

Friends of Putnoe Wood and Mowsbury Hillfort

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 4th September 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, Jon Bishop, Sue Fannon, Martin Fannon
Chris Wedge,

1. **Apologies** – Chris Mackay

2. **Minutes of last meeting**

Agreed as correct

3. **Welcome to new members**

Sue and Martin Fannon were welcomed to the Group

4. **Formality of Meetings**

Some concern had been expressed that our meetings were in danger of becoming too formal. After some discussion it was felt that there needs to be some structure if we are to make progress and everyone is generally happy with the format

5. **Update from Park Rangers, officers and members**

- Larissa has emailed Simon Fisher asking if he could talk to the group about the Green Wheel Project and the Green Space Strategy. Andy has circulated information about this via an email, together with a questionnaire that we could fill in. Hard copies of The Green Space Strategy were available to look at.
- It was suggested we could apply for a Community Award. Larissa has details (she will send round).
- The 'poo bag' poster has been through various stages and was more or less in its final form.
- We are trying to get posts for our notices; there might be cabinet type boards we could use.
- We can replace the 'Nature Reserve' sign at the Hillfort
- We have cleared about 1/5th of the meadow on the inner island at the Hillfort and we plan to clear as far as the ditch
- **Future plans for the Hillfort** are to knock back some scrub in the courtyard meadow, clear scrub around the orchard, raking the courtyard meadow and outer meadow after mowing, identify the trees, think of ways of reducing rabbit numbers
- **Future plans for Putnoe Wood** are putting in a noticeboard, put in new benches to replace plastic ones, more coppicing, replacing fencing in the East corner, cutting back the rides, removing some small balsam next June before flowers set, clear some sedge and bramble, identify trees with acute oak decline to get an idea of the number affected, try to let people know why some trees are being felled and also the advantage of altering the age range of trees in the wood.
- Members raised the problem of getting rid of cuttings etc., especially at the Hillfort. We could have a designated area for burning outside the main reserve and/or get a chipper up there.
- The path along the side of the Hillfort has been cleared after receiving a letter from a walker
- Grass cuttings have been thrown onto this path from adjacent houses. This is being investigated and followed up.

6. **Future tasks and events**

- Wednesday 5th September - continue cutting back on the inner island at the Hillfort
- Wednesday 12th September – clearing some of the paths at the Hillfort
- Saturday 15th September - Jon will lead a session looking at trees in Putnoe wood to identify those oaks with acute oak decline and to identify some of the other trees

- Wednesday 19th September – Raking the meadow
- Wednesday 26th September – continue raking the meadow
- Saturday 29th September – to be confirmed

7. Fund Raising

- We could have a stall at the Victorian Fayre in December.
- There is also an opportunity for promotion of the group and volunteer recruitment through the national Making a Difference campaign that runs from Saturday 21st October to Saturday 3rd November 2012. Pride in Bedford are planning a promotion of this campaign.
- The Notelets are being sold in various places at £2 for a pack of 4. Many thanks to Andy, they are excellent. A poster advertising them was shown.

8. Financial Matters

Diana has been asked if we could speak at her WI group and we would receive a donation This was agreed.

9. Any Other Business

- Some bird boxes have been made and are ready to go up
- Suggested we try to have a bat walk next year
- Suggested we keep a short diary to record the tasks we have done etc.

10. Date of Next meeting

Tuesday 6th November, hopefully in the Trophy Room again