

FRIENDS OF NAPHILL COMMON

MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING No. 38 Poland House, 21/10/14

1. Present and apologies

Present: Chris, Neil, Ron, Sheila, Steve, Trevor, Peter, Marek and Peggy.

Apologies: Kevin, Lynn and Philip

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes were agreed and signed, with a correction re the “silver washed fritillary”. There were no matters arising.

3. Treasurer’s report

Peggy reported as follows:

Bank balance as at last statement (22/9/14) £1430.50

Income to 21/10/14: £1282.09 (+ b/f £1121.82)

Expenditure to 21/10/14: £1003.41.

Surplus 2014: £278.68.

4. Membership Secretary’s report

132 members YTD.

It was proposed by Lynn (via Neil), and agreed by all, that laminated hard copy membership cards be replaced with simple receipts for membership payments for 2015 onwards.

It was also decided to encourage new members to join FoNC and to seek additional working party helpers via its noticeboards.

Action: Lynn and Peter.

5. Felling report

Trevor had kept in touch with Wessex Woodland’s David Hunt through the start of the felling operations and there had been no issues to date. Several villagers had made requests for specific trees to be felled, which FoNC agreed to pass onto Wessex, but without endorsement. Wessex had commented that the trees overlooking two overshadowed allotment plots could only be felled if paid for by the council. Marek noted that there were swallow holes in the plots and they were unusable in any event. Peter and other committee members had taken some before and after -felling photos, which had been uploaded to the website.

6. Newts and waders

Phillip and Trevor had been provided with waders courtesy of CBB and would sample survey the ponds in spring for greater-crested newts.

7. Visit to RAF station

The RAF had appointed an environmental/conservation officer (Sergeant Neil Hutchinson), who had requested assistance from FoNC. Trevor and Chris had visited the base and made a report recommending certain actions to improve bio-diversity e.g. clearance of knapweed and installation of bat boxes and owl shelters in empty bunkers.

It was agreed that the Secretary would contact the sergeant to enquire as to how best to encourage RAF personnel to join FoNC and perhaps to write an article for the base newsletter.

Action: Sheila.

8. Working parties

A small party had tried to tackle the Japanese knotweed, which covered a much wider area than had been realised, so containment injections into some 180-190 weeds’ hollow stems had been undertaken around the edge of the area on another occasion and it was hoped that the

Dashwood Estate would honour its previous commitment to tackle the issue by spraying the weeds in spring 2015. The weed was very pernicious; it could lie dormant for up to 20 years and needed burying 5m down if it was not burnt when “dead”.

In the winter the working party met monthly only and would concentrate on areas away from the fellings.

9. Walks

These had continuing success (with a London walk too in the summer) and thanks were expressed to Chris and Ron for their leaderships of these events.

10. Fungus foray

This was to take place on 26/10 and a report would be made next meeting.

11. AGM

This was to take place in the VH on 13/2/15, with doors opening at 7.30 pm (booked by Trevor). No refreshments were considered necessary, but the format would continue as previously e.g. chairman's, treasurer's and membership secretary's reports, with slides as backdrop, then the guest talk. No speaker had yet been agreed - suggestions were John Tyler, Neil Harris and Jill Kent. Edward Dashwood had not replied to date.

All the committee agreed to stand for re-election except Steve who was retiring shortly and who wished to keep himself free of commitments for the immediate future. Everyone thanked Steve for all his help and wished him well.

Trevor noted that he hoped a new chair would come forward once the committee had been elected.

Action: Steve to ask Jill to be the AGM speaker.

12. AOB

1. Steve noted that there would be a bid in place by March 2015 to “map” Hughenden & Bradenham areas, using an active remote sensing technique, known as Lidar (light detection and ranging), which could accurately detect terrain elevations, e.g. hill forts now covered by woodland.

2. Trevor noted that the VH was to be the venue for a Chilterns Common Project event on legal issues. Details had been circulated by him and anyone interested was encouraged to attend, as FoNC had been offered additional places in return for help on the day.

3. Trevor relayed the success of the Gruffalo event, especially for younger children and where the story was read before going to the Common.

4. Ron, as the FoNC rep on the village hall committee, had been asked to seek FoNC support for the Christmas fair by either running a stall or game on the day or donating a raffle prize. It was agreed to gift £50 in whatever way Cathryn Carter would find most useful.

Action: Ron to liaise with Cathryn and then Peggy.

5. Marek noted that Residents' Association representations had been made to WDC and others about the hard-core drive from the Common to the re-sited entrance of the garage of Braeside Cottage, the end house on Braeside, which had received permission from the Dashwood Estate to make a new driveway off the Common.

6. Phillip's splendid map of the village was now displayed on the VH wall and the whole was now on disk.

7. Peggy asked for suggestions for the village hall committee - FoNC noted a defibrillator and a hearing loop.

13. Date of next meeting

MONDAY 19/1/15 (noted: Ron's apologies in advance).