

## Earley Environmental Group

Minutes of the 2020 Annual General Meeting  
Held at 7:30pm, Monday 6th January 2020  
Function Room, Maiden Place Community Centre, Earley

Present- Edwin Trout, Grahame Hawker, Alan Broodbank, Liz Wild, Jon Cole, Bob Collis, Raymond Saktrager, Rosemary Cook, Anne Booth, John Booth, Elaine Charlson, Charlotte Allchin, Steve Tames, Terry Higgins, Andrew McCaffery, Jean Hackett, Brian Hackett, Tim Chambers, Linda Chambers, Jane Sellwood and Andrew Long.

1. Apologies- Liz Atkinson, Kathy Maskell, Les Hill, Elaine Butler, Sheila Crowson
2. Announcements- AB shared information of a veteran Oak on Measham Way that is under threat of felling and cited the link for the response for members of the EEG.
3. Minutes of previous AGM- The minutes were accepted as an accurate record with minor typo corrections to spelling.
4. Chairman's Report on activities of 2019-  
Edwin reviewed the programme of 2019 and summarised as the 'Year of the calendar'. Bob Collis led the planning, creation and distribution of the EEG calendar and 200 copies were sold. Edwin felt that it was a very successful project for the EEG and was one that would be repeated later in the year for a 2021 version.

The EEG committee have met three times over the year. Edwin discussed the success of the tree planting for the White Letter Hairstreak moths as evidenced by two separate sightings of the moth on the reserve. Grahame informed the meeting that a further 200 trees were planted over the year.

Due to the success of the calendars, a selection of sweep-nets and other equipment have been purchased to support the Big Bug Hunt held in the summer months.

Edwin reminded the group that the group had been approached at the start of 2019 in reference to the adoption of green space outside Earley Station but that this was still awaiting further contact and arrangement. The green space is within Earley Station adjacent to Platform 1.

The EEG has shared petitions with its members that were felt to be relevant and appropriate to the ethos of the group. This will continue into 2020. Membership of the group stands at 253.

Edwin praised the ongoing work of the Wednesday Volunteers and outlined the valuable contributions that the group have made in terms of practical conservation. The group size has grown and is at 15 some weeks. The group was nominated for a Pride of Reading Award in 2019.

The EEG hosted events that supported 'Wild About Reading 2019' at the Reserve and members also travelled to other sites to deliver sessions to members of the community.

Edwin informed the meeting that Peter Soul who founded the Earley Adopt-a-Street Initiative had passed away in June 2019 but that 8 members of the initiative including many from the EEG were carrying on the scheme as his legacy to show appreciation and respect for the hard work that he had put in.

Changes to the EEG committee were described. Bob Collis has joined the group, Mel Orros has left the area and the group. Sue Smith sadly passed away early in 2019 and the Wednesday volunteers have built a bird-hide on the reserve in her memory as well as dedicating the calendar project to her memory. She is very much missed.

Thanks were expressed to the committee for their hard work over the year.

#### 5. Treasurer's Report-

In Jeremy's absence, Edwin presented the report. At the start of 2019, there was £1,197.46 in the account. This figure has risen to £2,332.65 by year-end. Special thanks to Bob Collis as £307 of this amount came from the sale of the calendars.

#### 6. Election of Committee-

The current committee all agreed to stand again. The motion was proposed and they were re-elected en-bloc.

#### 7. Member's evening-

Bob Collis shared a slide show (made up from photographs taken by a member of the group) of the year's work carried out by the Wednesday volunteers which was very much enjoyed by the group. The friendship and camaraderie that the participants feel was evident and the work they carry out, led by the Ranger team is invaluable to the reserve. The work done varied greatly and was carried out in all weathers. There was also a strong link made to the importance of tea and cake! Grahame Hawker celebrated his 60th birthday this year and the group made sure that he had a really special day which was documented in the film.

Following the short talk she gave on the subject at the 2019 AGM, Charlotte Allchin showed two short clips (filmed by a local young photographer and film-maker) showing the value of connecting with young people through two projects that are supported by the EEG. The first was the annual Earley Green Fair, attended by many people and which was part of this year's Wild About Reading event and which connects so many young people to local conservation and environmental groups. The second was the Outdoor Learning space at Radstock School which is enjoyed by all the children there and is invaluable to their well-being and connection with nature. The EEG Wednesday volunteers have worked hard on the site to help maintain gardening areas as well as the wildlife garden. Charlotte is really excited

that the EEG has committed to supporting the 'Wild About Reading 2020' event which will take place from Wednesday 27th to Sunday 31st May.'

Edwin Trout showed the group an extensive variety of fungi photographs that he had taken over the year at Maiden Erlegh Nature Reserve and other local green spaces. He showed the group how the fungi display changed over the year and described his own growing enthusiasm for the subject which only really started over the last year. He showed the effects of experimenting with different lighting on his camera and discussed his fascination with the often unexpected locations of the fungi he had found. We look forward to more pictures in the future.

John Booth shared some very interesting and inspiring data on home solar panels. They have had panels for the last 9 years and John showed the group graphs and explained how they showed that solar panels were definitely worth the investment. In 2019, their home was able to use 23% of the power generated and the remaining 77% was exported into the National Grid. John discussed how this excess energy could be alternatively harnessed in the home and the implications of doing so. John concluded by pointing to the Wokingham Climate Action Plan which is a £24 million, 8 point programme created to support the borough's declaration of a climate emergency in 2019. It was agreed that it would be interesting and worth watching how the programme was implemented.

Jon Cole showed the group some very detailed photographs of different insects and shared with the group details of his two current projects. The first of which is a project on saprophytic insects and the range of effects they cause to different plants and creatures. The second project is a low light emission project and aims to show what creatures are attracted to the particular low lights used. The talk was very interesting and it would be very interesting to hear the findings of both the projects.