

FoHC General Meeting - 10th January 2026, 10am-12pm

(Previous meeting: 30th November 2025)

In attendance: Lucy, Chrissie, Ellie, Val, Liz, David, John, Sarah, Claire, Laurence

1. Minutes of last meeting

- Liz wanted to update that she went to the meeting with Rosie instead of Sarah, otherwise all fine
- **Action:** Lucy to double-check Council roles and responsibilities, due to recent staff changes, so we know who to raise issues to best

2. 'Business' side of FoHC

a. Chair position - Check in on how new roles are going so far (All fine so far)

b. AGM

- Updates on room booking/dates from Lucy

Range of options explored – 16th May, 2-4pm proposed as best possible time, with back up date 6th June. Room options: Garden Room with outside space or events room next to Café (£25 an hour). **Action:** Lucy to check in on Garden Room availability and to then book in next FoHC meeting a few weeks before. Chrissie to check in on events room.

- Any updates from Katie on PP/any extra thoughts on AGM

- Katie not in attendance, but Liz said she can help too with powerpoint. **Action:** Lucy to check in with Katie.

Structure: Kept simple after that with stall with info + powerpoint (rolling) of photos and video of FoHC + speaker. (Suggestions on the AGM presentation by officers sent over and included following the meeting: suggestion of short, pre-prepared officer statements; presentation of the accounts; governance (any amendments to the constitution and policies, which members can view in advance on the website) and election of officers (can be actual election or endorsement of the willing depending).)

- Ideas: Lots of great ideas, but reminded ourselves that we're holding an AGM for business purposes so doesn't have to be a grand event, as long as it focuses on information about FoHC and engages public. Ideas were for stalls (information of FoHC activities/photos/feedback) which could include tree with "leaves" for leaving feedback, benefits/achievements of FoHC work + related surprising facts (bat numbers e.g.), suggestions which we can reference next year ("we fulfilled these" etc.) or asking for projects ("would you like to see more ponds on the Common?"). Kids activity raised, but as we're not a child-focused group and this may result in a lot of work on the day, we left this. Speaker suggestion of John Budd for

a 20 minute talk on local birds. **Action:** Chrissie to send through info/contact details

- Display: chalk A-boards might be available to be borrowed from The Ardagh. We can stick things on the wall of the Garden Room. Suggestion of printing big posters of info.
- AGM team: Claire and Ellie kindly volunteered to carry on with organisation from here (Lucy can support with room booking and general help etc) **Action:** Claire and Ellie to link up and plan!

3. Matters from last meeting

a. Policies – GDPR and data protection/Financial

- *Update on GDPR policy from Val and Liz* (checked and ready to add to website!)
- *Update on Financial policy from Sarah and Val*
- Sarah happy to finalise **Action:** Sarah to send round for group to check)

4. Finance / Grants

a. CIL Funding for bat boxes - Val to update

- Just waiting for the money to arrive! **Action:** Chrissie to check this then work with Val/Sarah to transfer over to FoHC bank account, or Chrissie/Val to work out with receipts if not possible

b. Bristol Water

- *Any updates on hunt for someone with video skills/videos to share?*
- None yet, but Liz took some of pond. Suggestion of taking some at Litter Pick (“what did you find this month?”) **Action:** Lucy to take video at January pick, everyone else remember to continue to take video at events
- *Update from Liz on deadline for re-submission/any improvements to application* (ongoing: Val and Liz to retool and resubmit)

c. National Lottery Awards for all – John to update (to do, **Action:** John to continue)

d. Kew funding - £2000 (DL: 3rd Feb) growwild.kew.org/community-programme

My mistake (Lucy) on adding this in, as I'd forgotten we had agreed to create projects first and then look for funding – apologies! This kind of funding not needed right now.

e. Bank/savings account – any updates from Sarah

No updates on bank account, but question of website renewal raised. **Action:** Lucy to check in on website renewal and update Sarah

- f. *Councillor James Crawford asks if we have any projects that can use a small cash injection – any updates from Val*
Val chased, but no response yet. Suggestion to ask for money for shed (see 5g for details). **Action:** Shed team to let Val know costs so she can follow up with request

5. *Reports from subgroups/current projects*

- a. *New Quab Pond – any updates/future plans?*
Future work will be needed to stabilise variable water level (pond not deep enough to reach clay layer) and remove rocks/debris. Puddling in summer suggested as remedy.
Action: Val to check with Joe McKenna and Rosie (as of 15.01.26, they've given us a tentative go ahead!)
Action (for closer to summer): Laurence to submit risk assessment and keep an eye on pond, then put out a call out on whatsapp for puddling volunteers when the conditions are right.
- b. *Lower Common Pond clearance / plans for bridge removal*
- *Bridge removal – any updates from Lucy* (no updates yet)
 - *Pond vegetation clearance – updates from Dylan/Laurence/Lucy*
No firm agreement with time of year to conduct work, so we'll double-check with Council (will need their approval anyways and good to get it in writing) **Action:** Lucy to check with Joe McKenna
 - *Batch risk assessments – updates from Laurence*
Ready to go! **Action:** send to Sarah Blazier for approval
- c. *Wendy House Area* (suggestion of renaming Scots Pine Patch – will be reflected on next agenda)
- *Whip planting – update from Dylan and Val*
 - Oak, beech, wild cherry and more planted! The Council will not be interacting with the area at all, so it will be our job to monitor and trim grass etc.
 - Three types of invasive plants must be dug out – working party suggested for when ground is softer.
Action: Sarah to monitor area and let everyone know when appropriate to dig. Lucy to submit risk assessment to cover Spring.
 - *Fence removal plans – if appropriate now?* (protecting saplings for now, so will leave in)
- d. *Wassail in the Orchard – updates from Lucy and Val*

- Chrissie, Val and The Ardagh team have done a wonderful job organising! As of 15.01.26, advertising has been sent out with schedule and music/lyrics. Rog Revell to play melodeon, bring toast and introduce the parts at the Orchard. Ardagh team to provide cider and lead other parts of event. If rain, will go ahead mostly inside Cafe. Event will take place at Café on the Common, 5:30pm, Saturday 17th January – come join in!
- e. *Mosaic group - update from group/meeting dates*
- *Updates from Dylan/Val/Sarah (Liz attended in Sarah's place) on second meeting with Rosie (Project proposal from last meeting: Audit of broken trees - and replacement with natives?)*
 - Mosaic group plans for the Common have been submitted to the Council and we're just waiting to hear back (end of January). Council feel positive about using dead hedging to guide mowing and will revisit ideas after the next hay cut. They're not considering plans for any more ponds at the moment though. **Action:** to check why this is (has the Common received its share for now, or other issues at play?)
 - Muller Road triangle (across from the Victorian urinals): the Council don't want to mow it, so we can plant there. **Action:** check with Rosie (after plans come back) on any restrictions on types of trees we can plant due to proximity to houses
 - *Nature walks – any updates from Liz on potential programme for 2026*
 - Liz scheduled a wonderful range of talks for the year with Steve and Eric! Details below. Tree walks/art walks can be ran ad-hoc by ourselves. **Action:** Liz to book these in (then standard Eventbrite/advertising with Lucy when appropriate for each)
- Bat walks with Steve England: 21st April and 4th September
 Folklore of wildflowers with Eric Swithinbank: 20th May
 Pollinator safari with Eric Swithinbank: 20th June
 Walk on the Wild Side with Steve England: 11th July
- *Bunds (increasing the size of them on Castle Field during New Quab dig) – (no go)*
- f. *Ways to make links with Horfield Leisure Centre – Claire to update on if there's a liaison (no updates yet **Action:** Claire to continue)*

- g. Shed – Liz to update on location/options*
- Group checked over the space with Chrissie to measure – total area is 2.8 x 4.4m, but no need to buy a huge shed, just one that can at least fit the folding table. Cedar wood highlighted as sturdy and long lasting, but option hasn't been narrowed down just yet. At the moment, looking to cost ~£350, so can't purchase until money secured (Val to ask James Crawford, see 4f)
 - Shed group created (see below) to narrow down shed options/build when secured

- h. Suggestions of further sub-groups (shed, posters, communications, funding and grants)*
- Shed: David, John and Liz (as she's been looking at options so far)
- Posters and communication: Lucy and Liz (**Action:** Lucy to send info to Ellie to see if they'd like to get involved)
- Funding: Val, Claire, Liz and Ellie
- AGM: Claire, Ellie
- Mosaic group: established already
- Thanks for volunteering, everyone! Anyone who would like to join in any, please let us know

6. *Health and Safety* (risk assessments sorted elsewhere in meeting)

7. *Ideas for new projects / activities*

- a. Winter workshops* (not needed)
- Suggestion of fund creation activities, which can include linking with nearby groups (e.g. a walk that ends at the sauna), adding a donation link (securely) to the website, and increasing cost of walks. **Action:** Funding group to pick up (could ask Chrissie how the Ardagh's donation QR code/links work)
- b. Running route - maintenance/map* (suggestion to leave at shorter route and re-highlight that one)
- c. Suggestion of new environmental projects:*
- *Focus on planting more rare/endangered native trees*
 - *Further transplanting existing seedlings in no-mow areas already agreed with the council.*
 - *Building dead hedges bit by bit (adding material in over time)*
 - *Checking regularly on specific newly planted trees*
 - *Replacing dead trees with whips (Kellaway Ave. and Western Road field)*
 - Ran out of time to discuss, so Mosaic Group to pick up and develop. **Action:** Mosaic Group to meet and discuss
- d. Memorial tree planting – renewing this/creating new map?*

(Liz has found the original map! It's now up on the website under Resources)

e. *Plaques for trees/benches – Laurence to update (no go for now)*

8. **Communications (ran out of time, but no major updates/ need to check in with those involved anyways)**

- a. *Any updates/news for social media/ website/banner/Bishopston Matters/Twelve trees trail leaflet*
 - *Reminder for help with content for website/photos and video*
- b. *RSPB Spotlight on Local Groups / Managing for Nature newsletter – updates from Lucy / Dylan*
- c. *Special “weeks” (e.g. tree week) – any upcoming ones, from Katie? (Creating calendar with future plans/projects as well?)*

9. **AoB**

- a. *Ardagh Monthly Market – next planned for March/April*
 - *Decided on April to help publicise AGM – need volunteers to man the table! **Action:** post on whatsapp to see who would be available to volunteer*

10. **New issues for later consideration (ran out of time to discuss)**

11. **Potential projects (no discussion needed this meeting)**

- *Information boards for the Common (Spring)*
- *Ditch clearance (Autumn/Winter)*

12. **Date of next meeting**

- *Next meeting is 14th March, 10am-12pm, meeting after will be late March/early May before AGM (tbc)*
Action: Lucy to do usual scheduling for next meeting, once AGM is booked in
- *Volunteer training: no set dates upcoming*