



Friends of Island Pond Wood

Launton Annual Parish Meeting 19 April 2018

Report from Friends of Island Pond Wood including FIPW Ltd

The Friends of Island Pond Wood held its' Annual General Meeting on 25th January this year. All committee members agreed to continue for another year. In addition there is the board of Friends of Island Pond Wood Ltd, chair Tony Meacock, which is the formal leaseholder.

We again had another busy year with a total of 11 major work sessions and two miscellaneous sessions resulting in volunteer hours up 20% on last year. Once again we had two joint sessions with Bicester Green Gym in October and we worked alongside Oxford Conservation Volunteers in a major session in November. Through this extra help we have been able to start cutting back the encroaching blackthorn hedge at the bottom of the Blackthorn Rd gardens and clear a large bramble patch near the stones. We also had further help from TCV volunteers to build the boardwalk which was our most ambitious project so far. We then went on to build a mini boardwalk with the surplus materials. We also installed a picnic table under the old oak tree and replaced two of our old seats.

We had another dedicated pond work session in September. We did more work to reinstate the pond edge, adjacent to the houses, as well as our regular maintenance regime. Later Mark Blake the contractor pollarded the large willow nearest the entrance gate

We continue to monitor the condition of the ash trees and are pleased to report that they appear to remain healthy. This is something that we check every year.

Richard Peverell is our fishing bailiff. This year 19 fishing permits were issued.

It is now three years since leasing the woodland and Tony Meacock and Linda Murray have continued to work hard on behalf of the company (FIPW Ltd) applying for grant funding etc. We received two major grants in 2017, the first from the Lottery Fund paid for the boardwalk, the second from Cherwell District Council Spark fund paid for creation of the picnic area.

The Parish Council continue their support by funding some of the mowing in the woodland. Their funds enable us to mow the paths three times a year and rough mow some parts of the wood once a year to keep the blackthorn in check. The Parish Council also provided two new benches to replace those which had deteriorated over time.

During the year the Friends ran a photographic competition with the 12 best pictures chosen for use in a calendar. The calendar was sponsored by local businesses then sold to raise funds. In all about £400 has been raised this way.

The committee members would like to express their thanks and appreciation to all those who have been involved this year, whether that has been through participating in the work parties, providing administrative support, or for simply walking round and enjoying the wood. Special thanks also go to several supporters for their generous donations which enable us to tackle various improvement projects. In 2018 we will be celebrating our 10th anniversary of Friends of Island Pond Wood.

Maureen Roberts, Chairman of FIPW