

FRIENDS OF PUTNOE WOOD and MOWSBURY HILLFORT

Minutes of the General Meeting held on 19 July 2022 via Zoom.

Members present: Jon Bishop, Lynn Caudrey, Martin Fannon, Sue Fannon, Anne Lilliman, Mick Lilliman, Chris Moss, Dave Parratt, Peter Stathers, John Wallace, Marion Wallace, Chris Wedge, Helen Wilkie, John Wilkie,

1 **Apologies for absence** were received from Diana Readhead, Allison Wilkins and Andy Wilkins.

2 **Minutes of last meeting held on Tuesday 24 May 2022.** The minutes were agreed as an accurate record. There were no matters arising.

3 **Update from Country Park Guardian.**

Jon noted that both sites were very dry and asked the Friends to stay alert to the danger of fires.

4 **Future Tasks and Events**

John Wallace reported.

4.1 Mowsbury Hillfort. The forecast was for cooler weather the next day, and the Friends agreed to carry out work on the hillfort the following afternoon. Tasks to be tackled: butterfly count, dead-head hogweed, golf ball collection, litter pick, and removal of dead material from the moat. Future tasks will include re-setting the post to the field gate into Mowsbury Meadow, and brush cutting and raking the courtyard meadow and island.

4.2 Putnoe Wood. Future tasks include: installation of path edging; cutting back low hanging vegetation where required along the brook; brush cutting along the green path.

4.3 Funding. Jon reported that it may be possible to obtain capital funding from the Green Space Capital Improvement Fund.

5 **Financial Matters**

Peter reported that after making a complaint to NatWest about the problems he had encountered in transferring the account management from John Wilkie to himself, he had now made progress, and was hopeful of having access within days. He will then update the Friends' accounts.

5.1 Fundraising. Peter reported that as gesture of goodwill following the problems he had had with NatWest, he had been told that the bank would make a £200 donation to the Friends' account. With this anticipated injection of funds, he estimated that the account balance would stand at £450. Members present agreed that no fundraising was therefore needed for the time being.

6 **Reports from members –**

6.1 Green Flag Award. Chris Wedge reported that Putnoe Wood had been inspected by a Mystery Shopper, and Mowsbury Hillfort had received a full inspection. The results should be known by 26 July.

6.2 Visit to hillfort by Ravensden Primary School. Marion reported on the visit by 21 pupils and supporting staff on the morning of 22 June. Marion, Helen and Chris had assisted the school with the school's planning, 7 Friends acted as guides during the visit, and Marion had put together additional notes to help the guides. It was a very successful and enjoyable

visit covering wildflower and butterfly identification in the meadow, and exploring and learning about the iron age hillfort. The lead member of staff sent an email thanking the Friends for their help. It is hoped that the school may wish to plan a similar visit in the future. The school had extended an invitation to the Friends to attend their village school's Centenary Celebrations on 7 July; Marion and John attended and saw displays of work by the year 3/4 pupils following their visit.

Note: Lynn and Dave left the meeting at approximately 7.25 due to internet failure. John Wallace assumed the chair.

7 Any Other Business

7.1 Timing walks around the Hillfort and Putnoe Woods. John Wallace said that members of the public sometimes asked how long it would take to walk around the sites. Martin said he had an Ordnance Survey App which could be used to work out distances of various routes around the site.

7.2 Vision Document for Putnoe Wood. John Wallace noted that he and Chris, with support from Dave and Andy, had written a Vision Document and sent it to James Lynch and Clare Pick for comment approximately 6 months ago, but had received no response. Jon said he would try to get an acknowledgement that they had received it.

7.3 Apple trees on the Hillfort. Marion reported that during their butterfly count on 13 July Chris, Maggie and herself had noticed that some of the apple trees had been stripped of fruit which was not yet ripe. It was agreed that notices asking visitors to refrain from picking apples until they were ripe, and not taking large quantities, should be made and displayed each year while the fruits are developing.

7.4 Hillfort visitors. Marion reported that she and Chris had encountered two ladies on the Hillfort who complained about the clearance work the Friends had carried out. They explained why the work was necessary after which the visitors said they then understood the intentions behind the work and appeared to be content.

8 Date of next General Meeting

Tuesday 27 September at 7.00pm by Zoom.