

FRIENDS OF PUTNOE WOODS and MOWSBURY HILLFORT

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 14 October 2014 in the Function Room at Mowsbury Club House

Members present: Lynn Caudrey, Martin Fannon, Sue Fannon, Dave Parratt, Diana Readhead, Chris Searle, John Wallace, Jane Warner, Chris Wedge, Helen Wilkie, John Wilkie, Allison Wilkins, Andy Wilkins,

1 **Apologies:** John Bishop, Ed Burnett, Margaret Fisher, John Jordan, Helen Miller, Jane Moore, Marion Wallace.

2 **Minutes of last meeting held on 12 August 2014**

These were agreed as a correct record.

3 **Update from Park Rangers**

In the absence of any of the Park Rangers the following was noted.

- **Walking Route between Putnoe Wood and the Hillfort.** Andy had received an email from Ed Burnett following his discussions with Management of the Golf Course. They agreed to 3 to 4 walks per year and would require 3 week's notice in advance. The date for walks must avoid clashes with important competitions at the Club, and a Risk Assessment would be needed. The proposed route had been discussed.
- **HLS Update** It was noted that Jane has to apply for retrospective funding from Natural England on completion of work carried out under the HLS plan.
- **Orchard Pruning** Discussion took place as to best times to prune trees taking into account recommendations by the RHS. It was agreed that pruning of stoned fruit trees will take place in June, and apples and pears in January/February, weather permitting in all cases.
- **Outstanding Actions from previous meetings:**
 - Replacement of notice boards at Putnoe Wood entrance Danny has ordered the new boardsAndy will ask the Rangers for updates on -
 - Nature reserve sign at Hillfort
 - Installation of sleeper info post at bottom of Mowsbury Hill Meadow
 - Installation of additional dog bin at north entrance to Putnoe Wood.

4 **Update on recent activities and events**

- **Foraging Walk 7 September 2014** Thanks were extended to John and Ginny for leading the walk which was very enjoyable and well attended. John has offered to lead another walk in the spring.
- **Wassail Tuesday 20 January 2015** John Bishop had confirmed that the Hemlock Dancers will attend. It was agreed that any profits will be split between the dancers and the Friends.
- **Hillfort Information Pamphlet** Work is continuing. It was agreed that the format should be A4 tri-fold. Some reduction in the text was needed, especially on the front page. The following agreed to form a working group to progress work: Lynn Caudrey, Dave Parratt, Chris Wedge and Andy Wilkins.

5 **Financial Matters**

Cash in Bank	£341.13
Petty Cash	£34.44
TOTAL	£375.57

It was agreed that John will purchase two more Wolf aluminium handles, 2 x cultivator heads and 2 x rake heads

6 Christmas Meal, excursion

It was agreed that we would incorporate a small celebratory gathering into the next meeting (see below). John Wallace will liaise with Clubhouse staff to arrange Christmas nibbles etc.

7 Any Other Business

John Wallace offered to lead a guided walk around Wrest Park at a date to be agreed in the future

8 Date of next meeting

7.00pm Tuesday 9 December 2014 at the Mowsbury Club House.

AFTER NOTE

The following update was received from Jane Moore, Park Ranger on Wednesday 15 October.

Ed has sorted out permissive path. Signs being ordered.

Ed hopes to have signage carved for sleeper notice board. He wanted the wording confirmed again at meeting. Can you please send him an email to let him know.

There are a pile of bat boxes sitting outside the office at Priory. Jon wanted to know if the group would like them to sell to raise funds. (There are enough at Priory and at Putnoe Wood and don't need any at the Hillfort.)

Cut and collect still to be done. Have been chasing. Will let you know when I have a date.

Spoke to Laura Downton (BCN Wildlife Trust) about managing the ragwort on lower third of field. Advises I keep it mown regularly next year along with removal of ragwort rosettes. We will have to live with thatch building up over next year on that part but hopefully can include in cut and collect at end of season which may remove some. After that we need to keep on top of ragwort removal or if that proves unfeasible will go back to mowing until we have got on top of ragwort problem.

To do:

move arisings from Mowsbury Hillfort Meadow one cut and collect done

finish brushcutting and raking off outer banks of Hillfort.

brushcut and rake off orchard

brushcut regrowth on inner island

slash nettles in neglected orchard

cut back RHS hedge adjacent to footpath that climbs up the side of Mowsbury Hillfort Meadow (blackberries are finished). Will bring hedgetrimmer up and do probably easiest option