred are annexed.

- (a) Her task is to create a long term strategy with a collaborative approach.
- (b) She had been working to understand ownership, as well as plotting different habitats and new developments on the borders of the park.
- (c) Carbon credit parking, with more usage putting pressure on woodland. The government was providing funding to set this up and manage. The main focus was on Coombe Woods.
- (d) Proposals for new pond to support great crested newts. Discussions with landowners to enhance bio-diversity. Improved management of Filsham Reedbed.
- (e) For the lower tier recreation, it is proposed to create a wetland reed bed, which would form a link between Filsham Reedbed and the Glyne Gap marshes, improving flood retention, but developing the lower tier so that it is accessible for the public, with islands and paths, plus a boardwalk along the side of the Gorringe Stream, useable for bicycles as well as wheel chairs, and linking to Lewis Avenue and the old tramway path to Glyne Gap.
- (f) For the activity area, the recreation grounds either side of Fieldway: ideas for exercise trails, using natural materials and very simple. E.g. a mile a day trail, small boot camps (push ups etc), an exercise area for dogs, tree planting along the sides, a picnic area with

the possibility of a pop up cafe by the children's play area. An application has been made to Biffa for funding some of this.

- (g) The design for the new signs for the entrances to the park is nearly complete and hopefully the new signs will be ready in the New Year for FCV to install.
 - (h) For the Discovery Centre proposals for decorating the exterior and developing a scheme for a communal garden – taking in the mound and all round the Centre as an overall plan up to the ditches to the east and south of the centre.
 - (i) All ideas are welcome and there will be further discussions in 2023 about re-wilding round the grounds
8. Talk by Pete Hunnisett on flora and fauna he has observed in the Park in 2022: a list of the specimens is annexed.
 9. Future plans: Julie has drafted an events diary for the first 6 months of 2023 which is being finalised and will be circulated. Particular ideas for the year are:
 - (a) Craft evenings
 - (b) Photography project
 - (c) Amsterdam walk and talk in March
 - (d) Games night
 - (e) Coastal Walk on Sunday February 26 from 10 to 12.3 for the local Refugee community
 10. After thanks to the speakers and participants the meeting was closed

The meeting closed at 20h

Minutes approved

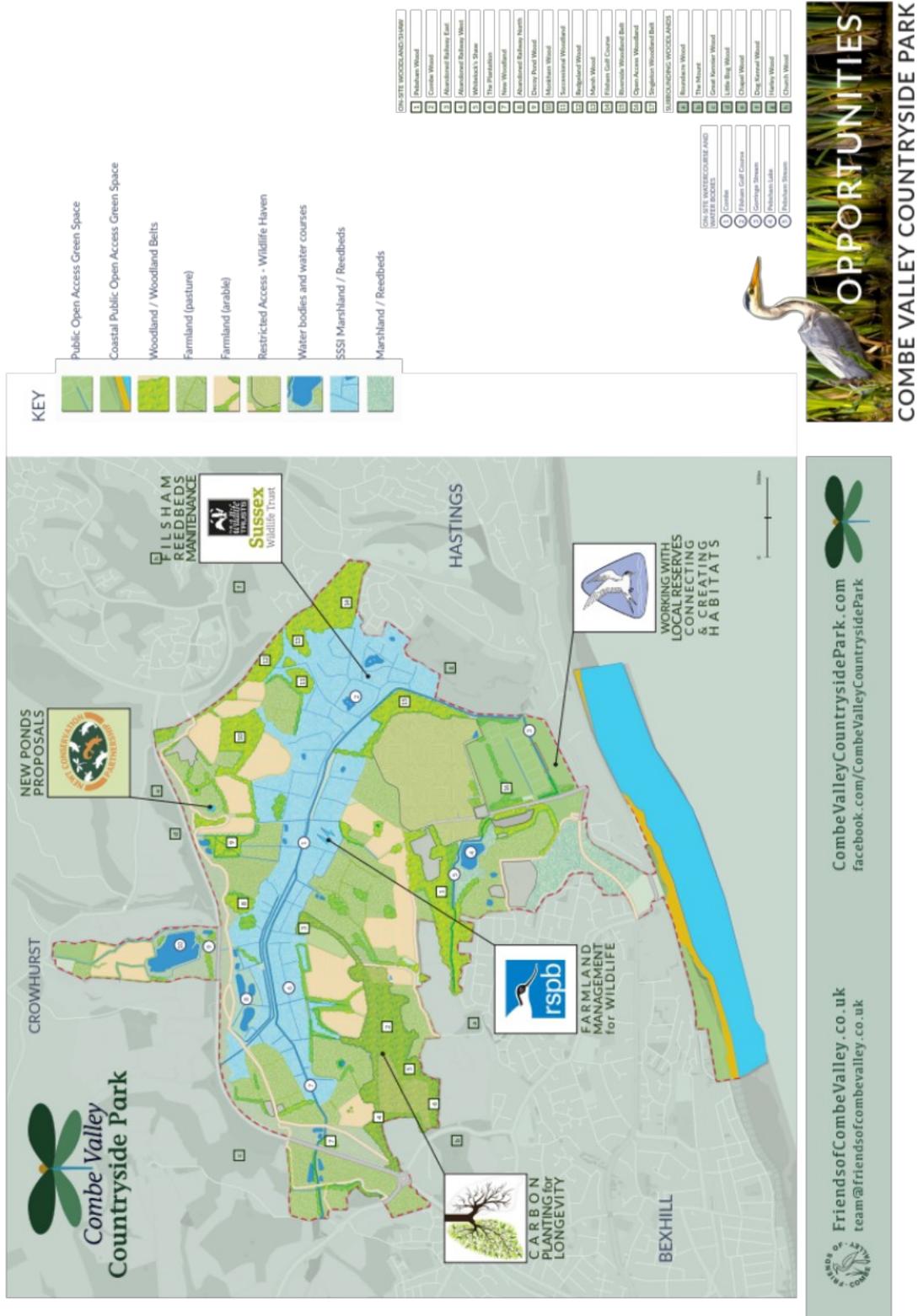
signed

Pete Clarke Chair

minutes prepared by William Ackroyd using notes taken by Virginia Vilela

Annex Maps from Annie Brown

Ideas for the whole park



Annex Maps from Annie Brown

Ideas for the Recreation Grounds at Freshfields



Annex – Notes of sightings by Pete Hunnisett

- Annex – Notes of sightings by Pete Hunnisett
- Roe deer, on side of the flood meadows, not common in this area
- Scarlet elf cup fungi, along the old railway line, grows on rotted wood and moss
- Wigeon and pintail – have a lot of wigeon in winter, pintails are rarer
- Black tailed godwit, he had never seen in the valley before, they are usually found in muddy estuaries
- Town hall clock: very small and he had not noticed them before, they have a distinctive 5 faced flower head, with four sides and one on top, looking like a town hall clock tower. Found along the old railway track
- American Mink: sometimes seen near three bridges, this one was on the edge of Filsham reed bed
- Lesser sea spurrey found on edge of salt marshes: a patch on little Galley Hill cliffs
- Hairy dragonfly, a rarer dragonfly, named because of the hairy thorax. The edge of the dragonfly wing (and other flying insects) is stiffer than the rest of the wing, giving the wing greater structural support and enabling it to fly 20% faster
- Marbled white butterfly, not normally seen in the valley but seen twice this year.
- White admiral – a rarity for the area
- Javelin wasp which does not sting: it is parasitic with a long thin abdomen used to lay eggs in other wasp nests
- 13 spot ladybird; rare. Ladybirds have varying numbers of spots, 7 is the commonest
- Fen raft spider: first sighting in the area, it is found in Pevensey
- Green Sandpiper: the number has increased in the last two years
- Willow emerald damsel fly: there are a number of different damsel flies in the area, this one only appeared in the last 5 or 6 years. It has a long thin abdomen and does not fold its wings along the abdomen unlike most damsel flies
- Red eyed ormyrid wasp: it lays its eggs in a gall, itself a parasite and then the wasp larvae feeds on the gall as it develops
- Wall brown butterfly: first sighting in the valley common on the Downs
- Clouded yellow butterfly: not rare but only appears as adults.
- Hooper swan: rarer than the mute swan and more common in the north, they migrate from Iceland