

FRIENDS OF PUTNOE WOOD and MOWSBURY HILLFORT

Minutes of the General Meeting held on 31 January 2023 via Zoom.

Members present: Lynn Caudrey, Martin Fannon, Sue Fannon, Mick Lilliman, Anne Lilliman, Dave Parratt, Peter Stathers, John Wallace, Marion Wallace, Chris Wedge, Helen Wilkie, Andy Wilkins, Allison Wilkins.

- 1 Apologies for absence** were received from Jon Bishop, Chris Moss, Diana Readman.
- 2 Minutes of last meeting held on Tuesday 29 November 2022 and Matters Arising.** The minutes were agreed as an accurate record.

2.1 Use of poles and other arisings from coppice sites. After consideration of the proposals from Guy Lambourne set out in the minutes of the last meeting, the general consensus of members present was to pursue the matter no further. Access to the site on Borough Council land, and the amount of additional work required by the Friends to prepare the coppiced materials, would have been problematic. The poles are being used by the Friends. Any surplus poles can be shared by Jon with other Borough Council sites including Harrold Odell Country Park.

3 Update from Country Park Guardian.

Jon had sent an update read by Dave. Jon had referred to the report by Lizzie Dobbie, 'A Phase II National Vegetation Classification (NVC) Survey of Mowsbury Hill CWS' and paid tribute to the Friends group for their work since their formation which has greatly contributed to the extension of the County Wildlife status to land surrounding the Hillfort.

Jon had received good feedback from those who attended the Wassail on 17 January and was very pleased with how the event went. Approximately 60 visitors attended following a number of last-minute withdrawals, probably due to cold weather.

4 Future Tasks and Events

John Wallace noted the need to be mindful of the start of the bird nesting period from March onwards, and the need to complete activities such as coppicing prior to this.

5 Financial Matters

Peter presented a financial report as at 31 January 2023.

Category	Brought Forward	Current Balances	Change
Money held in bank	457.86	444.67	- 13.19
Petty cash	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total	457.86	444.67	- 13.19

Transactions since last report:

There has been 1 transaction in the most recent period.

Income:

Total Income	£00.00
---------------------	---------------

Outgoings:

Web Site	£13.19
----------	--------

Total outgoings:	£13.19
-------------------------	---------------

Month Net change	minus £13.19
-------------------------	---------------------

Comments:

A first bank statement has now been received by The Treasurer.

The last meeting discussed bank authorisations and agreed that accounts will be made available on request for auditing. Martin had agreed to carry out an audit.

Several purchases were made to meet the needs of the Wassail. These included the purchase by John Wallace of six new flasks and paper cups totaling £217.28. It was agreed that the Friends would be asked to retrospectively approve these purchases which would be charged to the Friends' General Fund, and that John Wallace shall be reimbursed appropriately from this account. This will be shown in the next meeting's accounts. This will reduce the available funds to £227.39 in the account. The flasks and cups will now be group equipment and currently held by Anne, Chris and Marion

Donations received at the Wassail were £201, and after reimbursement to John Wallace for the purchase of apple pies, juice, bread and paper cups for use on the night (amounting to £53.77), the residue came to £147.23. Members present agreed to round this up to £150 and Peter shall make donation of this sum to the Bedford Food Bank before the next meeting.

A motion to make the above payments was:

Proposed by Andy Wilkins

Seconded by Martin Fannon

Approved by all Friends present.

After Note: The Treasurer sent the sum of £150 to the Bedford Foodbank on 2 February and received a receipt and note of thanks.

A small quantity of 'tea money' has been found and will be listed as petty cash.

6 Reports from members –

6.1 Green Flag applications. Chis reported that Green Flag applications had been submitted for the Hillfort and Putnoe Wood. The Hillfort will be judged by a 'Mystery Shopper' and the Wood will require a site inspection. Dave will remove the reported trip

hazards in the S E corner kissing gate into the Wood prior to the inspection. Members present thanked Chris for all her work in submitting the applications.

6.2 Health and Safety. Dave noted that the risk assessments for the sites needed updating; the last review and revision took place in 2017. This was a Council responsibility. Mick will read and comment on the current documents and then speak to Jon about his findings.

6.3 Ravensden Neighbourhood Plan Area. Dave reported that the amended plan is to be put to a local referendum on 23rd February 2023. The area will not include the Butts, whereas the new boundary of the Mowsbury Hillfort County Wildlife Site does include the Butts.

6.4 Borough Council Free Trees. Dave reported that on 15 and 18 February the Borough Council is giving away 5,000 trees to local residents, businesses, schools and community groups to collect and plant locally. Community groups can collect up to 25 trees, stakes and guards. He will ask Jon if the Friends can apply for trees with a view to planting them alongside the fence to the golf range.

6.4 Badger holes. Marion noted the considerable number of new holes in the Hillfort orchard.

6.5 Schools Work. Marion raised the subject of approaching local schools to see if they would be interested in the Friends' assistance with guided walks.

6.5 Friends website. Andy reported that he is not updating the website as often as in the past. The main site for updates on upcoming events is now Facebook.

7 Any Other Business

There was no other business.

8 Date of next General Meeting

Tuesday 28 March 2023 via Zoom.