

## FRIENDS OF NAPHILL COMMON

### MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING No. 35 Poland House, 31/3/14

#### 1. Present and apologies

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

Apologies: Lynn, Kevin and Steve.

#### 2. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes were agreed and signed.

#### 3. Matters arising

Noted that Ron King was no longer willing to be interviewed for the living history project.

#### 4. New committee

The chair, treasurer, membership secretary, webmaster, working party co-ordinator and secretary all agreed to continue in post. The Chairman welcomed Neil to the committee (technically as a non-voting member).

#### 5. Treasurer's report

Income to 31/3 £2083.91;

Expenditure: £915.81;

Balance: £1168.10.

The largest outgoing had been the brushcutter & necessary safety equipment (although we had received a grant); insurance had increased in cost somewhat but we had reduced public liability insurance from £10 to £5 million.

Chilterns Conservation Board had kindly funded many of the leaders' fees in 2013 and it was hoped that there would be similar grants available in 2014.

#### 6. Membership Secretary's report (via Neil)

Membership was still under 100 members and last year we had 150. We agreed to make direct approaches to the societies and associations in Naphill and also do reminders via the Gazette; leverage with the Estate and other stakeholders depended on healthy village representation.

Action: Trevor (Naphill Gazette) and Sheila (associations)

#### 7. Brush cutter

Neil and Ron were now trained; signage "men at work" might be advisable to encourage the required 15 m clearance zone around any work being carried out. The cutter would not replace the mower, but would clear the ground to enable mowing and the first priority would be to clear the path entrances. The chair thanked Ron and Neil for their work and commitment and Chilterns Conservation Board for funding the cutter.

Action: Peggy to record our thanks to Rachel at Chilterns Conservation Board.

#### 8. Training

Philip and Trevor had both been accepted onto the newt licence course.

#### 9. Management plan

A lot of work had been done by FoNC in writing a detailed 24pp 10 year management plan and Chilterns Conservation Board had commented on it too - our plan for the Common. The aim was to have a standing agenda item to review the plan and then to update it annually, with this being sent by Chilterns Conservation Board to the Forestry Commission, Natural

England, the Dashwood Estate and Wessex Woodland Management. There was a discussion as to whether to put the plan onto the website.

#### 10. Proposed felling

We had received a response to our letter to Richard Pearce; they suggested we paint green bands around the trees not to be felled but there were 2 issues with that, namely that all the trees were not marked on the maps and that they were not all easy to find. An alternative might be to ask them not to touch trees over a certain girth and note a few "special" trees. We also noted that although they would almost certainly be doing the felling in zones, these were not marked on the maps. If they did give advance notice of the zones and the timetable then it might be possible for us to mark/spray the trees and also to identify the trees we did want removed e.g. around the ponds. There was also a question around the holly clearance and whether its removal in hectares applied to the whole Common or the areas in which the fellings were to take place. We all agreed that the offer of a meeting with the felling team would be very helpful.

Philip agreed to draft a response and to send our draft plan to the Forestry Commission.

Action: Philip.

#### 11. 2014 Programme of activities

- Fete: we would have our usual table with a quiz for children (identification of leaves/fruits and match them up with the correct tree) and information about the felling to emphasise its positive aspects.
- Historical walk led by Marion Miller: Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> June, meet at the Wheel at 7pm.
- Bat walk - led by Bridget Parslow, Friday September 12<sup>th</sup>, meeting at the Village Hall at 7.30pm.
- Bush craft skills - family event tba: Steve to investigate.
- Red Kite walk and talk - Chiltern Society has information on this.
- Fungi identification - autumn event tba.
- Moth survey - this will take place, but not for the public.
- Foraging - idea only; Steve to investigate.
- Birdsong Walk - Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> May, led by Trevor and Chris. Meet 9.30am Naphill Village Hall. Peter would do a poster with a QR code on it.
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#### 12. 2015 ideas for activities

- Victorian fair - Peggy to investigate with National Trust.
- Butterfly walk - do again in 2015.
- May Day Dawn Chorus walk - idea to bring forward.

#### 13. AOB

- Ron noted that Jean Lawrence's son, Peter Booth?, had some old photographs of the Common when it was common not woodland;
- Marek noted the decline in muntjac;
- Peggy agreed to give auditor John Harris a bottle of wine as small thanks for his work on the accounts;
- Harveen Tiwana asked to join the working parties, although Peter had not heard from them.

#### 14. Next meeting

Tuesday 20/5/14 in Poland House at 7.30pm.