

# FRIENDS OF PUTNOE WOOD and MOWSBURY HILLFORT

## Minutes of the Meeting held on 20 October 2020 via Zoom

**Members present:** Jon Bishop, Lynn Caudrey, Martin Fannon, Sue Fannon, Anne Lilliman, Dave Parratt, Chris Moss, Diana Readhead, John Wallace, Marion Wallace, Helen Wilkie, John Wilkie, Allison Wilkins, Andy Wilkins.

1 **Apologies for absence** were received from Mike Ayles, Sarah Ayles, Mick Lilliman, and Chris Wedge

2 **Minutes of last meeting held on Tuesday, 3 March 2020.** These were agreed as an accurate record. There were no matters arising.

3 **Update from Country Park Guardian**  
Jon Bishop reported.

3.1 **Hillfort.** He congratulated the Friends on the Green Flag award. It had been a very busy summer with an increase in visitor numbers. There had been some vandalism, but no major issues. Jon suggested that the dead hedge to the north of the moat surrounding the island should be kept low so as to enable views of the island, but widened in order to make access across it by potential vandals difficult. The Friends now use the less obvious access route to the island via the Courtyard meadow. During discussion it was suggested that delaying the cutting down of nettles along the northern island viewpoint and the annual cutting of the island itself, may also be a deterrent to undesirable access. It was unlikely that there will be a Wassail in 2021

3.2 **Putnoe Wood.** Jon suggested that, with the Friends' agreement, the use of power tools for strimming and brush cutting was best carried out before the rest of the team arrived to clear arisings; this practice had proved successful in recent work on the Hillfort. Following Philip Harvey's enquiries about the use of metal detectors to search for possible remains of a Bristol Beaufighter aircraft which crashed into the Wood during the war, James Lynch had said that this would be allowed. Jon will try to be present when any detection work is carried out.

4 **Future Tasks and Events**  
John Wallace listed future tasks as follows.

4.1 **Putnoe Wood:** preparing for and coppicing area 1d; footpath clearance; clearing timber and rubbish from the ditch along the western boundary; clear timber and rubbish from stream adjoining golf course; erect new sections of fencing along western ditch to deter cyclists.

4.2 **Hillfort:** cutting back growth from the leat and ponds; scrub clearance on the south side of the hillfort to allow for vehicular access; manage bramble on south side adjoining scheduled boundary, and agree with Jon a plan for future management of this scrub area.

5 **Financial Matters**  
John Wilkie presented figures as at 3 March 2020

Category	Brought Forward £	Current Balances £
Money held in bank	574.47	387.81
Petty cash	0.00	0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>574.47</b>	<b>387.81</b>

## Transactions since last report:

### Income:

Tea sales	£23.00
Brickhill PC donations	£200.00

**Total Income** **£223.00**

### Outgoings:

Web site	£10.73
Tree protection	£287.53
Charitable donation	£111.40

**Total outgoings:** **£409.66**

## 6 Reports from members

**6.1** Helen presented a report from Chris Wedge. .

**6.1.1 Butterfly Survey.** Despite the late start and some wet Wednesdays about 8 walks took place during the summer. Certain species such as gatekeeper, meadow brown, common blue and various whites were very common but the old favourites like peacock, red admiral and small tortoiseshell were quite rare.

**6.1.2 Mowsbury Meadow.** As Lizzy Dobbie from the Wildlife Trust was unable to visit the outer meadow this spring or early Summer as she had planned to do, it was not possible to put the site before the County Wildlife Site panel. She hopes to be able to do this next year and then hopefully the CWS boundary may be extended to include the meadow and ramparts.

**6.1.3 Green Flag Award.** The Hillfort has been given a Green Flag Community Award for 2020.

Chris congratulated the Friends for all these group efforts.

**6.2 School Visits.** Marion noted that Hazeldene's visit planned for 22 April had been cancelled due to lockdown, but the school said it would like to visit in 2021 if COVID restrictions allowed.

## 7 Any Other Business

**7.1 Green Flag Application for Putnoe Wood.** John Wallace spoke about the possibility of making an application. Dave noted that this would need to be led by the Borough Council. After discussion it was agreed that Jon will speak to Katie and James Lynch about the idea, and subject to that an exploratory meeting should be arranged between Claire Pick, Jon Bishop, Chris Wedge and John Wallace. A survey of users of the Wood, including dog walkers, could form a useful part of the application.

**7.2 Review of Health and Safety documentation.** Helen reminded members that a working group comprising Mick, Dave, John Wallace and herself had been planned but had not met due to the coronavirus. Jon Bishop reported that in the meantime he had completed a review of all the Borough Council Health and Safety and COSHH documents that affect volunteer work and sent his findings to Katie and James with the intention that these should form part of an information pack for groups. Jon will follow this up with Katie and James.

## 8 Date of next meeting

6.00pm Tuesday 19 January 2021 via Zoom.