Alnwick Area Friends of the Earth

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting on Wednesday 6 April 2022

Present: Brycchan Carey, Kaitlyn Burns, Ruth Hawkins, Martin Swinbank, Gillian Maude, Cathy Crowther, Eve Reverchon, Terry Smith, Lisa Bellamy, Mike Powell, Sue Patience, Elliot Smith.

Apologies: Anne Gladstone, Sheila Pearson, Liz Anderson, Angela Ramsey, Karen Swinbank, Julia Lyford

Minutes of last year's meeting – Accepted

Review of the 2021/ 2022 year and Friends of the Earth Achievements: We have discussed the achievements of Friends of the Earth during the previous year, how these have been received and what improvements could be made.

- **COP 26/ WAWW**: Friends of the Earth have been actively involved in COP 26 Glasgow events as well as the Alnwick What a Wonderful World Festival. Three walking groups to Glasgow were supported including Spanish walkers (Marcha a Glasgow) supported and entertained.
- **Stalls:** We had two stalls in the Alnwick Marketplace and attended a Berwick and the Borders Climate Action Group Walk.
- **Letters Campaign:** We constructed a letters campaign to Berwick MP Anne Marie Trevelyan about the proposed new Cumbrian coal mine, plastics, fuel poverty, the proposed new gas pipeline for Mozambique. Also climate justice, the IPCC report, COP 26 and about the issue of climate refugees. We met with Anne Marie Trevelyan about the proposed coal mine at Cumbria.
- **What a Wonderful World Event:** FOE contributed to this festival held the day before COP which included an activity day, music, speakers, a conversation with AMT via videolink. It also included a display about COP26 and a Live for the Planet leaflet.

  Eliot Smith LIFE dance. We supported Eliot Smith LIFE dance; a contemporary dance performance highlighting the importance of climate change.

  Links with other climate action networks- We linked up with and supported other climate action network events in the region.

- **A Stall at Alnwick Castle Green Week:** FOE contributed to this event by having a stall on the day to talk about green issues.
- **Lobbying AMT about overflowing sewerage:** FOE wrote about this- sometimes we received a response but sometimes not. Kaitlyn Burns spoke about the value of public pressure on government.
- **FOE regularly attend meetings of the NCC Climate Action Plan Steering Group:** FOE's point of view here is that these meetings are mixed in terms of achievement and often limited by central government. But it is positive that the Leader of the Council, Cllr Glen Sanderson, takes the chair.
- **FOE planted many hundreds of tree saplings.** Limitations with this have been finding land and also the future management of the trees. We have and can continue to use this as a tool to talk about trees.
- **Maintaining 'The Oaks' Flower Bed.** This is being maintained to a high standard for wildlife and people by Sue and Lisa.
- **Communication of Environmental Issues;** We use Twitter, Facebook, our Website and Email. These are well viewed and positively received.
- **Planning Session.** We held a planning session to discuss the implementation of FOE. We split the work of FOE into groups of Fuel Poverty, Nature and Biodiversity and the Process which we follow to achieve our work. As part of this we discussed attracting youth. A draft has been prepared by Eliot Smith for this. National Friends of the Earth has prepared a map of fuel poverty across the country. We also have a subgroup of What a Wonderful World for planning this festival.

Other Matters

Financial Accounts: These are well managed by Sue Patience. Although they are in healthy condition we have an awareness that we could always do with more money.

National Liaison Officer: This is maintained to communicate with National Friends of the Earth and is currently held jointly by Terry and Sue.

Other issues discussed: There will be no changes considered to the constitution. Safeguarding will be a constant agenda item due to its importance.

The Review of the Alnwick and Denwick Neighbourhood Plan

The ADNP is intending to be reviewed during the next year. This is a planning document linked to the National Planning Framework and the Northumberland Plan which has now been passed.

The ADNP has different sections- the original environment section was prepared by Rachel Roberts, Sue Patience and David Farrer as well as others.

It can now be reviewed to take account of new environmental issues and policies. These include for example biodiversity net gain. There was previously a difficulty in getting environmental issues placed into every other section of the plan. There is also the difficulty in having all the right policies accepted by the planning officer.

However the understanding of the environmental situation has changed. FOE can have a strong voice in achieving this change. There are also Community Action Proposals associated with but importantly separate from the main plan.

Currently the CAPs are aspirational and not SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, reportable and time limited).

It will be probably be necessary to set up a sub group for this.

Date of next meeting: 1 March 2023

This needs to be held within a year of this meeting