



# FRIENDS OF COOMBE WOOD

**Chairman:** Gwyn Jordan

**Treasurer:** T. Isherwood

**Secretary:** John Rostron

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## **Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Friends of Coombe Wood held on Thursday February 18<sup>th</sup> 2025 at 7.30pm at St George's Small Hall, Thundersley**

### **Present**

John and Margaret Rostron, Melvyn Westlake, Gwyn and Doreen Jordan, Terry Isherwood.

### **Apologies**

Eileen Peck. Michael Dearson and Sue & Ted Speakman had sent apologies.

### **1 Welcome**

The Chairman Gwyn Jordan welcomed members to the AGM.

### **2 Minutes of the Previous Annual General Meeting on January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

There were no matters of accuracy and no matters arising not otherwise covered in the agenda.

The Chairman proposed that the minutes be accepted. Members agreed to this.

**Accepted**

The Chairman signed and dated the minutes of both meetings as an accurate record.

### **3 Matters Arising**

The two areas of contention. The Fence around the Lake Drive property has now been moved. There had been a minor issue with the London Road property but after consulting with the Council's Planning Officers, your committee had agreed to leave that in abeyance.

### **4 Chairman's Report**

We thank our secretary John Rostron for his work; on the minutes, the website, the new posters, and the newsletters and arranging the hall for our AGM.

We also record our thanks to Terry Isherwood for getting our accounts sorted and the banking system organised.

We have no outstanding legal matters having satisfactorily settled the position of the fence along bridleway 58, and express our appreciation to Alan Morley for his lead on this issue.

We have settled the issue on the infringement at 445 London Road and have agreed to take no further action over the small extension on the northern boundary following the suggestion of Laura Downer of Castle Point planning. We have seen large items removed from obstructing the woods after informing the local Council and record our thanks. Most recently, there was a problem with what appeared to be water monitoring equipment with pumps and a reservoir in heavy polyethene, these items were abandoned in the swampy area where the stream leaves the woodland.

Our main function as friends of Coombe wood is to keep an active watch on the woodland boundaries and we have no outstanding issues to report but it is easy to see how boundaries could be challenged if we were not watchful. Our existence is perhaps sufficient deterrent to this kind of activity. Although the Village Green status is granted by Essex County Council, they show no interest in watching the situation on the ground.

### **Planning application in Lake Drive.**

An application has been made for one storey extensions to No 1 Lake Drive, known as *Woodlands*. I have asked Michael Dearson to liaise with planning about drainage. Should there be mandatory waste removal to avoid contamination of the stream and Lake?

### **Some suggestions for the future.**

It would be good to see removal of all traces of the heavy steel security fencing that originally was erected on the Northern Part of the Wood.

The repair of the dam at the Lake and the restoration of the clear water pond for wildlife and especially amphibians that once were common here.

To establish the system for authority over the maintenance of the wood and removing dangerous trees etc.

To consider the building of a suitable rustic bridge over the stream at the most used crossing.

Maybe fix some boardwalk through the swamp area where someone has already made a small start.

Work out public liabilities for all work done.

The restoration of the best small bluebell area, the so called “Bluebell Dell” adjacent to No 491 London Road on the Bread and Cheese Hill. This will involve much work on fallen tangled trees and an overgrowth of laurel.

The pulling up of brambles from some of the best areas of wood anemones and bluebells close to the entrance opposite Glen Road.

## **Treasurer**

The Treasurer, Terry Isherwood gave a report:

As of 4<sup>th</sup> February 2025, the FoC account had £1 233.55.

As of 31st October, 2023, the FoC account had £1 271.05.

The main expenditure has been on Newsletters and Posters.

Outstanding liabilities include the hire of the Hall for the AGM (£30.90).

There are currently 45 memberships of whom 13 have paid for 2025.

The Chairman proposed acceptance of this report.. This was carried without dissent. **Accepted**

**5 Election of Officers and Committee**

The current Chair, Secretary and Treasurer are willing to continue. Melvyn Westlake proposed that they all be re-elected, seconded by Margaret Rostron. This was carried without dissent. **Accepted**

The current committee comprises Sue Speakman, Eileen Peck, Melvyn Westlake and Michael Dearson. Melvyn Westlake proposed, seconded by Doreen Jordan, that they should continue as committee. This was carried without dissent. **Accepted**

**6 Questions from the floor / Any Other Business**

The Chairman had proposed a number of topics in his report. In addition, a member asked what was the responsibility of the Essex County Council to the Village Green. The committee will look into this.

The meeting finished at 8.30pm