

Special Meeting Dulwich Society Wildlife Group 7/9.21

Meeting held to elect officers to fill vacancy arising as a result of indisposition due to ill health of Sub-Committee Chair.

Present

Sigrd Collins, Sue Cope, Jeff Doodson, Charles Newman, Peter Roseveare, Glynis Williams

In attendance: Sam Taylor of LWT.

Officers and Members

Peter Roseveare was elected unopposed to take on the role of Interim Chair of the committee for at least the next few months until a younger generation of members can be recruited to join the group and take it forward into the future.

Sue Cope agreed to take minutes in future meetings.

Angela Wilkes was wished a speedy recovery in absentia. It was agreed to mark her outstanding contribution to the Wildlife Group and to local wildlife conservation in general when she is further recovered.

Charles Newman was welcomed to the committee.

Emily Montague will be invited to attend future meetings as she has a keen interest in promoting local wildlife conservation and to facilitate liaison with Dulwich Park Friends.

The LWT Dulwich Woods/Sydenham Woods Officer (currently Sam Taylor) will continue to be welcomed to meetings to facilitate liaison with LWT.

Glynis Williams continues to ensure liaison with the Dulwich Society Trees committee as a member of both groups.

Terms of Reference/ Aims of the Wildlife Group

It was agreed these will be revisited. Sue Cope agreed to redraft the existing aims dated 2013 as they appear on the Dulwich Society Website. The redraft will be discussed at the next meeting. Sue said she thought the 2013 statement remained a good summary of the functions of the group but it is time to revisit priorities and actions and would be useful as a framework and focus for future work of the group.

Reports

LWT Sydenham Woods report from Sam:

The footbridge in the woods remains closed. Southwark looking into alternative options to avoid tree felling. No sign of imminent decision. During lockdown, the woods were particularly busy which caused concern that there might be an impact on wildlife and

increased impact of ground around trees. Since easing of Covid restrictions visitor numbers have fallen to less worrying levels. No shortage of volunteers at present. Still no evidence of hedgehogs in the woods. Inspection of bat boxes has not taken place this year as Huma Pearce the bat handler has not been able to handle bats this year because of risk of introducing covid to the native bat population.

Dave Clark doing monthly bird counts. Suggestion that bird numbers have been down. Kestrel and tawny owl are nesting but no sparrowhawk currently. (although there are sparrowhawk sightings in the area).

Regular butterfly transect recordings have been done over the summer and submitted to UKBMS.

There will be two upcoming guided walks, including a bat walk. Details to be put on Society's e-newsletter.

Tree Committee:

Glynis reported on the successful Dulwich Society CGS bid for a hedge around Dulwich Library. The hedge is now planted with dual purpose of filtering pollution and providing for pollinators and other insects. Glynis researched and canvassed to ensure species provide flowers through the year.

General sharing of wildlife observations:

The group shared personal observations of local wildlife over the last few months:

Of note: fewer ladybirds than usual. Good year for damselflies and dragonflies with more species noted. Sparrows in healthy colonies in only parts of the area. Peter told us that sparrow colonies tend not to intermingle and therefore risk in breeding dangers.

Chaffinches have been seen this year having been notable by absence in last few years.

Glynis reported on attending a visit to the newly created wildflower meadow in Camberwell Old Cemetery with Jon Best the ecology officer for Southwark and Stephen Bolton of Butterfly Conservation UK.

Ten species of butterfly were identified including small copper. Stephen reported that ten species had also been found in Dulwich Park. Peter has seen marbled white butterflies in West Norwood cemetery and they are also reported in Burgess Park. Marbled white and small copper are relatively unusual sightings, so it is very encouraging to know about these observations.

Action

Sigrid will report to Ian McInnes that Peter is the new Chair of the committee.

Sigrid will update contact details of members within the group and ensure that each member has access to the Dulwich Society e-newsletter.

Next meeting: early November, day to be finalised.

Future meetings at two-monthly intervals.