

# Friends of Putnoe Woods and Mowsbury Hillfort

## Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> February 2012 at Mowsbury Club House

**Members Present** - Jane Moore, Diana Readhead, Paul Wheatley, Alison Wilkins, Andy Wilkins, Jon Bishop, Helen Miller, Chris Wedge

**Apologies** – Rita Brereton, Larissa Clarke, Chris Mackay, Ed Burnett

### 1. Green Borough Fair

This is on 26<sup>th</sup> February at St Mark's church, Calder Rise from 12-4.

We are aiming to promote the group and will have Andy's power point presentation on view (which he showed, it was excellent, so many thanks were expressed). We also hope to have photographs and fliers to show forthcoming events.

We will be able to demonstrate how to make obelisks. Jane can bring some hazel from recent coppicing and some willow. We will also have Laxton juice to sell.

Update: Andy, Chris, Alison, Diana, Helen and Kate manned the stall, new contacts taken, 4 obelisks sold and over £30 raised in funds from their sale and that of Laxtons apple juice.

Laxtons also sold at Seed Share event Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> March, £13 raised and new contacts taken.

Bat Talk at Priory Visitor Centre 23 people came and over £40 raised; donation of £20 given to Beds Bat Group. A very enjoyable and informative talk, well received.

### 2. March Celebration

Date confirmed is 20<sup>th</sup> March 7-10ish at Priory Visitors Centre.

It will be a 'Bring and Share' event and Jane will co-ordinate and email everyone.

We need an editorial to go in the paper relating to this and it was suggested that information could be obtained from the power point and the website. JM with help of LC to write draft and circulate.

### 3. Panoramic Panel

The money available for this project needs to be spent by the end of March so we need to have some ideas. It was suggested we could have a panoramic picture with key landmarks identified. Andy will try to take some photos. We will ask around to see if we can find an artist to help. It was suggested we try and bank the money as time is so short.

Update: Meeting John Wallace Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> March to discuss. JM, LC and Friends.

### 4. Wassail Event

Excellent feedback showing everyone had really enjoyed it.

Suggestions for the future:-

- other orchards should be used to avoid damage to one site
- hopefully volunteers could be more involved in the organisation
- the date needs to be fixed well in advance so as not to interfere with other important deadlines
- the big lights were successful and in future need to light the tree .....
- have hot soup instead of sausages

The hard work done by the Rangers was greatly appreciated. Donations of £33 were given. If this is to be put in a bank account for future use we need to form a Friends Group. This is something we hope to work towards. Jane will circulate a simple constitution for us to look at.

### 5. Apple Pruning Course

Helen had attended this course run by the East Anglian Apple Orchard Project and she reported that it had been a well run, informative and very enjoyable experience. Hope to run as an annual event to train more volunteers.

## 6. Future Tasks

**Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> March** 2-4 pm at the Hillfort put in as an extra date to do further apple tree pruning (to replace date cancelled due to snow)

**Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> March** at Putnoe Wood had been suggested as path repairing but further inspection shows this will need will need a contractor as it is quite a big job. Tasks can still be done at Putnoe, possibly further coppicing or opening views to the Hillfort. It was suggested the meeting time be set at 1-30 pm and finish at 4pm.

A litter-pick was suggested for **the morning of 17<sup>th</sup> March from 10-12**, meeting at the entrance to Putnoe Wood- **APPEAL for helpers. Jane is able to attend at the start of the session to drop off litter picker tools etc but if Friends can run the session it would be very much appreciated.**

**Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> April** 1-30-4pm an eco-survey at Putnoe woods

**Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> April** 2-4pm a guided walk at Putnoe woods

**Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> May** 1-30-4pm an eco-survey at the Hillfort

**Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> May** 2-4pm a guided walk at the Hillfort

## 7. Any Other Business

- Paul is attending the Putnoe Community Safety Forum at Putnoe Heights Church on 1<sup>st</sup> March at 7-30pm. He will mention our group and Jane agreed to talk about it.  
Update: Presentation well received and local councillor Michael Headley to put as much of diary in his newsletter as he can fit.
- The money from The Greensand Trust is available for the orchard. £400 is being spent on reducing the height of the very tall fruit trees, £200 on purchase of new trees to replace dead trees, £100 on equipment (pruning saws and secateurs) and £100 on identification of some of the apple varieties.
- The website is up and running, thanks to Andy
- Ed Burnet has said the Borough is applying for higher level stewardship for Mowsbury Hillfort Local Nature reserve and adjacent meadow. Possible further funding through Heritage Lottery bid by Borough in conjunction with BTCV.
- There will be a plant sale at Priory on 15<sup>th</sup> April 2-4pm, partly run by ladies who look after the wildlife garden
- Paul said that as his job description was changing he may not be able to be so involved so he wished us every success
- Seed Share event held 3<sup>rd</sup> March – update -good attendance by the public and interest in the calendar of tasks. Details taken of possible new volunteers to circulate info to. Just over £10 taken in Laxton juice sales.
- New young volunteer shown an interest – aged 12 years Charlie Almond. Agreement that Charlie can attend if under supervision from council staff member and with consent letter from parent/guardian.

## 8. Date of Next meeting

Tuesday 27<sup>st</sup> March 2012 at 7pm, at Mowsbury Club House.

NB - update: Bat Talk on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> February (Bob Cornes) went very well with over 20 people attending and some interest in the Friends Group from new contacts. Sufficient funds were raised from the donations to give a £20 donation to Beds Bat Group which they were very pleased with and raise further funds towards the group.

The Beds Bat Group very kindly left us with some bat info packs from the Bat Conservation Trust. If you would like one of these, please let Larissa know.