



## **10<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting 2019-22**

**Coneygree Orchard 13<sup>th</sup> August 2022 at 11.00 am**

All members were warmly invited to attend the AGM to celebrate the recovery from the limitations of Covid-19 lockdowns and to discuss the plan for 2022 and 2023.

### **MINUTES**

#### **1. Welcome, attendance and apologies for absence**

Attendees: - Tom Low, Andrea Steeden-Cane, Alex Steeden-Cane, Kevin Dalby, Deborah Cunningham, John Livingstone, Amalie Livingstone, Jon Minall, Wendy Fabbro, John Morris, Emma Levan and David Aston. No apologies.

#### **2. Minutes of the 9<sup>th</sup> AGM were signed by Tom**

#### **3. Chairman's report**

Wendy apologised for not having had an AGM for the past two years. This is largely due to the social restrictions surrounding Covid etc. Despite indicating she was stepping back from the role of Chair, Wendy spoke about her continued love for the Community Orchard and how every effort should be made in the future to attract and publicise this unique community asset among the general public.

- Ideas for the future included - possible training days, cooking recipes and classes etc.
- Special mention was made to John Morris for all his mowing and work at the Coneygree Orchard. Hannah Clarke at the Eastington Farm Shop was given a particular mention for all her help and support. David will now write a letter/email to Hannah Clarke expressing our gratitude for all she has done to help sell the Apple Juice for ECO whilst raising over £100 for the Women's Refuge Charity.
- Due to the very poor weather, last year's Apple Day at The Badger was extremely disappointing and thus poorly attended.
- Tom thanked Wendy for her forbearance in running ECO throughout the Covid-19 lockdowns yet keeping both orchard maintenance and Apple Juice production going.

Signed by Chair at 11<sup>th</sup> AGM..... dated.....

#### 4. Treasurer's report

**Andrea** summarised the Accounts for 2019/20, 2020/21, 2021/22. Income had been limited by lack of sales outlets due to Covid and the main expenditure was £800 on the yellow scratter (this was praised by those present).

Andrea to circulate all three years' accounts by e-mail. If no objections are received within 10 days, the Accounts will be deemed accepted, to be signed by Wendy.

A formal thank you was also made to Gloria Morris, who shortly after the last AGM, had handed over the position of treasurer after 11 years in the role.

#### 5. Coneygree Orchard Warden's report

**Kevin** reported that the situation over the past two years had moved into one of low maintenance and soft focus. Kevin indicated that the wooden shed may soon have to be replaced and there had been no loss of fruit trees. Comment was made on the apparently heavy crop , the best year of production yet.

It was discussed that the Parish Council may soon request that the adjoining fence may have to be moved, with an implication of a work party having to be raised.

On the question of the old fruit cage being removed, a question was asked about the possibility of this allowing more fruit trees to be planted and getting younger volunteers to perhaps help in this process (see also Brownings Orchard, item 6).

**Emma reported** the issue of the recent Family Jubilee Picnic being deemed a big success and that every effort should be made to try and do something similar again in the future (see item 9).

The pond is in need of some attention and John M suggested that maybe we should investigate the possibility of looking into bringing some extra water over from the nearby Eastington Park estate. John L says he is prepared to look into the current ground plans and report back when he has found out more.

Emma offered to talk to the farmer and Tom would speak to the manager of Eastington Park

There was also interest expressed toward the possibility of seeing whether a path/gate between Eastington Park and the orchard might be useful for encouraging yet more people to walk through the orchard towards the church.

## 6. Brownings Orchard Warden's report.

**Debbie** reported that there had not been that much activity at the orchard over the past two years, other than towards mowing and some control of the brambles.

Special thanks was made to Mark Cunningham for the mowing and for all his help and support. With some mid-week work, Brownings Orchard was now up to the same standard of appearance and technical care as Coneygree.

It was noted that there can be no public event at the orchard until the pathway has been completed around the pond. It was agreed that there was little time to tackle that until after Apple days and comment was made that digging right now would be very hard work, anyway.

## 7. Planning for Apple Days –

**Tom** reported that there were 150 new bottles and 250 returned bottles, which was enough for the season. The returned bottles would need washing to remove labels and old tops.

Responding to requests, there would be a pre-published list of Apple Day events :

- Sept - Middlehall Old Farmhouse, for Williams pears from Shepherds Patch
- 1st or 8th Oct - Nastend Court, focused on the Underleaf
- 8<sup>th</sup> or 15th Oct - Hazel Cottage for John Newton at Frampton.
- **22nd Oct, Parish Apple Day at the OHMG.**
- 29th Oct or 5th Nov, Middlehall new farmhouse for Nick Spencer's orchard.

David to investigate whether any pre-existing Autumn/pre-Christmas local events might be suitable for attending, with a view to us selling more bottles of fruit juice. School Xmas Bazaar and Slimbridge Village Hall had been good venues in the past.

## 8. Election of Trustees:

**Coneygree Orchard Warden**, Kevin Dalby to stand down after 12 years' sterling service, including detailed design of Coneygree Orchard, selection of trees with mainly local origin and coping with specialist equipment like plate compressors and post hole borers. To be replaced by John Livingstone and Amalie.

A formal vote of thanks was made to Kevin Dalby for his 12 years of service to the ECO and in particular his role as first warden of the Coneygree Orchard.

Tom Low elected as **Chairman**. **Brownings Orchard Warden** Debbie Cunningham re-elected, Emma Levan was re-elected to take the lead on **fundraising/publicity**, David Aston was re-elected as **Secretary** and Andrea re-elected as **Treasurer**.

**9. Any other business** - it was discussed that we should look towards holding as many as 5 community events each year now that the orchards are established – exemplifying the “Community” in ECO e.g.

- a. - a Winter Wassail
- b. - Training Days for how best to care for fruit trees, starting with planning in Brownings Orchard this winter
- c. - a Blossom Day in the Spring, possibly as an Easter Holiday picnic,
- d. - a Mid-Summer Picnic to capitalise on the success of Jubilee family picnic
- e. the traditional Apple Day in the Autumn (nearest Saturday to National Apple Day, 19<sup>th</sup> October).

Emma said she'd be prepared to take a lead in helping organise such public events, along with Amalie.

**10. Meeting ended @ 12.35.**

David Aston

ECO Secretary

13/08/22

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Signed by Chair at 11<sup>th</sup> AGM..... dated.....