



The Friends of

**Putnoe Woods
& Mowsbury Hillfort**

Constitution

Friends of Putnoe Woods and Mowsbury Hillfort

March 2012

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1. Name

The name of the group shall be **Friends of Putnoe Woods and Mowsbury Hillfort**

2. Aims

The aims of **Friends of Putnoe Woods and Mowsbury Hillfort**:

- ❖ To foster and promote all the activities of the two sites by working in partnership with Bedford Borough Council and the Park Rangers.
- ❖ To assist the park Rangers with practical and promotional tasks.

3. Membership

Membership is open to all:

- ❖ Willing to assist in practical or administrative tasks.
- ❖ Willing to promote the group and encourage local people to enjoy the two sites
- ❖ Supports the aims of **Friends of Putnoe Woods and Mowsbury Hillfort**

Membership will begin when contact details are recorded. There is no annual membership fee.

All Members except for those elected to the Management Committee will be unable to vote at meetings except for at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) but can participate in discussions and express their point of view.

A list of all members will be kept by the membership secretary.

Ceasing to be a member

Members may resign at any time in writing to the secretary.

Any offensive behaviour, including racist, sexist or inflammatory remarks, will not be permitted. Anyone behaving in an offensive way or breaking the equal opportunities policy may be asked not to attend further meetings or to resign from the group if an apology is not given or the behaviour is repeated. The individual concerned shall have the right to be heard by the management committee, accompanied by a friend, before a final decision is made.

4. Equal Opportunities

Friends of Putnoe Woods and Mowsbury Hillfort will not discriminate on the grounds of gender, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, sexuality, disability, religious or political belief, marital status or age.

5. Officers and committee

The business of the group will be carried out by a Committee elected at the Annual General Meeting. The Committee will consist of at least 5 and a maximum of 12 members, three places being offered to representatives of Bedford Borough Council and be composed of 3 officers and up to 12 committee members. Two additional members may be co-opted onto the committee at the discretion of the committee.

The officers' roles are as follows:

- ❖ Chair, who shall chair both general and committee meetings
- ❖ Secretary, who shall be responsible for the taking of minutes and the distribution of all papers **and maintaining membership.**
- ❖ Treasurer who shall be responsible for maintaining accounts.
- ❖ Task and Events co-coordinator

In the event of an officer standing down during the year a replacement will be elected at the next General Committee Meeting.

Any committee member who wishes to retain their voting writes and is unable to attend at least 60% of meetings, tasks or a combination of both will be contacted by the committee and asked if they wish to continue to assist the group in this role.

Members of the Management Committee who are not able to attend a meeting are asked to notify the group before commencement of the meeting.

The Committee meetings will be open to any member of the **Friends of Putnoe Woods and Mowsbury Hillfort** or the general public who may speak but not vote.

6. Meetings

6.1. Annual General Meetings

An Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held within fifteen months of the previous AGM.

All members will be notified in writing at least 2 weeks before the date of the meeting, giving the venue, date and time.

Nominations for the committee may be made to the Secretary before the meeting, or at the meeting.

The quorum for the AGM will be 50% of the management membership or 5 members, whichever is the greater number.

At the AGM:-

- ❖ The Committee will present a report of the work of **Friends of Putnoe Woods and Mowsbury Hillfort** over the year.
- ❖ The Committee will present the accounts of **Friends of Putnoe Woods and Mowsbury Hillfort** for the previous year.

6.2 Special General Meetings

The Secretary will call a Special General Meeting at the request of the majority of the committee or at least three other members giving a written or verbal request to the Chair or Secretary stating the reason for their request.

The meeting will take place within twenty-one days of the request.

All members will be given two weeks notice of such a meeting, giving the venue, date, time and agenda, and notice may be by telephone, email or post.

The quorum for the Special General Meeting will be 10% of the membership 10 members, whichever is the greater number or 6 members of the management committee.

6.3 General Meetings

General Meetings are open to all members and will be held at least **every three months** or more often if necessary.

All members will be given two weeks notice of such a meeting, giving the venue, date, time and agenda, and notice may be by telephone, email or post.

The quorum for a General Meeting shall be 10% of the membership or 5 members, whichever is the greater number.

Meetings will be limited to two hours with an extra thirty minutes available at the discretion of the officers present, if the agenda can be completed within this time.

If the agenda can not be completed items outstanding can be deferred to the next meeting or a Special Meeting called.

7. Rules of Procedure for meetings

All questions that arise at any meeting will be discussed openly and the meeting will seek to find general agreement that everyone present can agree to.

If a consensus cannot be reached a vote will be taken and a decision will be made by a simple majority of members present. If the numbers of votes cast on each side are equal, the chair of the meeting shall have an additional casting vote.

8. Finances

An account will be maintained on behalf of The Friends of Putnoe Woods and Mowsbury Hillfort at a bank agreed by the committee. Three cheque signatories will be nominated by the Committee (one to be the Treasurer). Any two of these must sign every cheque. The signatories must not be related nor members of the same household.

Records of income and expenditure will be maintained by the Treasurer and a financial statement given to each meeting.

All money raised by or on behalf of Friends of Putnoe Woods and Mowsbury Hillfort is only to be used to further the aims of the group, as specified in item 2 of this constitution. **The account will be named Putnoe Mowsbury Friends.**

9. Amendments to the Constitution

Amendments to the constitution may only be made at the Annual General Meeting or a Special General Meeting.

Any proposal to amend the constitution must be given to the Secretary in writing. The proposal must then be circulated with the notice of meeting.

Any proposal to amend the constitution will require a two thirds majority of those present and entitled to vote.

10. Dissolution

If a meeting, by simple majority, decides that it is necessary to close down the group it may call a Special General Meeting to do so. The sole business of this meeting will be to dissolve the group.

If it is agreed to dissolve the group all remaining money and other assets, once outstanding debts have been paid, will be donated to a local charitable organisation. The organisation to be agreed at the meeting which agrees the dissolution.

This constitution was agreed at the Inaugural General Meeting of the Friends of Putnoe Woods and Mowsbury Hillfort on:-

Date/...../.....

Name and position in group

Signed

Name and position in group

Signed