

RIVER DEBEN ASSOCIATION

Minutes of Committee meeting held on Wednesday 16 May 2018 at 67 The Thoroughfare, Woodbridge

1. Present and apologies

Present: Sarah Zins (Chair), Jane Alexander, David Bucknell, Anne Moore, Robin Whittle.

Apologies: Peter Clay, Alan Comber, Veronica Falconer, Jim Goldsworthy, Richard Verrill, Kate Laydon, Robert Simper

2. Declarations of Interest

SZ asked for declarations to be made at the appropriate time in the meeting.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 5th March 2018

The minutes were approved with no amendments.

4. Matters arising

Saltmarsh outing: Invitations to take part in the outing will be issued in due course.

Summer boat trip for RDA members: Due to public liability regulations SZ proposed that this idea be abandoned. Those present agreed.

Other matters will be covered later in the meeting.

5. Change of Committee Members

There were no proposed changes.

6. Accounts and Membership to date

SZ circulated the latest figures supplied by JG.

Subscriptions received to date total: £2,418 with up to a further £500 expected over the coming months.

Total income to date is £2,566.81 with total expenditure, following the publication and distribution of the Spring magazine at £1,108.91.

Cash held = £11,224.68

7. Feedback from Spring Meeting 2018

SZ apologised for the cramped venue and the poor acoustics, although she was pleased with the turnout for the meeting. She has lodged a complaint with The Seckford Foundation for the poor-quality sound equipment and they have refunded her for the cost of hire. SZ was praised for her handling of the situation and it was suggested that a venue with a loop system to aid those with hearing aids would be preferable for future meetings.

8. Speaker, venue and date for Autumn Meeting

The suitability of Bawdsey Manor, with a talk about radar was discussed. Concern about the willingness of members to drive to and from Bawdsey in the dark was raised. It was agreed that members will be able to bring friends to the Autumn meeting as this might increase membership.

Action: SZ to decide on venue for Autumn meeting.

9. Report from SCF meeting on 09/05/2018

SAZ did not attend, as there was nothing on the agenda of particular relevance to the RDA.

Note that partner summaries, including from the DEP, and minutes of the Suffolk Coast Forum meetings can be found at <http://www.greensuffolk.org/suffolkcoastforum/>.

10. Report from the DEP meeting on 09/05/2018

SZ updated the committee on recent business discussed at the DEP meeting, including FC1 (see below) and the EA saltmarsh project at Kyson. The DEP has employed someone to improve their website and it was hoped that this would enable dissemination of more information.

11. Flood defences

SZ updated the committee on FC1 (Bawdsey to Ramsholt) proposals and in particular the proposed enabling development to fund the work, which is likely to cost in the region of £1.5 to £1.9 million. A discussion ensued as to benefit to the community at large of such work and the proper amount for the landowners benefitting from such work to contribute. A study was done when the DEP plan was being written on the effects of the volume of water if river walls on both sides of the estuary were breached, but they do not deal with what happens if only the Bawdsey side is flooded. It is likely to be very expensive to commission further work on the effects on a Bawdsey-only breach. The committee agreed that the RDA will not object in principle to the enabling development provided that those landowners who stand to gain from the works put in a reasonable proportion of the costs.

12. Saltmarshes

RW confirmed that the AONB have accepted the RDA's application for £2000 funding and this will enable the saltmarsh project to continue for another year. A copy of the funding agreement will be sent to SZ. It is feared that Health & Safety considerations lie behind the lack of interest in helping with taking measurements of the saltmarshes from Woodbridge School, but RW intends to enlist the help of friends and family to take measurements every 6 months.

SZ reported that the Environment Agency are undertaking a £50K project to restore the saltmarsh at Kyson and that Suffolk County Council have submitted an application for £211K to repair the sluice at Kingsfleet and restore the saltmarsh there. A conversation ensued as to the aims of each project, the likely rate of accretion of sediment and the value for money to the taxpayer. The RDA supports the project for freshwater harvesting and the sluice repair at Kingsfleet but is concerned that the sediment accretion will not be significant over the life of the materials used.

Action: SZ to meet with Jane Burch (SCC) and Guy Cooper (Environment Agency) to find out what results are expected from the work and what they will be measured against.

The University of Suffolk have not been able to suggest someone willing to undertake a PhD study into the saltmarsh erosion thought to be caused by crabs and ragworms. The RDA remain interested in supporting research on this issue to the value of approx. £3000. SZ said Peter Cosgrove is working with DEFRA investigating how saltmarshes should be valued.

Action: The question of whether the RDA should fund a PHD study will be discussed at the next meeting.

13. Planning Applications and new construction

Melton Hill – no further news was reported.

[SZ declared an interest in the following item]

Lime Kiln Quay – the owner of 3 Lime Kiln Quay has re-applied for permission for a garage with the same specifications as before. It is feared that the intended fencing will spoil the view of the river but it was agreed that the RDA would not oppose the application but would ask for a condition that it will not be used as a separate residence.

There were no objections to the board on Deben Wharf advertising Suffolk Cottage Holidays. There has been an application to berth an ex-cadet training vessel at Melton Boatyard to run as a business, providing meeting facilities and a café.

[SZ declared an interest in the following item]

The owner of Dairy Cottage on the Sutton bank of the river has replaced a small green hut with a summer house which has large windows and is lit at night. As it is in an AONB, planning consent is required. RW proposed that an objection is lodged by the RDA. The proposal was seconded by AM and JA and carried, SZ abstained from voting.

Action: VF to lodge an objection to the summer house at Dairy Farm, Sutton on behalf of the RDA and write re 3 Lime Kiln Quay.

14. Wildlife

There have been no further reported sightings of coypu on the river but the Committee were asked to encourage people to keep their eyes open. Mike Emmett will be asked to write an article about coypu for The Deben magazine.

15. Footpaths and access

Update from DEP Access Meeting on 17/04/2018

AM said the DEP was working on a policy to introduce a tax on new developments in the area to pay for a river warden. Work is ongoing to develop new walks inland from Adastral Park to relieve pressure on walks towards the river. Update on meeting with Clare Cadman re progress on Coastal Path

There is no progress to report about the Coastal Path. All options are still being investigated. AM objected to the RDA stance of being in favour of a path from Bawdsey to Wilford Bridge and the Committee will be asked to vote at the next meeting: it was suggested that the path might contribute to the flood defences. The meeting felt that the breaches in the west bank at Early Creek and below Hill Farm and at Cross Farm would make a path round the tidal reach too difficult, although there are no objections to a footpath in principle. A meeting is being arranged by Thomas O'Brien, who is interested in repairing the breaches to the river walls at Martlesham, and will be held in Martlesham Parish Rooms on 12 June at 7.30pm.

Action: Discussion on RDA's stance regarding the Coastal Path to be added to the next meeting's agenda

16. Stands at Maritime Woodbridge and Woodbridge Regatta

It was agreed to book a stand at both Maritime Woodbridge on 8th and 9th September and the Woodbridge Regatta on 17th June. RW will provide a video loop about the RDA on both occasions but is unavailable to help 'man' the stand in June. AM volunteered to attend on both dates.

Action: SZ to book a stand at Maritime Woodbridge and Woodbridge Regatta

17. Website including news updates

SZ congratulated KL on collecting news items for the website from DYC and recommended that the committee look at the updated News page of the website.

Action: All to look at website

18. Autumn 2018 edition of The Deben

DB called for more articles to be submitted. Possible themes of interest suggested were: archaeological finds on the Deben from East Anglia One; coypu; wild swimming; the history and story of the vessel that it is proposed to use as a meeting place and cafe at Melton Boatyard; saltmarshes; an article by RW on the river walls, the coastal path and rowing.

19. GDPR

SZ, AC, PC and JA met on 1 May 2018 to discuss action needed to comply with the new regulations coming into force on 25 May 2018. PC has agreed to update the membership records and to keep all data secure and our new privacy policy has been put onto the website. The membership form is being updated.

20. Sewage in the Deben

The issue of sewage being discharged from houseboats and yachts into the river will be discussed at the June meeting. It is thought this is a planning matter and that there are currently no regulations concerning the use and discharging of holding tanks.

Action: SZ to talk to Woodbridge Marina about facilities for discharging holding tanks.

21. Any other business

It was reported that the derelict boat 'Alpha, which is in danger of breaking up and blocking the channel, is now back in the private creek near Wilford Bridge and is not currently a threat to river users.

Action: SZ will try to speak to the creek owner.

The date of the litter pick being organised by Transition Woodbridge was noted – 3rd June at 2pm – see the website at <http://transitionwoodbridge.onesuffolk.net/events/view/45> for more details or contact Kate Laydon.

AM said she would keep SZ updated on the plan for that Woodbridge Library to install moveable bookshelves so that space can be created enabling the library to be used as a meeting venue.

There will be a special committee meeting to discuss the Woodbridge Waterfront at 7.30pm on Monday 11 June at Saxon House, 83 Ipswich Road, Woodbridge, Suffolk IP12 4BT. The next scheduled committee meeting will be on 2nd July, 2018 at 1 Lime Kiln Quay, IP12 1BD.