

## **Shropshire Fungus Group**

### **Minutes of the Annual General Meeting 2019**

Held at Radbrook Community Centre, Shrewsbury, 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2019

#### **Present**

Les Hughes (Chair and Recorder), Martin Webb, Jo Weightman, Harold Bound, Rob Rowe, Stephen Wilson, Jim Cresswell, Liam Taylor, Susan Leather (Treasurer), Philip Leather (Secretary).

#### **Apologies**

Ted Blackwell, Ray James, Alison Curran, Clive Garnett, Charlotte Anderson, Concepta Cassar, Martin Scott.

#### **Minutes of the AGM 2018, Radbrook Community Centre, 23<sup>th</sup> April 2018 at 10.30am**

These were agreed as a correct record.

#### **Matters arising**

The Chair reported that she had acquired a voice recorder which would in future be available for recording finds on forays if required.

Agreed that all other potential matters arising were covered later in the agenda.

#### **Chair's Report**

Les Hughes presented his report which is attached. He reported that 2018 had been a prosperous year, with several new members, and nine completed forays (including one public foray at Dudmaston), and the issue of a Newsletter. A total of 1,100 records had been generated. We again received a grant of £500 for submission of records to Shropshire Ecological Data Network, and have made a further application for this year.

There were no requests for financial assistance with attendance at courses last year and the Chair reminded members of the existence of this form of help.

#### **Treasurer's report**

Susan Leather presented her report, a copy of which is attached. The grant from SEDN for 2018 had not been received at the point when the accounts were closed but the funds have subsequently been received. Total income was £760.00, made up of £190.00 from subscriptions, £70.00 in donations and income from the sale of Roy Mantle's book collection, and £500.00 from SEDN. The last of these therefore dominates our income. Expenditure totalled £612.75, the main items being the costs associated with the microscopy workshop in 2018, the purchase of field lenses for members to assist in identification of fungi on forays and chemicals and reagents to assist members with field identification, the costs of the website, and room hire for the AGM.

#### **Membership**

In the light of this it was decided to maintain the membership fee at £6 per person per annum. There are no family or couple memberships any longer.

## **Election of officers**

The Chair, Treasurer and Secretary were willing to continue in post for another year and members supported this unanimously.

## **Microscopy Workshop**

The Chair reported that last year's microscopy workshop had generally been adjudged a success, but there had been requests for a more structured approach, led by a tutor. Most people who attended, and some who could not, had requested a repeat in 2019. After negotiations, and subject to approval at this meeting, the services of a tutor had been negotiated. SFG will need to meet her travelling expenses and other out of pocket costs and to pay an honorarium. The Field Studies Council at Preston Montford has kindly agreed to provide a room and equipment free of charge again. At the suggestion of the tutor, the Chair applied for a grant from the British Mycological Society to assist in meeting the costs of the event and SFG been awarded the sum of £300 for this purpose. Fifteen people have expressed interest in attending, the maximum number which the tutor considers practical if participants are to receive a reasonable degree of personal support and attention. A date of Sunday 22nd September 2019 has provisionally been agreed on with the FSC.

In discussion, the meeting congratulated the Chair on taking the initiative in identifying the arrangements and obtaining grant aid, and supported the appointment of the tutor and the provision of expenses and an honorarium. They were happy to leave the Committee to determine the scale of this assistance. The Chair was authorised to go ahead and finalise all arrangements.

It was noted that some of the equipment supplied by FSC was in less than perfect condition and the Chair undertook to see if anything could be done to improve this. Members with their own equipment were encouraged to bring it along.

The Treasurer suggested that it might be appropriate for those attending to meet the costs of the refreshments provided by FSC. The meeting agreed that this was reasonable and that a fee of £15 should be paid to SFG by those attending.

## **Programme of forays**

As usual, there was a discussion of potential forays. Several locations were put forward. These included:

- a foray in the afternoon of 21<sup>st</sup> September 2019, the day before the Microscopy workshop, enabling people to collect material, at Benthall Edge near Broseley.
- A visit to the Cholmondley Estate in Cheshire.
- The May Plantation on the south side of the Wrekin.
- The Bog, 20<sup>th</sup> October, organised by Rob Rowe
- Whitcliffe near Ludlow, 13 October, organised by Rob Rowe.
- Gittinshay Wood near Habberley
- Hopesay Hill
- Sowdley Wood, including the Rock of Woolbury
- Prees Heath
- Grinshill
- Sutton Wood, near Coalport.

The Secretary was tasked with drawing up an outline programme and negotiating with leaders, recorders and land-owners.

## **Records databases**

The Chair described developments in the national database of mycological records (the FRDBI) which have occasioned him much work in recent months (a paper was circulated in advance of the meeting). Around 60,000 past records from Shropshire are in the process of being migrated to the new database, of which around 3,000 pose serious problems for a variety of reasons. He still has to prepare and upload all the records from 2016-18. The format of these records does not match the requirements of the new database in a number of respects and this will require some changes and may prevent some records from being accepted into the new system. In future, recording will need to be compatible with the new requirements and the Chair will prepare some guidelines/instructions for recorders. Recording on site during forays will be considerably more demanding.

SFG will have its own 'group' in the new database, and only the Recorder will be able to add records to this. Individual members will however be able to enter their own records if they wish to do so.

## **AOB**

Rob Rowe mentioned work he is involved with to set up the Middle Marches Community Land Trust and agreed to circulate information on this enterprise.

The meeting closed at 12.15 pm.

Philip Leather, Secretary, 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2019

# **SHROPSHIRE FUNGUS GROUP**

## **Annual General Meeting 2019**

### **Chair's report**

Much of what I have to say is already contained in two papers which are on the agenda for later discussion. This will therefore be brief.

I am pleased to be able to report that the group prospered during the past year. We have had an increase in membership, being joined by a number of enthusiastic people. Sadly however I have to report the death of one of our members, John Newnham, who was a member for a good number of years, although never a regular attender.

We held nine forays, including a successful public event at Dudmaston, and acquired over 1,100 new records. It is worth mentioning that a good many of these came from Rob Rowe's efforts (with others) on behalf of Caring For God's Acre, involving visits to a number of Shropshire churchyards.

Financially, we are in good order, with funding from SEDN (Shropshire Ecological Data Network) apparently set to continue, and there was an overall positive response to the workshop day we held at Preston Montford last November, which was very well attended. With regard to data records, members will recall that last year we submitted a second successful bid to SEDN for funding. A third bid has now been accepted, although there is a proviso that funds might not ultimately be available.

Last year, with the promise of additional funds, we agreed to extend our offer of bursaries for members wishing to pursue appropriate courses of education. No-one has taken advantage of this but I see no reason not to extend the offer for a further year. I hope you will agree. We also agreed to offer basic equipment to members, and in addition to making loupes available we supplied sets of stains and reagents to those who wanted them. I think it is important to attempt to use this funding to improve the knowledge and skills of our members with a view to maintaining the quality of our records. I would welcome suggestions about how this aim may be furthered.

In closing I'd like to pay a special thank you to Susan and Philip Leather for their continued support and help. I'm sure that when they booked places on a Field Studies Council mycology course in Scotland several years ago the last thing they expected to do was to end up running the Shropshire Fungus Group.

Les Hughes

March 2019

## SHROPSHIRE FUNGUS GROUP

### Statement of Accounts 1 Jan 2018 to 31 Dec 2018

Balance in hand at 1 Jan 2018 £354.81

#### ***Income***

Membership fees, inc back fees and advance payments (27 members) £190.00

Sale of books and donation for Roy's papers £70.00

SEDN grant 2017 £500.00

**Total income £760.00**

#### ***Expenditure***

Room hire for AGM 2018 and 2019 (£20 deposit 2019 to be returned) £62.00

Refreshments for AGM 2018 £9.10

Website services inc new hosting deal to 2022 £187.71

Crystals and reagents £135.48

Postage £15.54

Workshop materials £107.92

Workshop lunches (+£24 to add in 2019 for extra people) £95.00

**Total expenditure £612.75**

Income less expenditure £147.25

Carried forward from Dec 2017 £354.81

Balance in hand at 31 Dec 2018 £502.06

Susan Leather, Treasurer

26 March 2019