

**Weaverham Community Memorial Orchard
Annual General Meeting
The Scout Hall, Church Street, Weaverham
Tuesday 21st November 2017, 7.30 pm
Minutes of the meeting**

Present

Geoff Hornby, Roger Johnson, Steve Doughton, Lynne Rafferty, Fiona Casson, Peter Sayers, Tina Johnson, Mike Hornby, Brian Williams, Jacquie Williams, John Freeman, Anthony Powell. John Wilson.

Welcome

Tina Johnson thanked the Scouts for their hospitality and all for attending. Apologies have been received from Charles Fifield, Glen Gidley and Robert Lloyd.

AGM minutes from 2016.

Acceptance of the minutes was proposed by Lynne Rafferty, seconded by Geoff Hornby and agreed by the meeting.

Membership of the charity.

Anthony Powell was elected to membership of the charity. (See also attachment.)

Chairman's report

The Chair made her report which is reproduced below.

Presentation and adoption of Accounts

Treasurer Brian Williams presented the accounts. Acceptance was proposed by Peter Sayers, seconded by Steve Doughton and approved by the meeting. Brian reported that the necessary returns have been made to HMRC and Companies House.

Election of Trustees

Tina Johnson, Brian Williams, Mike Hornby, Steve Doughton and Peter Sayers were re-elected, having been proposed by John Freeman and seconded by Fiona Casson.

Amendments to the Constitution

Tina explained the need for changes. Amendments were proposed by John Wilson and seconded by Jacquie Williams. The changes were agreed unanimously. Paragraph 2 of our Constitution is thus amended as follows:

THE PURPOSES OF THE CHARITY ARE:

To create and conserve a community orchard in Thorn Wood, Northwich Road for the recreation and educational benefit of residents of Weaverham, Hartford and neighbouring communities.

To preserve fruit tree varieties that have local significance.

To maintain the orchard as a memorial to all who served in both World Wars and in more recent conflicts.

Any other business

Anthony Powell reported that Transition Northwich, a local environmental organisation, have an apple press which they are willing to allow other organisations to use. This may be useful in future years when the orchard bears a significant crop.

The chair closed the meeting at 8.20 pm with an invitation to refreshments and to view our display boards.

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Membership of the charity

The following individuals comprise the members of the charity.

Steve Doughton
Peter Sayers
Fiona Casson
Sue Hornby
Roger Johnson
Lynne Rafferty
Jane Sharples
Georgie Dutton
John Wilson
Geoff Hornby
Irene Bush
Jacquie Williams
Brian Williams
John Freeman
Mike Hornby
Tina Johnson
Anthony Powell

In accordance with our constitution, with the exception of Anthony Powell, all other memberships will end in May next year unless re-elected by the trustees.

Chairman's Report for the Year 2016 – 17

Our volunteers continue to work in the orchard tending the trees, putting in strong stakes, weeding, keeping the paths clear and picking up litter and dog poo. Early in March we took scions from the old Wareham Russet tree in Tower Lane as well as from other Cheshire heritage apple trees growing in Trafford Drive Allotments Community Orchard. Harry Delaney of Reaseheath College kindly grafted the scions onto rootstock whilst Anne Harrison from the college and three of us waxed the grafts and potted the resultant saplings. Brian and Jacquie have been caring for these saplings together with two Wareham Russet saplings donated by David Andrews of Stretton Watermill. These will be planted during the dormant season thus increasing the number of trees in the orchard to around 150. This year some of the scions have been grafted onto dwarf root stock so that once the trees are mature the apples can safely be picked by children. Next year we aim to plant a few Hazel pears and Cheshire Prunes (damsons) as well as a few more Wareham Russets. Last year I reported that the Weaverham Trust had planted our first pocket orchard of two Wareham Russet apple trees in the Bottom Pitch. We have increased the number of pocket orchards this year as some of our Wareham Russet saplings have been planted in school grounds, private gardens, Mere Brow Farm and the grounds of Weaverham Cricket Club

CWaC councillors Charles Fifield, Paul Williams, Harry Tonge, Susan Kaur and Patricia Parkes kindly gave us £2000 from their discretionary Community funds towards the cost of a glass fronted notice board and two picnic tables all hand crafted from sustainably sourced Cheshire oak. We often observe people reading the notices which we try to change regularly, and the picnic tables have proved to be quite popular. Although we initially experienced some vandalism the damage caused was immediately rectified and the local community have been able to enjoy the facilities. This is the third year that our local CWaC councillors have helped us and we are extremely grateful.

We took our display board to Thorn Wood in January when Saltscape held a hedge laying competition. We made some very useful contacts at this event and we were invited to speak to Hartford Civic Trust who, like the Weaverham Trust, are very keen to support us in any way they can. Indeed both groups have given us donations of £50 this year.

Since our last AGM we have also received a generous donation of £100 from the Grange Junior School and a similar donation from Mere Brow Farm.

As a result of our meeting with Hartford Civic Trust, CWaC Councillor Patricia Parkes sometimes attends our meetings and continues to take an interest in the Memorial Orchard. Indeed she did her best to persuade the Highways department to give us a parking layby near the entrance to Thorn Wood. Unfortunately due to the presence of underground services her request was refused.

We took our display board to Hartford's Picnic in the Park in the summer hoping to spread awareness of the Memorial Orchard. With that in mind, we continue to contribute to the Weaverham News and to the Hartford News. Steve continues to look after our website and our newest member Fiona has set up a Facebook Page which now has 96 followers.

We were very sorry to say goodbye to Irene Bush when she moved out of the area. Irene made a huge contribution to the orchard whilst she was a member of the action group. We miss her and I'd like to thank her for all that she did as a member of the group. Although she no longer lives here she continues to take an interest in the Memorial Orchard.

We were very pleased when Fiona Casson agreed to take Irene's place. Fiona has

lots of fresh ideas and makes a tremendous contribution to all that we do. She works very hard on our behalf and it is great to have her in the team. I would like to take this opportunity to thank her and all the other members of the Action Group who work tirelessly at the orchard and behind the scenes in so many different ways: Fiona Casson, Steve Doughton, John Freeman, Mike Hornby (secretary), Peter Sayers, Brian Williams (treasurer), and Jacquie Williams. I would also like to thank our other volunteers who have worked extremely hard at the orchard; planting, weeding, slashing, mowing, litter picking, ragwort pulling and so much more. Our thanks also go to local PCs Chris Rees and Matt Hood and to PCSO Alex Haskell for their visits to the orchard. I am particularly grateful to PCSO Nicola Devey who, since her appointment has patrolled Thorn Wood twice daily. We continue to work closely with Neil Oxley of the Woodland Trust and we are very grateful for the interest he has taken in the orchard. Finally, I would like to thank all of you for your continued support and for coming here this evening.

Tina Johnson, Chairman, 21st November 2017