



The Friends of

# Putnoe Wood & Mowsbury Hillfort

## Newsletter

Issue 6 October 2012

### Acute Oak Decline Investigation

Putnoe Wood is under threat again. Two previous occasions were during the nine weeks siege of Bedford Castle, when the Royal forces of Henry III used the Wood as a convenient source of timber and then again during World War One, when timber was needed for the trenches. A new form of Acute Oak Decline is spreading across the centre of England and Wales.



Putnoe Wood, along with other woods and forests, is under investigation for acute oak decline with the support of the Forestry Commission. Scientists are currently investigating the causes of the problem but currently there is no known cure or prevention for this disease. Symptoms include dark fluid bleeding from splits in the tree bark leading to a rapid decline in the health of the

oak tree. The key cause of this condition appears to be a pathogenic bacteria, causing necrotic patches to form under the bark which is followed by splits in the bark. A number of pests and pathogens can cause stem bleeding and confirming whether it is acute oak decline can be very difficult, relying on visual symptoms alone is not sufficient evidence. Planning for the future, new oak saplings can be planted and these would not be susceptible to Acute Oak Decline, because only mature trees over fifty years old seem to be at risk. By the time these trees reach maturity hopefully a cure would have been found or this disease would have run its course. For the latest information please go to the Forestry Commission web site at: [www.forestry.gov.uk/](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/)

### Making Hay While The Sun Shines



The picture shows the Friends hard at work raking the cut grass on the hillside meadow at the Hillfort, the rain stopped briefly to allow a large area to be cleared. The top part of the meadow was mowed this year for the first time in more than a decade. Last year when the rest of the meadow was cleared this area was left long to give any shrews, mice and other small mammals a short term refuge. It was mowed this year because creeping thistle and common ragwort were becoming dominant in this part of the meadow. Removing the cut grass reduces the nutrient levels in the soil and gives the wild flowers and finer grasses a better chance to grow. Interestingly, the Friends preferred to use the traditional wooden rake rather than the heavier metal one.

### St Mark's

Our thanks to St Mark's for promoting the Friends group in their Partnership News and for displaying and selling the notelets on our behalf.

### **You can help to protect healthy oak trees and prevent spreading Acute Oak Decline:**

Avoid contact with trees showing symptoms such as stem bleeds and dead or dying branches.

Do not touch the bleeding areas on tree stems.

If you have been walking or cycling in an area where there are diseased trees, clean soles of walking shoes and bicycle tyres before entering areas where trees are not yet affected.

Do not remove dead wood, branches or infected bark from the wooded area.



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

### Litter Poster



Posters trying to encourage users of Putnoe Wood and Mowsbury Hillfort to dispose of their litter responsibly have been placed at all of the exits to the Wood and at the path leading up to the hillfort. We do hope it will have the desired effect.

### Self Build Houses Due Spring 2013



Pocket Rocket Diana and friend have been beavering away over the last few months producing nest boxes for Putnoe Wood and Mowsbury Hillfort with further models on the production line. We also have a quantity of timber in store to increase the total build to well over twelve elegant homes. They should be ready for occupation for the 2013 breeding season.

### Green Space Strategy

As discussed at our last meeting, the Friends Group has been asked to participate in the Boroughs questionnaire for the Draft Green Space Strategy. The questionnaire is straight forward for us to complete, if you have any comments that you would like included in our reply please let us know before 12th October. For further information go to [www.bedford.gov.uk/greenspace](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/greenspace)

### **Let Us Know Your Views.**

Contribute to the November issue of the newsletter.

**Together Everyone Achieves More**

### Christmas Stocking Filler

Why stuff a healthy orange, nuts or a fattening Mars bar into your loved ones Christmas stocking this year when you can give them a pack of our unique notelets.



They are virtually fat, salt and sugar free, fibre rich and are 100% recyclable. 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.

### Did You Know

Putnoe Wood and surrounding estate has a long history. The name in its present form has been around since the 16th Century, but was formerly known as 'Puttenhoe' and 'Putenho' indicating the spur or 'hoh' of land belonging to an unknown Anglo-Saxon settler called Putta.

The next owner of the Putnoe estate in around 1066 was Anschil De Asketill of Scandinavian Origin and then recorded in the Domesday Book in 1086 as a wood big enough to support a hundred swine and was given to a Cistercian order.

In 1224, Considerable damage was done to Putnoe Wood during the nine weeks siege of Bedford Castle, The Royal forces of Henry III using the wood as a convenient source of timber. A full century was needed for the complete recovery of the wood.

In 1537 the dissolution of monasteries ended Warden Abbeys ownership and the estate passed to the Gostwick Family of Willington. In 1731 the estate was sold to Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough and then in 1774 was purchased for Francis, fifth Duke of Bedford.

In 1798, the first botanical records of Putnoe Wood were recorded in Charles Abbot's 'Flora Bedfordiensis', Charles Abbot was a well-known local parson and botanist.

The demolition of Putnoe Farm in 1968 ended a continuous period of over nine hundred years during which the site had been occupied by a succession of farm buildings at the centre of a manorial estate.

### 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



### 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



### Friends of Putnoe Wood and Mowsbury Hillfort Scrub Clearance September 5



Unfortunately this is the last task on the Hillforts Inner Island, at for the present. We are producing so much debris, not just in this area, that dead hedging cannot resolve the problem. Hopefully in the near future a solution can be found to clear the waste from site, burn or chip. But look on the bright side, the cleared area is a lot brighter and we are still enjoying the challenge.

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### Impromptu coppicing session



September 6

Impromptu coppicing session and obelisk making demo with our guests for the day, Youth Inspired C.I.C. Putnoe Woods from 10-12 on Thursday 18th October.



@Friends of Putnoe Wood and Mowsbury Hillfort



### Friends of Putnoe Wood and Mowsbury Hillfort September 3



Green Wheel Panoramic Display. A handsome piece of street furniture, unfortunately too rich for our funding at the Hillfort. We would have to spend the rest of our

lives in internal servitude to get the likes of these. Our only consolation is that our images were used in the art work and pictorial images.



### Task at Hillfort abandoned August 29

For safety reasons, due to weather conditions, today's task at the Hillfort was abandoned and we retired to the golf course clubhouse for an impromptu meeting and coffee. The task has been re-scheduled for this coming Saturday 1st September 1.30 – 4.00. This is only the second time we have had to cancel a task, the last being deep snow at Putnoe Wood. Come when you want and stay as long as you like. Meet in Mowsbury Golf Course car Park or You will find us by the sound of "whistling while you work" emanating from the Inner Island.



### A higher class of Rabbit



A higher class of Rabbit. An Oyster Shell found excavated from a rabbit burrow.

Next Task. Wednesday 29th August. Mowsbury Hillfort 1.30 - 4.00. Continue clearing scrub from Inner Island.

Stay in touch.

Find Us on FaceBook and Twitter or  
[www.putnoemowsburyfriends.org.uk](http://www.putnoemowsburyfriends.org.uk)




## Word Search Quiz

Answers in any direction and are associated to either Putnoe Wood or Mowsbury Hillfort in some way.


C	H	A	R	L	E	S	A	B	B	O	T	D
Y	A	S	P	D	O	M	E	S	D	A	Y	I
R	W	I	R	O	B	I	N	C	L	D	F	A
R	T	M	T	A	E	L	D	E	T	O	L	R
E	H	O	N	E	T	T	L	E	I	U	E	Y
B	O	N	R	O	T	P	A	R	T	R	O	Q
K	R	S	R	R	L	U	R	A	V	E	N	W
C	N	C	I	C	I	T	A	G	O	P	I	S
A	E	A	C	H	O	T	P	H	E	N	R	Y
L	A	R	H	I	N	A	D	I	L	R	O	J
B	T	R	A	D	J	M	U	G	D	O	N	A
O	U	O	R	R	N	O	C	H	E	S	A	M
A	P	W	D	E	K	U	K	S	R	E	G	E
K	M	O	R	I	N	S	B	U	R	Y	E	S
F	C	R	O	N	P	E	A	F	L	O	R	A
E	A	F	F	O	R	A	G	I	N	G	E	P
W	B	U	R	C	S	S	T	R	E	A	M	G

1. Bird of prey.
2. First Anglo Saxon settler in Putnoe.
3. Medieval Manor House at Mowsbury Hillfort.
4. Aged Tree.
5. Vegetation and plants.
6. King that laid siege to Bedford Castle.
7. Rabbits Home.
8. The first botanical records of Putnoe Wood were recorded by this Parson.
9. A Tax survey Book of 1086.
10. The young leaves of this Tree were widely known as “bread and Cheese”.
11. Ancestor of all cultivated plums.
12. Known as Brambles in Scotland.
13. Spotted leaved Common Flower.
14. Artificial watercourse or aqueduct.
15. Preceding the Roman period.
16. Christmas Card Bird.
17. Unwanted growth.
18. Seeking free food.
19. Drinking vessel.
20. Romans flogged themselves with this plant.



The Friends of  
**Putnoe Wood  
& Mowsbury Hillfort**

**A6 Notelets (4 pack)**



**ONLY  
£2.00**  
Donation

*These 4 great images taken from Putnoe Wood and Mowsbury Hillfort in Bedfordshire are available as A6 Notelets in a unique 4 pack gift set complete with envelopes.*

*To purchase your pack of notelets please contact Rebecca at [rebecca.wilkins@bedford.gov.uk](mailto:rebecca.wilkins@bedford.gov.uk) or for more information about Putnoe Wood and Mowsbury Hillfort please visit: [www.putnoemowsburyfriends.org.uk](http://www.putnoemowsburyfriends.org.uk)*



### Keep In Touch

Browse and download photographs of our tasks, events, views, wildlife, fauna and fauna at:  
[images@putnoemowsburyfriends.org.uk](mailto:images@putnoemowsburyfriends.org.uk)  
 Download the Newsletter and information from the Membership page or check for up and coming tasks and events on the Diary page:  
[www.putnoemowsburyfriends.org.uk](http://www.putnoemowsburyfriends.org.uk)

### Up-and-Coming Events and Tasks 2012

Friends Meeting Mowsbury Golf Club,  
November 6th. 19.00

Additional Task: Thursday October 18th.  
 Coppicing session and obelisk making demo at Putnoe Wood 10–12.00, with our guests from Youth Inspired C.I.C.