



The Friends of

Putnoe Wood & Mowsbury Hillfort

Newsletter

Issue 2 June 2012

Can't See the Wood for the Woods

During recent encouraging discussions with Cllr Michael Headley, John our Events and Tasks co-ordinator was asked why we were using Putnoe Woods rather than Wood. An interesting question because way back in the past Woods was the name used, this may have reflected the size and extent of the Wood in Norman times. Coming back to present times it is interesting to note that Wikipedia still refers to Woods. However, Park Ranger Danny has confirmed that the management plan and the Citation for the County Wildlife site refer to Wood. Therefore to avoid confusion it is best if we fall in line with the Council and be consistent across all of our media.

You might have noticed that the web site, Facebook and the Newsletter now reflect the change from Woods to Wood and it is not a problem to erase the surplus "S" from the templates. The wording in the constitution will have to be updated with an amendment, something for the next Friend's meeting. Many thanks to Cllr Michael Headley for bringing this matter to our attention.

So from Woods to Wood, let us hope that in years to come it will not shrink to Putnoe Copse.



Data spreadsheets collected from the Plant survey at Mowsbury Hillfort can now be viewed and updated online.

Where have all the Avens gone

In recent times Putnoe Wood has been getting drier, evidence of this can be seen by the loss of the ponds to the north side of the wood and plants such as the Water Aven have gone. Global warming could be a contributor but man's interaction in the area has probably accelerated the process. With the construction Mowsbury Golf Club and Mowsbury Park in the seventies, it was necessary to change the water drainage to the area north of the Wood. As a result of the provision of these amenities together with the enlargement of the stream that runs along the north side of the wood, to accommodate surface water run-off from the North Brickhill and Woodlands estates, the same volume of rainfall from Mowsbury Hill and the surrounding area does not now drain down to the Wood.



Have Your Say!

How would you like to see our group progress?

How can we raise funds?

What Tasks or Events would you like us to consider?

Let Us Know Your Views.

Contribute to the July issue of the newsletter.

Up-and-Coming Events and Tasks 2012

Tuesday 12th June

7.00 to 8.30pm, litter pick evening at Mowsbury Hillfort Meeting in car park.

Tuesday 3rd July

Friends meeting. Venue to be confirmed.

David Barnes has recorded two new birds at Putnoe Wood. Lesser Whitethroat and Stock Dove.



National Planning Policy Framework

You may not think that the published National Planning Policy Framework would be of concern to a community conservation group such as ours, but look a little deeper into 59 pages of this publication and you could be surprised. The wild life that Putnoe Wood and Mowsbury Hillfort support is not just dependant on these two small havens but on the surrounding countryside. The NPPF expects Local Planning Authorities to identify in advance sufficient sites for five years' worth of housing with an additional buffer of 5%. The NPPF also states that planners should "*recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside*". However, in a number of further statements it encourages development in rural areas. What is disconcerting is that the area around our two sites, Freemans Common, Jackmans Farm and the area spreading out from the present Norse Road developments are natural prime targets for future housing. Mowsbury Golf Course, Mowsbury Park and the Bedford Athletic ground, which are all owned by the Borough Council, are designated as amenity open space and part of the Green Wheel. Cllr Michael Headley said they are safe under the current borough development plan. Should we be concerned, yes I think we should! There are so many questions that cannot be answered at this time, so we need to keep a careful eye to ensure the intrinsic beauty of the countryside is not threatened or changed.

If You Go Down To The Woods Today



It may be your last chance to see the spring flowers in Putnoe Wood

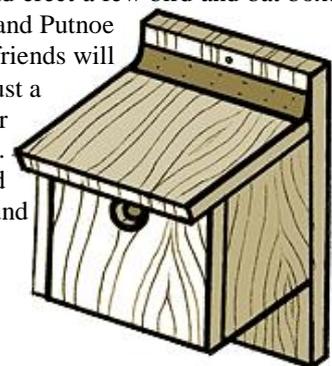


Back To Nature

Ed Burnett led the nature Walk at Mowsbury Hillfort. Not only did we find Flora and Fauna that we had not recorded before but we were also entertained by a soaring buzzard and David Barnes's discovery of a nesting site for a Spotted Woodpecker.

Build A Bird A Home

If you have the time and inclination one of our tasks this year is to build and erect a few bird and bat boxes at Mowsbury Hillfort and Putnoe Wood. Our feathered friends will not expect mansions just a dry warm place to rear their young or to roost. Construction plans and instructions can be found on the website.



Celebrate The Diamond Jubilee

Waveney Green. Brickhill

Tuesday 5th June 11am-3am

All activities are free of charge

www.brickhillparishcouncil.gov.uk

FOOD FOR THOUGHT



Service Tree

Location

Mowsbury Hillfort. (In the wild normally confined to ancient woods and hedgerows). Also known as the Chequer Tree. Remains of the berries have been found in prehistoric sites.

Harvest/Pick

September. Fruit are the size of small cherries. Hard and bitter but 'blet' during autumn and become sweet.

Uses

When berries have ripened they can be eaten like sweets or used to make alcoholic drinks, either steeping the berries in spirit or making wine.

Medlar

Location

Mowsbury Hillfort. Probably a native tree but only occurs occasionally in hedgerows in southern England.

Harvest/Pick

After November frosts.

Uses

When bletted the brown flesh can be scrapped out and eaten with cream and sugar, baked whole or made into a jelly.

Information taken from Food For Free. Richard Mabey

