

FRIENDS OF PUTNOE WOODS and MOWSBURY HILLFORT

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 9 December 2014 in the Function Room at Mowsbury Club House

Members present: John Bishop, Robert Bright, Lynn Caudrey, Martin Fannon, Sue Fannon, Margaret Fisher, Helen Miller, Jane Moore, Dave Parratt, Diana Readhead, John Wallace, Marion Wallace, Jane Warner, Christine Wedge, Helen Wilkie, John Wilkie, Allison Wilkins, Andy Wilkins,

- 1 **Apologies & Welcomes:** None Received. Andy welcomed Robert 'Rocky' Bright to the meeting.
- 2 **Minutes of last meeting held on 14 October 2014**
These were agreed as a correct record.
- 3 **Update from Park Rangers**
John Bishop and Jane Moore reported on the following.
 - 3.1 **Borough Council Health and Safety Review.** As a result of the review we are requested to take heed of the following documents:
 - Booklet 'Health and Safety: a Guide for volunteers' which includes 'Your responsibilities as a volunteer' and 'Our commitment and responsibilities'.
 - Vegetation clearance using hand tools safe system of work
 - Operating a brushcutter safe system of work
 - Volunteer Task Sign in FormWe are also required to have a minimum of 2 appropriately trained First Aiders on site when we are working. This will require a 3 day training course and an annual half day refresher day. John Wallace will co-ordinate this in the New Year.
 - 3.2 **Wassail Tuesday 20 January 2015.** The format will be the same as for the 2014 event. The Hemlock Morris Dancers will perform and may be joined by Redbornstoke Morris from Ampthill. In that case the dancing will take place in the car park prior to people moving off to the Hillfort. Park Rangers will do preparatory work on the site the day before in order to ensure its safety. Friends are asked to act as guides on the night. Braziers will be lit in the old orchard and apple juice served for refreshment. Bookings to attend the Wassail will be via Priory Rangers 01234 211182 or email prioryrangers@bedford.gov.uk. The Hemlock Morris Dancers will also perform at The George, Silsoe High Street, at midday on New Year's Day.
 - 3.3 **HLS update.** Jane will claim money to cover 20% of the cost of pruning the pear trees.
 - 3.4 **Orchard Pruning.** It is hoped that orchard pruning will take place prior to the Wassail.
 - 3.5 **Sleeper info post at bottom of Mowsbury Hill Meadow.** Ed has completed the post which is ready for installation.
 - 3.6 **Installation of additional dog bin at north entrance to Putnoe Wood.** Cllr Headley had been in touch with an offer of support for the poop scoop campaign. John Bishop reiterated the fact that the single Borough Council member of staff whose job it is to empty dog bins is working at full capacity. An alternative to an additional dog bin would be to fix stickers to litter bins saying that these could be used to deposit poop bags. It was acknowledged that ideally a bin should be placed at the entrance to the wood nearest the old BMX track. John Wallace will explain the situation to Cllr Headley.
 - 3.7 **Mowing, Brush Cutting and raking orchard and inner island.** This work has progressed well.

3.8 Hillfort History. Thanks were extended to Rocky for information he had provided and which had been forwarded to the Borough Heritage Records Officer. Efforts will be made to find a plan of the inner Hillfort which showed the extent of stone footings revealed by excavations in the early 1960's.

4 Update on recent activities and events

4.1 Planting in Putnoe Wood. Over 400 trees and shrubs had been planted in recent weeks

4.2 Future Work Plan. It was agreed to work to a loose rotation of 2 consecutive week's work at each site, according to need, so as to give equal coverage to both. John Bishop will be coppicing in the Wood in the coming week.

4.3 Hillfort Information Pamphlet Work is continuing. A decision regarding the essential purpose of the leaflet would determine its content. It was acknowledged that it is important to raise awareness about the site, although its relatively remote location at the top of a hill does not lend itself to casual visitors. Jane will speak to Dave Kenney about the possibility of English Heritage's help to fund a sign advertising the Hillfort's Scheduled Ancient Monument Status.

5 Financial Matters

Cash in Bank	£312.57
Petty Cash	£34.44
TOTAL	£375.57

Transactions since last report:

Income:

Sale of notelets	£16.00
Easy Fund Raising	£30.18

Outgoings:

Purchase of rakes & grubbers	£58.74
------------------------------	--------

Change over period (£12.56)

7 Friends 4th Year Celebrations. Andy invited members to bring ideas to mark our 4th Anniversary on 4 March 2015 to the next meeting

8 Any Other Business

John Wallace reported that Cllr Headley had invited us to request Ward funding for Putnoe Wood. There is a deadline of early January 2015 for applications which must bring added value to the area, and not be for funding of routine work.

8 Date of next meeting

7.00pm Tuesday 10 February 2015 at the Mowsbury Club House.