

**Draft Minutes of the
Farm Woodland Forum
Annual General Meeting
24 June 2008
at Weem, Aberfeldy, Perthshire, Scotland**



Present: Paul Burgess (Secretary), David Corry, Jan Dick, Tom Dutson, Fiona Gordon, John Holland, Lynton Incoll, Keith Kirby, Gerry Lawson (Chairman), Jim McAdam, Geraldine McDonald, David Pilbeam, Alan Sibbald, Mike Strachan, Greg Thexton, Tony Waterhouse (Treasurer), Jon Wordsworth

Apologies: Ian Short, Hugh Williams, Mark Malins, Chris Stark.

The meeting started at about 7.00 pm. Gerry Lawson chaired the meeting.

1) Minutes of the 2007 Annual General Meeting

The minutes of the AGM of 27 June 2007 held at the Rural College, Draperstown, and posted on the Forum's website (www.agroforestry.ac.uk) were accepted as being a true record of the meeting.

2) Matters arising on the minutes

There were no items arising from the minutes other than those to be raised as agenda items.

3) Chairman's report

Gerry Lawson started the report of his second year as Chairman by thanking Mike Strachan for organising such an interesting and productive meeting. He noted that the Forum had remained active during the past year and had maintained its annual meeting and JISCMail communication. He specifically thanked Lynton Incoll for his involvement in keeping the addresses on the JISCMail list up to date and maintaining the FWF Proceedings

Unlike in previous years the, the Farm Woodland Forum had not responded to any major government consultations. However he noted the increased international demand being placed on land for food and fibre production, and the dramatic increases in food, land and timber prices. These provide a new opportunity for promoting agroforestry and productive farm woodlands. At the Executive Committee Meeting, held earlier, it was suggested that this should be the focus of the 2009 Annual Meeting.

It was worrying that England, Wales and potentially Scotland were applying the 50 trees/ha limit as the cut-off for payment of Single Farm Payments (SFP). Many countries, such as Ireland, maintained a focus on whether the land was being productively used for agriculture. Officials considered it unnecessarily bureaucratic to start counting trees. In other countries the possibility exists for "stacking" Single Farm Payment entitlements onto other land so that agroforestry-type developments did not affect the eligibility for SFP. It was suggested that the Farm Woodland Forum should highlight those countries that were taking an integrated approach and that the Forum should draft a letter that members could send to appropriate Ministers. There was also the possibility of responding to the current health check on the EU Common Agricultural Policy. For example in England and Wales:

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/cap-healthcheck/index.htm>

This closes on 1 September 2008. Paul Burgess suggested that this process would best be articulated through the Farm Woodland Forum's JISCMail list.

Action: Gerry Lawson

4) Secretary's report

JISCmail contact list and activity

Paul Burgess reported that on 23 June 2008, there were 186 contacts on the JISCmail list, up eight from last year. Use of the JISCmail service (42 postings) was up on last year (34 postings). A proposed agroforestry field trip to England was the item that generated the most interest. *Subscript: no pro-active attempt had been taken to increase membership in European countries, as suggested at the 2007 AGM.*

Membership

Only 17 members of the Forum had paid a full membership fee for 2007-08, eleven from the 2007 annual meeting and six new members. Because of the lack of a newsletter, the secretary had not sent membership fee reminders to the contact list.

Charity Commission: Annual Return and Trustee Update Form

Paul Burgess reported that he had submitted the Charity Commission Annual Return and Trustee Update form on 11 December 2007.

Agroforestry in the Temperate Zone COST Proposal

Paul Burgess reported that he was working with Dr Dick Freese of the Brandenburg Technical University in Germany and they had successfully passed the first stage of the COST process (European COoperation in the field of Scientific and Technical research) with a proposal entitled "Agroforestry in the Temperate Zone". The deadline for the second phase was 1 August 2008. Paul sought permission to include the Farm Woodland Forum's name in the proposal, and this was given.

Action: Paul Burgess

Photographic library

It was still the intention to develop a photographic library of agroforestry and farm woodland images on the Farm Woodland Forum's website. Paul Burgess had recently sent an e-mail to the membership requesting such images.

5) Treasurer's report

Tony Waterhouse presented the treasurer's report from 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008. The balance at the beginning of the year was £2110.89. The closing balance for the end of the year was £2036.67, but this did not include another £110.00 in subscription fees which was still due from the 2007 Conference. There was minimal change in the accounts for the past 12 months, and the receipt from membership subscriptions was almost balanced by the cost of a speaker at the 2007 conference. Tony reported that the accounts were currently being examined by an independent auditor.

Statement of the account from 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008

	Opening balance	£2110.89
Income		
	Subscriptions (07/08)	£41.00
	Donations	£64.32
	Bank interest	£20.46
	Sub-total	£125.78
Expenditure		
	Travel expenses for conference speaker	£200.00
	Sub-total	£200.00
	Closing balance	£2036.67
Income	Subscriptions (07/08)	£110.00
Outstanding		

In view of the state of the accounts, it was proposed that the annual subscription for an ordinary and student member be maintained at £10 and £1 respectively. The meeting suggested that the Farm Woodland Forum should actively seek membership fees from previous members.

It was proposed that Tony Waterhouse should take on the role of Membership Secretary and send out reminders to the members. In this case, it was also proposed that John Holland, currently Assistant Treasurer, should take on the role of Treasurer (See item 8).

Action: Tony Waterhouse

6) Report from the Fund-raising Sub-committee

Tony Waterhouse reported that the fund-raising sub-committee (A. Waterhouse, T. Dutson, J. Holland and G. Lawson) had not met through the year. Lynton Incoll proposed that one way to raise money for conference meeting was to contact the local tourist board.

7) Report from Publicity and Publication Working Group

Gerry Lawson reported that the Publicity and Publications Working Group (Gerry Lawson, Chris Stark, Ian Short and Alan Sibbald) had not met, but he provided an update on current publicity and publications.

Newsletter: a site visit report of the 2007 meeting (based on a write up from David Pilbeam and John Holland) had appeared in the Irish Forestry Journal. Gerry Lawson apologised that he had not checked that this was placed on the Forum's website. At the Executive Committee meeting it had been proposed that the meeting report was combined with the site visit report to create a 2007 newsletter. It was planned that a 2008 meeting report would be quickly issued.

Conference proceedings: Lynton Incoll had contacted each presenter of the 2007 meeting and those that were interested had the opportunity to place a paper or copy of their presentation on the Farm Woodland Forum website. Although Lynton received minimal response, it was agreed that he should also approach the speakers at the 2008 meeting.

Website: Gerry Lawson thanked Alan Sibbald for his excellent work in maintaining the Farm Woodland Forum website. Alan reported that from the 2007 Meeting Report he would extract the abstracts from the 2007 meeting and insert them as clickable links on the website. Gerry reported that he had investigated Joomla (<http://www.joomla.org/>) which is a web-based content management system. At present the hosting of the Forum's website at Macaulay was working very well, and there was no need to change the set-up.

Contact list for future meetings: Tom Dutson reported that he had updated the list of contacts for publicising future meetings. Tom was interested in possible additions and would send a request to the wider membership.

Action: Tom Dutson

8) Election of the Executive Committee

According to the constitution, nominations for election to the Executive Committee with one proposer and one seconder have to be received in writing by the secretary two weeks before the AGM. The following nomination was received:

	Nomination	Proposed	Seconded
Ordinary Member	Mike Strachan	Gerry Lawson	Tom Dutson

The meeting agreed unanimously to re-elect Mike Strachan to the Executive Committee. In addition it was proposed that Mike should take on the role of Vice Chairman. This was proposed by Gerry Lawson and seconded by Paul Burgess with unanimous approval from the meeting.

Following the discussion related to the role of a Membership Secretary and the Treasurer (See Point 5) it was proposed that Tony Waterhouse should become the Membership Secretary and John Holland (currently Assistant Treasurer) should become the Treasurer. This was proposed by Mike Strachan and seconded by Lynton Incoll and was approved of unanimously.

It was noted that the departure of Chris Stark left a vacancy on the committee. A written proposal had been recently received from Mike Strachan, and seconded by Gerry Lawson, that this place on the Executive Committee should be taken by Greg Thexton. However as it was noted that as Greg was not fully aware of the requirements of being a trustee of the Forum, it was agreed that he should serve as a co-opted Executive Committee Member for 2008-09.

9) a) 2009 Forum Meeting, National Forest, Derbyshire

In the absence of Hugh, Paul Burgess reported on the current progress with the 2009 meeting at the National Forest. It was suggested that this would probably take place on 24 and 25 June 2009. During the past year Hugh Williams had moved from the National Forest to Forestry Research at Alice Holt. Although he was no longer directly involved at the National Forest he was still supportive of the annual meeting being held there. It was still planned to use the accommodation of the new National Forest Youth Hostel (80 bed, centrally located in the forest and wood heated). In the past 12 months, Clive Keble had joined the Farm Woodland Forum and he was the principal point of contact. It was suggested that an organising committee including Hugh Williams, Clive Keble, Paul Burgess and one other should help construct a two-day programme. *Postscript: subsequent to meeting David Pilbeam and Gabriel Hemery have agreed to help with the organisation.*

Action: Hugh Williams, Paul Burgess

b) 2010 Forum Meeting

No decision was taken as to the possible location of the 2010 Forum meeting, but it was suggested that Gerry should approach Ian Short for a possible meeting in Ireland.

Postscript: Subsequent to the meeting, Ian Short has provisionally agreed to host the 2010 in the Republic of Ireland.

Action: Ian Short

10) Any other business

There was no further business and the meeting closed at 8.05 p.m.

P.J. Burgess

Secretary

30 June 2008 (modified 1 July 2008)