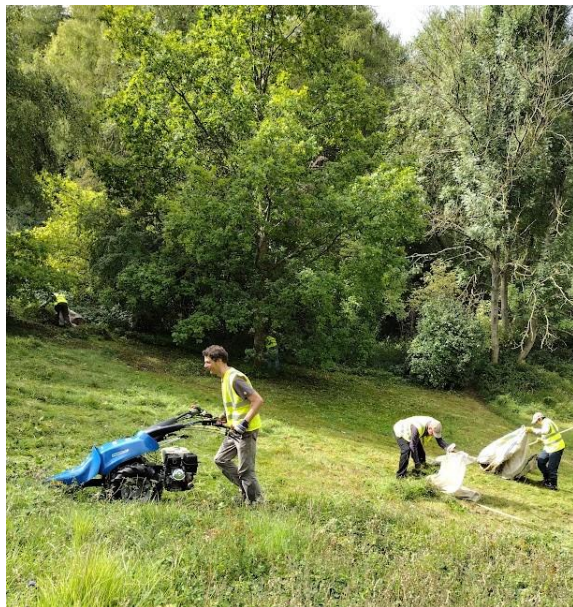
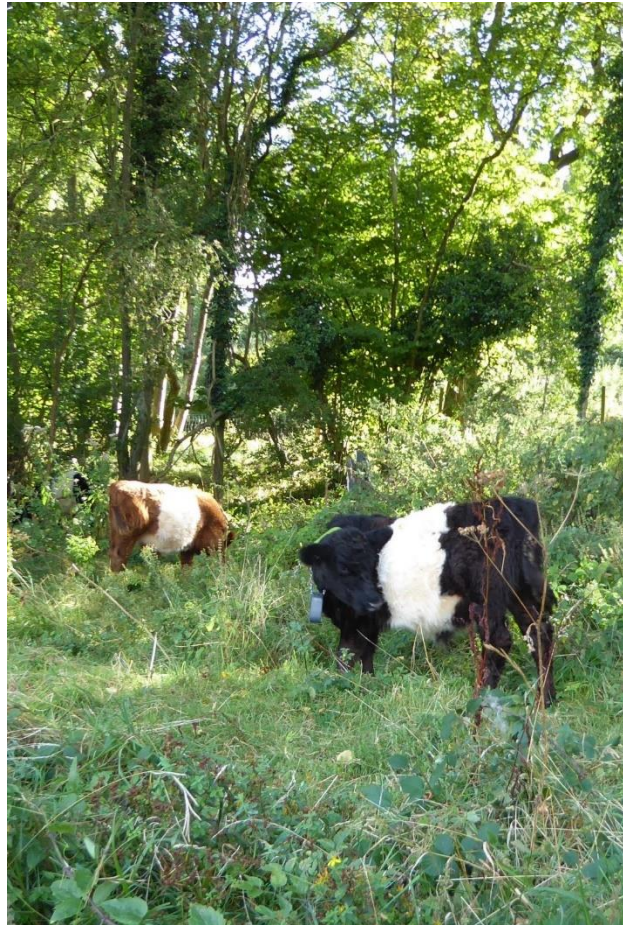


# FOLK Annual Report - 2023



# *Agenda*

- Welcome and apologies
- Minutes of 2022 AGM and matters arising
- Annual Report and Accounts
  - Presentation and approval
- Election of officers and committee
- Any other business
- Talk by Steve Peacock –  
Leckhampton – This is your (geological) life!

# *Annual Report*

- Committee Activities
- National Grid Landscape Enhancement Initiative
- Membership
- Work Parties
- Major Works carried out
- Cotswold Voluntary Wardens
- Users of the Hill
- Secretary's report
- Financial report
- The coming year

# *Committee Activities*

- 8 meetings held since the last AGM  
(January, February, April, May, June (on site), July, September and October)
- Some issues discussed :
  - National Grid Project - administration & progress
  - Management Plan for the site
  - Future funding of the hill – liaison with CBC
- Participation in local fetes

# *National Grid Landscape Enhancement Project*

- Grant worth £ 127k to Leckhampton Hill over three years from Summer 2021
- One year extension granted to aid completion
- Some possibility of extra funding
- Cash administered through CKPC and spent on projects outlined in the original bid which included Path enhancements, Walling, Larch thinning and gorse control
- Matched funding required of £35k (largely as volunteer labour) – EXCEEDED by £11K after only two years
- Remaining Work:
  - More of the same!
  - Limekilns maintenance
  - Management Plan compilation

# *Membership*

- Offer of free membership continued
- Membership now totals 500
- Followers on Facebook over 2,500

# *Work Party Statistics 2022/23*

- 39 Work Parties took place during the year with 3 cancelled due to adverse weather
- 1,744 volunteer Work Party hours logged
- Number at Work Parties ranged from 6 to 35, with an average of 15
- Work parties also attended by staff and pupils of various outside bodies including: Cheltenham College, Leckhampton High School, Capita, Talogy and Spirax Sarco
- Continued input from DoE volunteers

# *Work Parties Report 2022/3*

- Tasks completed during the last year include:
  - Burning gorse cut by contractors
  - Cutting and burning gorse, bramble and hawthorn in various areas
  - Clearing scrub and debris and moving stone in support of Cotswold stone wall reconstruction by the Cotswold Voluntary Wardens
  - Clearing growth on sections of Cotswold stone wall and fences
  - Cutting back growth encroaching on footpaths and tracks
  - Clearing brash generated by contractors felling Larch trees
  - Removing growth on the limekiln ruins
  - Pulling up Hemp Agrimony and removing Ragwort
  - Mowing various areas including around the Barrow, along Judy's Ride and 'Area 16' above Bridge Car Park



# *Major Works Carried Out*

- Extensive resurfacing of paths contributing to significantly improved access and grassland conservation
- Cotswold Wall rebuild beside Cotswold Way continues (Cotswold Wardens) together with erection of the new Memorial Wall
- Refurbishment of fencing to facilitate grazing
- Gorse clearance – an ongoing task

# *Cotswold Voluntary Wardens*

- The volunteer arm of the Cotswold National Landscape
- Spent approximately 1,805 man hours on Leckhampton Hill in 2022/23
- Building the 'Hartley Lane' Wall
- Building the Memorial Wall
- Clearing of fence lines in preparation for cattle
- Clearance of vegetation from dry stone walls
- Assistance with refurbishing of fencing, saving CBC large sums of money

# *Users of the Hill*

- Walkers, Cheltenham & County Cycling Club, FOLK and Cheltenham Borough Council work so that all users can use the hill safely
- Most established mountain bike tracks retained with minor modifications to improve safety for walkers
- Signage now installed to warn walkers and cyclists of each other's presence

# *Secretary's Report*

Time spent by volunteers on the organisation's affairs, in the past year, was estimated as follows:

Work parties (excluding significant admin)	1,744
Project work (Including RCEG)	210
Newsletter production	75
Events	75
Meetings and administration	440
	<b>2,544</b>

# *Financial Report - Highlights*

- Income received in year £7,101
- Expenditure in year £8,140
- Deficit (Income less Expenditure) £(1,039)
- Funds available at 30 September 2023 £2,000

## Notes:

1. We are grateful for the support of Cotswold National Landscape who gave £5,800 towards equipment and also Leckhampton with Warden Hill and Charlton Kings Parish Councils.
2. FOLK received a donation of £1,500 from Sir Charles Irving Trust in May 2019 towards the cost of completing a Management Plan - an important element of the prestigious 'Restoring Cheltenham's Escarpment Grassland' project. With compilation of the Management Plan now underway, these funds have been transferred to Charlton Kings Parish Council as custodians of the project's finances.

# *Financial Report (2) - FOLK Reserves*

- As a result of this year's shortfall, FOLK reserves reduced to £2,000 at the year-end
- Having secured new and replacement work party tools during 2023, we believe that FOLK is now well equipped to tackle future work party plans; as a result, we do not expect to see further significant outlays on equipment in the near future
- With FOLK pursuing its stated aims on many fronts during 2022-23, FOLK's Committee has agreed to conduct a review of its future spending and the funding of these activities
- Our review will also include fund-raising opportunities to 'future proof' FOLK financially for years to come and to allow FOLK to continue to pursue its key conservation and education ambitions

# *The coming year*

- Gorse clearance by contractors and volunteers to enhance grassland and reduce fire risk
- Making diseased and end of life trees safe for visitors
- Maintenance and clearing around the dry stone walls
- Continued removal of invasive plant species
- Veteran Trees – employment of specialists to assist in preservation

# *Agenda*

- Questions?
- Election of officers and committee
- Any other business
- Presentation by Steve Peacock



# *Existing Committee Members*

		<u>Term</u>	
1	Chairman - Mike Donnelly	2021 - 2024	-
2	Secretary - Tony Duffin	VACANCY	not seeking re-election
3	Treasurer - Mark Dowie	2022 - 2025	
4	Morgan Miller	2021 - 2024	
5	John Harvey	2022 - 2025	
6	Wendy Flynn	2022 - 2025	
7	Peter Whalley	2022 - 2025	
8	Clive Lewis	2020 - 2023	NOMINATED
9	Geoff Holt	VACANCY	not seeking re-election
10	Peter Niblett	VACANCY	not seeking re-election
11	Anne North	VACANCY	not seeking re-election

# *Election of Committee*

The 2023 AGM is required to elect the following:

- Secretary
- Up to 4 Committee Members - the election of whom will bring the Committee to its' maximum size of eleven.
- The COMMITTEE may co-opt a further 2 members, at a Committee meeting.

Nominations, as at 10 October:

- Clive Lewis
- Andrew Bishop

# *AGENDA*

- Any other business
- Presentation by Steve Peacock  
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