

# FRIENDS OF PUTNOE WOOD and MOWSBURY HILLFORT

## Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 13 October 2015 in the Committee Room at Mowsbury Club House

**Members present:** Jon Bishop, Lynn Caudrey, Martin Fannon, Sue Fannon, Margaret Ibbett, Helen Miller, Chris Moss, Dave Parratt, Diana Readhead, Chris Searle, John Wallace, Helen Wilkie, John Wilkie, Chris Wedge, Andy Wilkins (Chair), Alison Wilkins, and Jane Moore

### 1 **Apologies for absence.**

Apologies were received from Robert Bright, Jane Warner, and Marion Wallace

### 2 **Minutes of last meeting held on 11 August 2015**

These were agreed as an accurate record.

### 3.0 **Update from Green Space Officers**

Jane Moore reported as follows.

**3.1 Mowsbury Hillfort Update.** Mowsbury Hill Meadow had been mechanically cut and the removal of cuttings to the west side of the meadow was in hand. The outer banks of the Hillfort and the Courtyard Meadow had been brush cut, and the raking of cuttings and their removal to the edges was also in hand. Future tasks include hedge trimming along the public right of way to the west of Mowsbury Hill Meadow, and brushcutting the Old Orchard once the wild liquorice had fully died back.

**3.2 Management Plan for Mowsbury Hillfort and Community Green Flag status.** Jane is drawing up a Management Plan based on criteria for the Green Flag status including a timetable based on ecological indicators. The Higher Level Stewardship, wildlife and archaeological surveys will be appended. The BNHS recorders' finding had not yet been received.

Jon Bishop reported as follows.

**3.3 Putnoe Wood.** Coppicing work continues in plot 1g. The hazel poles requested by Sir John Rigby School have been collected and will be delivered soon. The Hemlock Morris may be able to offer help with the coppicing.

### 3.4 **Wassail.**

This will take place at 7.30pm on Tuesday 19 January 2016 with Hemlock Morris and Redbornstoke Morris. The format will be similar to the 2015 event. Maximum attendance will be 80 for safety reasons.

### 4.0 **Hillfort Leaflet**

This had been printed and thanks were expressed to Lynn for her work on this. A list will be kept of where the leaflets are distributed. It was confirmed that costs had been covered via the Country Park budget.

### 5 **Notelets**

Andy reported that 400 summer and 400 winter cards (to create 100 packs of each) had been printed at a cost of £72 inclusive of printing, inserts and packaging. Packaging had still to be done. It was agreed that packs will be sold at £2 each.

### 6 **Monmouth Oak Bench, Mowsbury Hill Meadow**

Andy reported that the bench should be delivered to him by Friday 16 October. Jane will transport it to the site. Fixings had been obtained.

## 7 Future Tasks

John Wallace reported as follows.

- 7.1 Putnoe Wood.** Complete coppicing of plot 1g, trimming of path edges and more bramble bashing.
- 7.2 Mowsbury Hillfort.** Complete raking of Courtyard Meadow. Rake ramparts ready for mechanical removal of grass to beyond tree line on west side of Mowsbury Hill Meadow. In November cut grass in Old Orchard and continue with winter pruning of fruit trees in Neglected Orchard. Help Jane with hedge trimming along public right of way on west side of Mowsbury Hill Meadow
- 7.3 Replacement gates for Putnoe Wood.** There was discussion about a longer term project for Putnoe Wood involving the replacement of the rusting and rotting metal gates at the SW and SE entrances. In addition to their condition they are not fully DDA compliant. For practical and economic reasons it is not realistic to recycle the felled diseased timber in the wood. It was suggested it would be appropriate to use a local contractor to remove the metal gates and concrete bases and the Friends would be able to assist with installing new timber gates. If the new gates were DDA compliant they would constitute an improvement project rather than routine maintenance work. Funding for the work and materials was an issue for further consideration.

## 8 Financial Matters

John Wilkie presented the latest figures:

Cash in Bank	£420.42
Petty Cash	£35.57
TOTAL	£455.99

Transactions since last report:

### Income

Ward Funding	£474.00
--------------	---------

### Outgoings

Flask	£27.49
Bench	£394.00
TOTAL	£415.49

### Liabilities

Unused Ward Funding	£80.00
---------------------	--------

to be used for fixing costs for the bench, subject to Andy Wilkins obtaining approval.

### Future costs

New blades for saws

## 9.0 Any Other Business.

- 9.1 Freeman's Common.** A note circulated to Friends by Andy Wilkins before the meeting had explained the background to this item. This Trust owned common is currently arable / pasture land. It has been held in Trust by Freeman's Common Charity since 1797 and is now subject to consideration, together with other sites across the Borough, as a site for a new housing development. Friends were asked if they wished to support a campaign to stop the sale of the Common for development in view of its position as part of a wildlife corridor, and the impact on the local community in terms of increased traffic if it was built on. Discussion took place as a result of which Andy agreed to investigate the terms of the

original Trust as held by the Charity Commissioners, and consult with the Bedford branch of the CPRE and the Bedfordshire Wildlife Trust. In the light of Andy's findings, the matter of the Friends giving their formal support to the campaign will be discussed again at the next meeting.

**10.0 Date of next meeting**

7.00pm Tuesday 8 December 2015 at the Mowsbury Club House.