

FRIENDS OF PUTNOE WOOD and MOWSBURY HILLFORT

Minutes of the General Meeting held on 23 January 2018 at Priory Cafe

Members present: Robert Bright, Lyn Caudrey, Martin Fannon, Sue Fannon, Mick Lilliman, Dave Parratt, Diana Readhead, John Wallace, Marion Wallace, Jane Warner, Chris Wedge, Maggie West, Helen Wilkie, John Wilkie, Andy Wilkins (Chairman), Allison Wilkins

1 Apologies for absence.

Apologies for late arrival were received from Jon Bishop.

2 Minutes of meeting held on Tuesday 14 November 2017

Item 8 Date of Next meeting amended to read 23 January 2018. With this amendment the minutes were agreed as an accurate record.

3 Update from Country Park Guardians

There was no report as neither Jon Bishop nor Danny Fellman were present at this point in the meeting. Andy reported on a reply he had received from the Mayor in response to his letter regarding the proposed regrading and redundancies of Park Guardians. The Mayor referred to communication with us on this subject by James Lynch. However, Andy stated that he had had no contact with James since sending the letter.

4 Future Tasks and Events.

4.1 Mowsbury - Higher Level Stewardship and Friends Vision Overview 2017. Dave and Lyn had written a summary of the work carried out during 2017 which included progress made against recommendations by Historic England and Natural England. On behalf of the Friends, John W expressed thanks to them for this work.

4.2 Green Flag Community Award Application. Chris has prepared an application which she will submit.

4.3 Wassail 2018. This was another successful event. Andy reported on the many complimentary comments received via the Friends' Facebook page. It was agreed that the early site preparation work carried out in December had proved helpful, leaving only set-up tasks to be done immediately before the event.

4.4 First Aid Training. Four Friends will attend this one-day course on Tuesday 27 February.

4.5 Health and Safety. All qualified brush cutter operatives confirmed they have read and understood the Toolbox Talks information about vibration white finger.

4.6 Future Tasks

Putnoe Wood

- Continue disposing of arisings from coppicing. Danny has identified and marked those piles that need to remain as wildlife habitats.
- Path repairs. John Wallace suggested that we ask Jon if the chipper could be used to convert coppiced wood into chips which could be used to repair paths in the wood.
- Snowdrop Survey. Marion and Chris proposed a survey to assess the spread of snowdrops in the wood.
- Trimming edges of footpaths

Mowsbury

- Clear windfall branches
- Clear debris from ponds
- Prune non-stone fruit trees
- Cut overhanging branches and nettles around north viewpoint
- Western Bridle Path - cut brambles and remove rotten oak fencing

4.7 Freeman's Common. Andy reported on a communication received from Gerry Sansom, Chair of CPRE Bedfordshire, about the long-term protection of Freeman's Common and ensuring it does not become included in plans for future developments. It was noted that the draft Borough Council Local Plan 2035 identifies the neighbouring Graze Hill as a site for housing but with no indication of additional infrastructure to support this. Whilst expressing concern for Freeman's Common, it was agreed that the Friends' primary focus is on Mowsbury Hillfort and Putnoe Wood.

5 Financial Matters

John Wilkie presented the latest figures.

Cash in Bank	£687.31
Petty Cash	£0.00
TOTAL	£687.31

Transactions since last report:

Income	
Tea Money	£41.15
Wassail Donations	£210.19
TOTAL	£251.34

Outgoings	
Wassail Costs	£44.33
Web Site	£31.15
Payment for meeting room	£7.45
TOTAL	£82.93

Diana was thanked for taking the collections at the Wassail. The surplus from the Wassail was £165.86 and, after discussion, a proposal that this will be donated to the Bedfordshire and Northamptonshire Multiple Sclerosis Therapy Centre on Barkers Lane, Bedford was Proposed by Martin Fannon

Seconded by Andy Wilkins

Agreed by all Friends present.

John and Helen Wilkie will contact the Centre to ascertain if they have any specific projects to which the money could be directed. The decision on which project to support could be made during a Task meeting.

7 Any Other Business

Friends birthday celebration pencilled in for 15th May 2018.

7.1 Country Park Guardian update. Jon joined the meeting and gave the following updates.

- The outcome of the consultations on the future of Country Park Guardians was still awaited.
- Jon will bring the chipper and wheel barrows to Putnoe Wood at 10am on Wednesday 31 January so that piles of arisings can be chipped and moved to those paths requiring repair. This will be an all-day task.
- Jon will arrange for the mature pear trees at Mowsbury Hillfort to be pruned by Apex. A 20% reduction was agreed.

7.2 Meeting with Natural England. 20 March has been provisionally agreed for a site meeting at Mowsbury Hillfort with Natural England and Geoff Saunders, Bedford Borough Council Archaeological Officer.

8 Date of next meeting

7.00pm Tuesday 10 April at a place to be notified.