

FRIENDS OF PUTNOE WOOD and MOWSBURY HILLFORT

Minutes of the Meeting held on 25 June 2019 at the Borough Hall, Bedford

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

1 **Apologies for absence** were received from Robert Bright, Jane Warner, Chris Wedge, Maggie West.

2 **Minutes of last meeting held on Tuesday 25 June 2019.** Agreed as an accurate record.

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

3.1 Mowsbury Hillfort. After reviewing recent work to cut back of nettles and brambles in order to improve vistas from the northern viewpoint, it had been agreed with the Friends that no further clearing or pruning should be carried out there until after the bird nesting season was over. Limited clearing elsewhere will be undertaken after consultation with Jon. Hog Weed flower heads in the orchard will be retained for insects but removed once the flowers begin to die back and go to seed. Jon plans to run the cutter around the footpaths as was done last year.

3.2 Putnoe Wood. Jon reported that Laura has carried out the baseline survey on the area.

4 **Reports from Friends**

4.1 Mowsbury Meadow flower species count. Lynn reported on the results of the recent annual count. More flowers were counted but no additional indicator species found. Chris Wedge will collate the results and send to Laura.

4.2 Schools Visits. Marion reported.

4.2.1 Hazeldene School. Visits by 60 Year 4 children took place on 25 April following a preparatory briefing session by Marion and Nicky on 24 April. The visits followed a similar format to that used in the two previous years. They had been successful, enjoyable and much appreciated by the school. A total of 255 school children have now visited either the woods or hillfort: 180 from Hazeldene, 60 from Renhold, and 15 from Scott Lower. Marion thanked all Friends who had assisted with these visits.

4.2.2 Mark Rutherford School. On 20 May, Jon presented four Sixth Form students with certificates for the voluntary work they had carried out. The school, through teacher Sam Baker, is keen to continue the work which contributes to their community involvement.

4.3 Community Orchard Workshop. Marion reported on an event run by Goldcrest Outdoor Education team at Little Downham Community Orchard on 16 May and attended by Lynn, Chris Wedge and herself. The event was useful and enjoyable, and they were given resources which could be used in school lesson planning. Marion and others will consider how these might be used with visiting groups.

4.4 Kempston WI visit. Diana reported on a visit to Mowsbury Hillfort by 5 members of the WI on 18 June led by herself, and Helen. Despite the wet weather, it had been successful and enjoyed by all.

5 **Future Tasks and Events.**

John Wallace reported.

5.1 Putnoe Wood. Future work to be carried out includes: brush cutting and pulling remaining areas of small balsam; installing fencing at points where access by cyclists needs to be stopped; litter picking; path edge maintenance; ditch clearance.

5.2 Mowsbury Hillfort. Future work to be carried out includes pulling ragwort and clearing the processional path around orchard. In the neglected orchard, work is needed to manage nettles and maintain or create areas of dappled shade; an insect and bird count was suggested in order to inform decisions about carrying this out. A decision is also needed regarding management of the fruit trees in the neglected orchard - whether to leave them untouched, or carry out pruning.

6 Financial Matters

John Wilkie presented the latest figures.

Cash in Bank	£457.97
Petty Cash	£55.50
TOTAL	£513.47

Transactions since last report:

Income:

Tea sales	£47.50
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Total Income	£47.50
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Outgoings:

Photocopying	2.00
Tool purchase (J Wilkie reimbursed)	489.17

Total outgoings:	£491.17
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7 Any Other Business

7.1 Mowsbury Hillfort Information Leaflet. After discussion it was agreed that this should be re-printed. No amendments to the existing leaflet were required. Jon will arrange the re-print via the Borough Council.

8.2 Health and Safety. Helen reminded Friends of the need to ensure they take appropriate and adequate personal protection precautions when carrying out work on sites, with particular reference to the risk of allergic reaction to various plants.

9 Date of next meetings

Annual General meeting followed by General Meeting - 7.00pm Tuesday 10 September 2019. Location to be confirmed.