



The Friends of

Putnoe Wood & Mowsbury Hillfort

Newsletter

Issue 5 September 2012

One small step for mankind.

A giant leap for the Friends group and one small step for mankind. Not exactly Neil Armstrong's words as he first set foot on the moon, but relevant to our latest exploration across the void to the inner island of the Hillfort.



Green Belt Risk

The June newsletter highlighted radical changes to the planning laws, following publication of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This new policy requires Local Planning Authorities to identify sites for their quota of new housing for at least five years in advance. The NPPF states that planners should “*recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside*”, however, in a number of further statements the NPPF encourages new development in rural areas. An important feature of current planning law is the opportunity to designate rural land as Green Belt, which provides protection against urban sprawl and uncontrolled development over the fields. Does the NPPF mean we are going to see the end of green belt protection to our precious beautiful countryside? The new planning policy framework, NPPF, means it is clear the Government intend relaxing current regulations so it will be easier to build on green belt land. Of equal concern is the related proposal to allow councils to sell off public amenity land for housing, both for sale or rent. It is also being suggested that farmers will be able to sell their land if is no longer profitable for agricultural use. There is a vital need for more houses to accommodate the growing population but at what cost. Our countryside is a precious asset and future building development needs to be controlled very carefully. *Continued on page 2.*

Bag it, bin it, don't chuck it or sling it!



Bedfordshire On Sunday ran an article on the problem of discarded poop bags and litter in Putnoe Wood after receiving complaints from local people. The Borough Council have suggested at some sites vandals were emptying the dog waste bins and throwing the Poop bags in the surrounding area, we do not think this is happening at Putnoe Wood. We would like to encourage all dog owners to continue to dispose of their Poop bags in the bins provided or take them home. Please support our campaign against the irresponsible dog owners who pick up, bag it and then throw their dog Poop bags into bushes and trees in Putnoe Wood. It would be wonderful if the Borough Council organised a whole town campaign against irresponsible dog owners or ideally there was a national campaign on this issue. In partnership with the Borough Council, we have produced a design for a poster and by the time you read this newsletter there should be posters on display at the Wood.

Up-and-Coming Events and Tasks 2012

Friends Meeting

Mowsbury Golf Club, September 4th. 19.00

Tasks:

Every Wednesday 1.30—4.00pm.

Every other Saturday 1.30—4.00pm

Please checkout our Facebook page

Chairman: *Andy Wilkins* Secretary: *Chris Wedge* Treasurer: *John Wilkie* Events and Tasks Coordinator: *John Wallace*

Island Escape

After surveying the inner island at the Hillfort, the long term project is to return it back to its original meadow state. Cutting back the scrub has commenced on this marathon task and work will continue over the coming months.



We only lost one person down a rabbit hole and John Wallace completed a double summersault with triple twist in his attempt to impress the Olympic squad. The highlight of the afternoon was seeing a pair of butterflies enjoying the newly cleared area.

Lichen and mosses at Mowsbury Hillfort

The Friends group joined members of the OPAL team and Dr Jon Rosewell from The Open University in the orchard at Mowsbury Hillfort.



Some of the fruit trees were GPS mapped and the task of logging the types of lichens and mosses continued together with recording the quantity of lichens and mosses present. Dr Rosewell demonstrated the use of iSpot, a software package that assists in the identification of lichens and mosses by selecting set descriptions such as colour, height and particular features.

To find out more go to:

www.ispot.org.uk or

www.OPALexplorenature.org/

Let Us Know Your Views.

Contribute to the October issue of the newsletter.

Together **E**veryone **A**chieves **M**ore

Una Sulum Perficio Magis

Continued from page one

In addition, the Government should encourage more use of 'brown field' sites within existing urban areas eg the new housing on the WH Allen factory site. Bedford had a major building expansion during the Victorian period when the railway and industry arrived in the town, new factories and houses were built. Fortunately, unlike some historic towns and cities, Bedford town centre did not suffer too badly from the rebuilding mania in the 1960s. The town has seen a major residential expansion on the north side of the town with almost continuous house building from the 1960s onwards to establish Brickhill, Putnoe and now Woodlands. Agricultural and horticultural land was lost to these residential estates and the University. However, we should be pleased that Bedford has retained many of its historic buildings and parks, has controlled the residential expansion and integrated new parks and amenity land for public enjoyment and has ensured the countryside continues to be accessible.

There needs to be a balanced approach to future building on the countryside. That is why it is important for the Friends to raise the profile and enhance the recreational usage of Putnoe Wood, Mowsbury Hillfort and the surrounding countryside so that it is totally unacceptable for these areas to be lost to concrete and tarmac.

Fund Raising

The Friends group have produced a pack of Notelets that we hope will raise funds for tools, projects and to support events.



Each pack contains four images from Putnoe Wood and Mowsbury Hillfort complete with envelopes in clear packaging. A minimum donation for each pack of £2.00 would be appreciated.

Memories

Please contact us if you have memories or information of any kind on Putnoe Wood or Mowsbury Hillfort. We are always trying to expand our knowledge and understanding of these two sites and record our findings for future generations.

contact@putnoemowsburyfriends.org.uk

www.facebook.com/#!/putnoemowsburyfriends



Not a follower of fashion

You may not be a follower of fashion or even Facebook which could mean that you are missing out on the latest news, events, and tasks from The Friends of Putnoe Wood and Mowsbury Hillfort. Here's a taster of what's been going on.



Chainsaw Massacre



Yes! This is Park Ranger Jane beneath the helmet cutting and cross cutting the Elder and Blackthorn trip hazards but there is going to be a lot more blood, sweat and tears catching up with the Friends Group as we plough through the scrub up at the Hillfort



Mowsbury Hillfort Island Escape.



Friends of Putnoe Wood and Mowsbury Hillfort 8 August Thank you! Mowsbury Hillfort Island Escape. We only lost one person down a rabbit hole and John Wallace completed a double summersault and triple twist that the Olympic squad would have been proud of. The highlight of the afternoon was seeing a pair of butterflies enjoy the newly cleared area.



@Friends of Putnoe Wood and Mowsbury Hillfort



Friends of Putnoe Wood and Mowsbury Hillfort

July 20 Even the Kitchen Sink. While carrying out the path clearance in Putnoe Wood of the nettles and overhanging branches the group picked litter as they went. Not only did they find the usual cans, bottles, glass, paper and of course the discarded dog poo bags but a kitchen sink. Who ever went to the trouble of carrying this across Mowsbury Park and then dumping it in the woods should stand up and raise their hand. We think you should receive a special award!



David Barnes, posted to Friends of Putnoe Wood and Mowsbury Hillfort



During yesterdays visit to the Hillfort the Orchids may have been going over slightly but the butterflies were enjoying the sunshine with Speckled Wood, Meadow Brown, Marbled White and Large Skipper all seen



Friends of Putnoe Wood and Mowsbury Hillfort.



Hose pipe ban, Yes! - torrential rain, Yes! Eco-survey at Putnoe Wood, no stopping us!



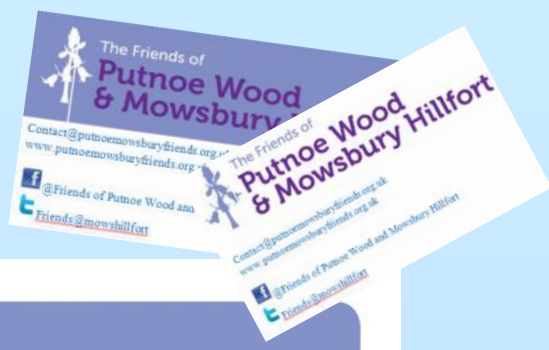
Going Batty at the Priory. Thank you to all concerned with the bat talk, a very informative and entertaining evening, not forgetting little Nora Batty who stole the show. The cake went down well but the meal worms were a little hard to swallow.



Stay in touch.
Find Us on FaceBook and Twitter or
www.putnoemowsburyfriends.org.uk



We have a range of business cards, hand-outs and information sheets available that can be emailed to you for distribution or for your own information.



The Friends of Putnoe Woods & Mowsbury Hillfort

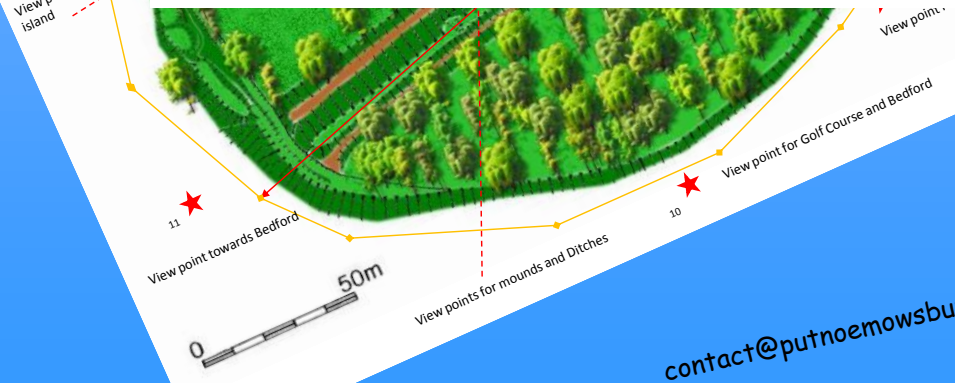
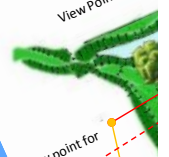
The Friends of Putnoe Wood and Mowsbury Hillfort began life in March 2011 and formed a constituted group in May 2012. As well as the manual tasks we are actively trying to get local people interested in the two sites by organising and promoting nature, wildlife walks, foraging, archaeological and history events. We have a close working relationship with the Priory Park Rangers and other groups and experts in their fields so that we always have the best guidance and advice possible. We are always looking for new opportunities to promote the Wood and the Hillfort but not at the expense of the environment or the wildlife.

If you would like to come and join us on a task, an event or require further information please email us on: contact@putnoemowsburyfriends.org.uk or check out our Facebook page, Web Site, Twitter or our monthly Newsletter which you can have emailed to you.

Everyone welcome to all sessions and 'Friends' meetings. No experience necessary for the volunteer tasks. All equipment provided. Please wear comfortable, practical clothes and footwear, and come prepared for all weathers! Places must be booked in advance for the guided walks on the contact number shown below.

For further information on any of the above please contact:
 Larissa Clarke - (01234) 718350 or email larissa.clarke@bedford.gov.uk
 Priory Country Park Rangers - (01234) 211182 or email prioryrangers@bedford.gov.uk
www.putnoemowsburyfriends.org.uk
 @ Friends of Putnoe Woods and Mowsbury Hillfort Friends@mowshillfort

Mowsbury Hillfort



contact@putnoemowsburyfriends.org.uk