

## FRIENDS OF PUTNOE WOOD and MOWSBURY HILLFORT

### Minutes of the General Meeting held on 17 September 2024 at Cloverdale Retreat Café, Priory Park, Bedford

**Members present:** Lynn Caudrey, Jon Bishop, Mick Lilliman (item 4 onwards), Chris Moss, Dave Parratt, Peter Stathers, John Wallace, Chris Wedge, Helen Wilkie.

1 **Apologies for absence** were received from Anne Lilliman, Marion Wallace, Allison Wilkins, Andy Wilkins and Christopher Linton-Willoughby.

2 **Minutes of last meeting held on Tuesday 9 July 2024 and Matters Arising.**  
The minutes were agreed as an accurate record. There were no matters arising.

3 **Update from Country Park Guardian.**

Jon reported that clearing timber from the partially fallen tree in the Hillfort moat had been completed. Remaining timber will be left to form natural habitat. He reported the remaining standing tree has been pollarded to ensure its safety.

Brush cutting on the hillfort is progressing well. The rough grass to the south side of the hillfort ramparts will be left uncut to overwinter, and the need for cutting reviewed in the spring.

The meadow has been cut. Arisings from the courtyard will be removed on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> and spread along the rows awaiting baling on the meadow. Baling and removal of bales is due to take place on Thursday or Friday.

The following dates were agreed for Saturday Task sessions:

21 September (clearing arisings from courtyard and orchard on hillfort).

19 October, 9 November, 14 December: coppicing in Woods proposed.

John will ask Andy to make posters to advertise Saturday tasks. Jon will advertise through Borough Council social media.

4 **Future Tasks and Events**

John Wallace outlined work to be addressed in the near future.

#### **Putnoe Wood**

- Posts for benches need to be bought (1 for Wood and 1 for hillfort). Jon may be able to obtain a discount on the cost of posts from Borough Council source. Peter will liaise with Jon to pay. Jon can collect posts in his truck.
- Clear debris along brook and remove growth causing possible obstructions to water flow.
- Next coppicing plots will be 1H and some of neighbouring 1I in order to reduce the size of the latter which is currently is too large to coppice in one season.

#### **Hillfort**

- Rough grass to south side of hillfort ramparts will remain uncut for the time being.
- Remove arisings from courtyard, island and orchard. Add to meadow arisings rowed ready for baling.
- Chris Wedge had obtained a quote of £1,526 Metro Signs for a noticeboard for hillfort. This will not be followed up. Previously used cabinets may be available from Borough Council which could be refurbished. Dave said that there was a possibility of using Ward funding for this purpose.

5 **Financial Matters**

Peter reported that there had been no financial transactions since the last meeting.

## **6 Reports from members**

**6.2** Chris Wedge reported on the visit to the Hillfort by 2 groups of pupils and staff from Ravensden School on 10 July, led by Lucy Tomilson. This was a repeat of a similar visit in 2022, and was enjoyed by pupils, staff and Friends who took part.

**6.3** John reported the Friends had received an enquiry from Katie Lewis, Bedford BC, asking if we could assist Tracey Palmer of Action4Youth who are working with Mark Rutherford School. They are visiting the school on Tuesday 21 November from 9.30 to 11am and have enquired about the possibility of a talk about volunteering and the area plus a walk to Putnoe Wood and Mowsbury Hillfort for a group of twentyfour year 10/11 pupils as part of Action4Youth's Wild Wellbeing sessions.

Tracey Palmer is the Action4Youth Inspiration Programme Manager. Marion tried to contact Tracey when the enquiry first arrived but without success and left her own contact details. Now Marion has returned from her walking holiday she will try again.

**6.4** Chris Wedge reported that a Green Flag 'Mystery Shopper' inspection of Putnoe Wood was expected. To date there was no report of this on the website.

**7 Any other business** None

## **8 Date of Annual General Meeting and next General Meeting**

7.00pm Tuesday 12 November 2024 at Cloverdale Retreat Café, Priory Park, Bedford.