

**Minutes of Furzedown Community Network
Annual General Meeting
Wednesday 29 March 2023 at the Furzedown Project**

Present: Sarah Forester (Chair), Steffi Backhouse, Dawn Thomas, Lynn Selwyn-Reeves, Leonie Cooper, Judi Gasser, Gemma Dunning, Jo Town, Monika Ivanova, Adam Seymour-Davies, Anna Godsiff, Anthony Langan, Peter Ramell (minutes), Sue Clarke, Fiona Glanville, Graham Loveland, Vito Ward, Tim Kahn, Tony Hay, Gillian Colville, Kathy Wocial, Niall Barrett, Caroline Holden, Moira Harbord, Alan Feast, Simon Prager, Gillian Samett, Gitte Rinds, Di Berry

Apologies: Angie Stephenson, Hannah Wallden, Martin Beaver, Jacquie Dredge, Sofie Henell, Howard and Carole Chapman

Welcome Sarah (Forester) welcomed everyone. Attendees briefly introduced themselves

Introduction, including aims and purpose of FCN Sarah reminded the meeting of the vision, aims and objectives of FCN as set out in the Constitution

Minutes of last AGM. The minutes from the February 2022 AGM were adopted.

Committee's Annual Report, presented by Chair Sarah presented the Chair's report, setting out the events and activities carried out by FCN over the previous year.

FCN accounts - Treasurer's Report. In Hannah (Wallden)'s absence, Peter (Ramell) presented the FCN accounts, which Hannah had prepared and which had been audited by Pius. There were no substantive points raised.

Election of officers and of members of the committee

Sarah said that she was happy to continue for another year as chair, but would be standing down at the end of the year.

The following were elected, unopposed, as officers, and as other members of the committee:

Officers: Chair – Sarah Forester; Vice Chair – Steffi Backhouse;
Treasurer – Hannah Wallden; Secretary – Peter Ramell

Elected Members: Léonie Cooper, Gemma Dunning, Judi Gasser, Anna Godsiff, Sofie Henell, Monika Ivanova, Anthony Langan, Lynn Selwyn-Reeves, Adam Seymour-Davies, Angie Stephenson (Membership Secretary), Dawn Thomas.

Co-opted member: Jo Town

It was noted that there was a vacancy for a further elected member, and that Camilla Duncan was interested in joining the committee. Sarah would speak to her accordingly.

Proposal for increase in membership subscriptions

The proposed increases - from £5 to £10 for annual membership, and from £50 to £75 for life membership - were agreed. It was agreed that a final offer of life membership at £50 would be made before the increase.

It was noted that an automated membership system - on the lines of that for the Woodfield Project - was being prepared.

The possibility of membership of FCN by schools or other organisations was raised.

Plans for 2023 and discussion

New website A new website was being developed to replace the existing site, which was in poor condition. Thanks to Anna (Godsiff) and Lynn (Selwyn-Reeves) for their work on this, and to Jo (Town) for maintaining the existing site in the interim. The new site would have an improved look and be more user-friendly, though as with all websites would depend on quality of the information on it.

Environmental improvements

Sarah (Forester) noted a number of existing or potential environmental initiatives, some of which had been discussed at the FCN open meeting in October 2022. These included possible planters on Moyser Road or elsewhere; the development of the Rec on which the Council was consulting; the community garden at MLBC; possible 'rewilding' initiatives (e.g. at the corner of Westcote Road), and the roundabout flowers organised by Lindsay (Hart). FCN was considering holding a meeting to discuss what environmental improvements could feasibly be taken forward, and at which people could volunteer to take part in particular initiatives.

It was agreed that a meeting would certainly be useful. Points arising in discussion were:

- it would be useful to invite Enable and the Council to the meeting
- a strategic approach to rewilding was needed
- the Council had allocated £600,000 to development at the Rec, and Enable were currently consulting on the form the development should take
- it was noted that the Furzedown Project were in the finals of a competition run by ITV to develop vegetable growing
- for taking forward initiatives on the Rec, a management advisory committee (MAC), as previously, could be useful: Alan (Feast) would be happy to be involved
- it would be useful to be aware of the 'Gardener partners' scheme run by AgeUK.
- there were good examples in Montreal of using spaces on road for planting and seating

- in considering planter or seating initiatives for Moyser Road, it would be helpful to involve residents

Defibrillators

Anthony (Langan) described a project he was working on with FCN to develop the provision of defibrillators in Furzedown. He would be providing a full report to the committee later in the year. There was strong support for this initiative and thanks to Anthony for taking it forward.

Events

FCN would be running the Run, Scoot, Walk event as in previous years, and would also be strongly involved in the Pride event on 17 June.

Consideration was being given to organising a larger event on the Rec on 22 July, with Enable, partly on the lines of the previous BDO. Two plans were being considered - a larger event which would require some crowdfunding (Plan A), and a somewhat smaller event, a larger version of last year's picnic (Plan B). In discussion, there was general support for an event, which would help to promote inclusivity. It would be important to avoid activities which were too expensive for families on limited budgets. Sufficient volunteers would also be required. Following discussion it was agreed to proceed with an event on 22 July, on the lines of Plan B.

A question was raised about garden gigs. It was noted that these required considerable planning and time, though some might be organised during the summer.

Volunteers

FCN would be seeking to draw up a list of potential volunteers

Fundraising

This would be discussed by the new committee.

AOB:

1. Gitte (Rinds) offered to provide information about accessibility for the website. It was agreed that Gitte and Anna (Godsiff) would take this forward.

2. Niall (Barrett) said that the Safer Neighbourhood Team were keen to attract more members, and that it would be good to discuss how the SNT and FCN could work together. This was agreed: FCN would arrange with Niall for him to come to an FCN committee meeting accordingly.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending. Thanks were also expressed to the committee for their work.