

FRIENDS OF PUTNOE WOOD and MOWSBURY HILLFORT

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Tuesday 8 November 2016 at Mowsbury Clubhouse

Members present: Jon Bishop, Lynn Caudrey, Martin Fannon, Sue Fannon, Chris Moss, Dave Parratt, Diana Readhead, John Wallace, Marion Wallace, Jane Warner, Maggie West, Helen Wilkie, John Wilkie, Allison Wilkins,

1 Apologies for absence.

Apologies were received from Jackie Hawkins, Chris Wedge, Andy Wilkins and Robert Bright. In Andy's absence, John Wallace chaired the meeting.

2 Minutes of meetings held on Tuesday 6 September 2016

These were agreed as an accurate record.

3 Update from Country Park Guardians

Jon Bishop reported.

3.1 Mowsbury Hillfort

- Mowsbury Meadow - mowing and clearance completed.
- Widening of entrance to meadow – new gates erected.
- HLS Funding for Archaeological investigation – Jon had been in email contact with Jeff Saunders, Archaeological Officer, regarding progressing the survey of the ditch. Responses from Historic England and Natural England are still awaited.
- Old Butts – the group will continue to keep a watching brief on this area.

3.2 Putnoe Wood.

- New entrance gates – installation is in progress
- Coppicing – in progress

4 Wassail 2017

Jon confirmed that this will take place on Tuesday 10 January 2017 with the Hemlock Group taking part as usual. The format will be similar to previous years. Preparation of the site will take place on the previous Wednesday afternoon, and Monday 9th.

5 Future Tasks and events

5.1 Putnoe Wood, John Wallace listed tasks already in progress or requested by Danny:

- New entrance gates – continue installation.
- Glade clearance – between paths 1 and 2, and half of the glade at the north-east corner.
- Installation of restrictions to access via south side bridge in order to slow cyclists' entry.
- Water retention in brook – to place 2 logs in the brook to create a shallow weir (2-3 inch) in order provide a pool of water for wildlife at times of reduced flow.
- Bramble bashing

5.2 Mowsbury Hillfort. John Wallace and Jon outlined the following winter tasks:

- Continue burning arisings
- Clearing the leat, including removal of stumps between pond and bridle path which will require a chain saw
- Ground clearance in south orchard.

6 Friends Update

6.1 CPRE award. John Wallace and Andy had attended the CPRE Living Countryside Awards ceremony where Mowsbury Hillfort was awarded a CPRE Mark and Putnoe Wood was Commended. Jon extended congratulations and thanks to the group for their work over recent years which had resulted in these awards.

- 6.2 Green Flag Community Award.** John Wallace said that a decision as to whether both or one of our sites will be put forward for the award once the application form has been examined. The closing date is 31 January 2017.
- 6.3 Mowsbury Hillfort Information Board.** Lynn reported on the progress of the working group. Consideration was being given to siting the board to the left of the approach to the Mowsbury Meadow gate on a site created by cutting back into the brambles. The relative merits of a lectern or upright model were discussed. Andy will print off a design for members to consider once a draft is available.
- 6.4 Scott Lower School visit.** Marion reported. After conversations with the Headteacher and a visit to the school, she had lead a 15 minute whole-school assembly on the Hillfort which had linked in with school learning objectives. This was followed by a site visit by School Council members from years 2,3 and 4, accompanied by two members of staff and 4 helpers from the Friends. The whole programme had been very successful and enjoyable. Marion is making contact with other local schools with a view to developing a similar programme including Putnoe Primary, and Brickhill, The Hills, Hazeldene, Renhold and Ravensden Lower Schools.

5 Financial Matters

John Wilkie presented the latest figures.

Cash in Bank	£545.33
Petty Cash	£10.00
TOTAL	£555.33

Income

Sale of notelets	£10.00
TOTAL	£10.00

Outgoings

TOTAL	£0.00
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Liabilities

Unused Ward Funding	£63.24
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John noted that in future the unused funding will not be reported separately

It was agreed that John will source and purchase two long-handled pitch forks.

7 Any Other Business

- 7.1 Bedford Walking Festival.** A number of the Friends had joined the walk on 18 September which had included the Hillfort and been well attended. Two new members of the Friends had been recruited as a result.
- 7.2 Willow for obelisks.** Jon said that willow was available for cutting at Priory Park.
- 7.3 Hedge Laying Course.** Jon gave details of a hedge laying course at Browns Wood on 21 and 22 January 2017, with preparation on the preceding two days.
- 10 Date of next meeting**
7.00pm, Tuesday 17 January at Mowsbury Clubhouse.