

Friends of Putnoe Wood and Mowsbury Hillfort

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 3rd July 2012 in the Trophy Room at Mowsbury Club House

Members Present -Jane Moore, Diana Readhead, Helen Miller, Alison Wilkins, Andy Wilkins, Larissa Clarke, Marion Wallace, John Wallace, Helen Wilkie, John Wilkie, Chris Mackay, Chris Wedge, Ed Burnett

1. **Apologies** – Jon Bishop, Audrey Wilkins

2. **Minutes of last meeting**

Agreed as correct

3. **Amendment to Constitution**

All agreed that the name of the group should be changed to The Friends of Putnoe Wood..... instead of The Friends of Putnoe Woods..... The amendment was signed and put with the constitution.

4. **Management plans for both sites and future Tasks**

After looking at Andy's list Jane suggested the following

Putnoe Wood

- Putting benches in sight line sites, Ed has some suitable wood
- Put oak post at the wood entrance for notices about the Friends group
- Cut back the nettles etc to open up the rides
- Survey of trees and other plants
- Dave Barnes has identified an area that is covered with brambles which could be cut back after mid -August

Mowsbury

- Plant Surveys
- Cut back nettles etc from along the paths. We could borrow some slashers!
- Cherries and other stone fruit trees could be pruned
- Clear some of the Elder around the orchard provided no nesting birds
- Put bird boxes in Mowsbury and Putnoe (no bat boxes in Putnoe)
- Continue searching the archives
- From mid – October the main meadow and courtyard will be cut
- From mid –August start to get rid of some of the brush cuttings, use the chipper for this. When we are coppicing etc in future we should try to strip and stack the cuttings carefully
- Investigate putting in some steps(permission will be needed)
- Clearing ditches but we will need to check what wildlife is there
- Trim back path up side of the outer meadow
- Replacing tree guards

5. **Update from Park rangers etc**

Covered above

6. **Future responsibilities of the Friends Group**

\It was decided that we should set some specific dates and try Andy's suggestion of every Wednesday and every other Saturday afternoon.

- Wednesday 11th July - clear nettles along path towards the orchard/courtyard meadow at Mowsbury
- Wednesday 18th July – clear paths and rides at Putnoe
- Wednesday 25th July – clear more paths at Mowsbury
- Saturday 28th July – attend Archaeology Event at Priory with aim of promoting the group
- Wednesday 1st August –activities to be arranged later
- Wednesday 8th August

- Saturday 11th August
- Wednesday 15th August

It was suggested that members should provide their own gloves and mug for the activities so that one person is not responsible for looking after these items (spares will be available)

The Friends Group will be able to assist the rangers in checking the sites and reporting any problems. The overall responsibility will still remain with Priory Rangers.

Larissa asked that if anyone visits Mowsbury Park after a weekend and sees lots of litter around the sports areas to inform her as she will then be able to contact the teams that may be responsible. Also if anyone sees people persistently allowing their dogs to foul the area, or throwing bagged poo away in the wood to let her know.

7. Problems with cut brush at Putnoe Wood

There have been comments/complaints made about the coppicing and cut brush. It was suggested that explanatory notes could be put on an information board about management of the wood.

8. Financial Matters

The bank account is being sorted.

9. Fund Raising

Andy had various suggestions that were well received such as recipe books, calendars, Christmas cards, notelets. He suggested we all think about these quickly. He will be able to arrange printing but it takes time to get things organised.

10. Any other Business

- There is going to be an article about the Friends group in the Pride in Bedford newsletter
- Details of tasks will be put on website and John W. will put together posters that we can circulate as before
- The Nature Reserve sign to be replaced, possibly just outside boundary of the Ancient Monument site
- We could think of putting a post at the bottom of the outer meadow, close to the golf club car park to advertise events to walkers etc.
- John Wallace reported he had spoken to Dorothy Jameson, historian, who would be prepared to give a talk on the Gostwick family
- Everyone was very impressed and thought the newsletter was fantastic. Thanks to Andy for all his work on this. It will be important that other people try to contribute stories or other news items.
- The Opal course will be from 11-2 on Thursday 12th July. It will start at Brickhill Community Centre on Avon Drive and then move on to the orchard. It is necessary to register.

11. Date of next meeting

Tuesday 4th September 2012, hopefully again in the Trophy Room at Mowsbury Golf Club.

(Thanks to John Wallace for arranging this venue which we all agreed had been very successful)

The meeting finished at 8-45 pm.