

FRIENDS OF NAPHILL COMMON

MEETING NO. 5

20th. May 2009

1. Attendees

Peggy Ewart, Daisy Leek, Marek Pawlik, Steve Rodrick, Philip Hussey, Peter Davis, Ron Collins, Trevor Hussey.

2. Apologies

Kevin Bennett, David Greenwood, Michael Clarke.

3. Visitor from BCC

Jonathan Clark, (01296 387695) rights of way officer from BCC came by invitation from Steve Rodrick. He explained matters concerning footpaths and bridleways on Naphill Common. BCC is responsible for the surface of paths and whatever grows up along paths, while the landowner is responsible for trees, fallen or hanging branches above the paths, and also stiles or gates. However, when obstructions are reported, the BCC rarely bother West Wycombe Estate, but arrange for clearance themselves – at public expense. The Chiltern Society often do the work and are paid at a rate of £3 per hour per volunteer. Paths have to be cleared ‘...to the width to which the public are accustomed.’ Small working parties do not need permission for minor maintenance, but permission is required for large working parties and the use of machinery.

It may be possible for the BCC to contribute towards the cost of noticeboards. Requests should be submitted by September. If we do any fencing the BCC will fit gates. We should report problems concerning paths, on line, to James Mawson, rights of way officer for the High Wycombe Area (01494 475125). It was suggested that we arrange to walk the paths with Mr Mawson. John Newman (01494 868954) currently surveys the paths on Naphill Common and reports problems, but we could supplement his work. We should submit new claims for registration of “missing” footpaths, presenting the required evidence.

The landowner has the right to close land for 28 days/year for shooting, but can close it for longer for tree felling etc. Jonathan Clark recommended the book ‘*Commons and Village Greens*’ by Angela Sydenham.

4. Previous minutes and matters arising

- The minutes of meeting No 4 were accepted and approved.
- Ron Collins was thanked for conducting his first ‘Walk for Health’ and congratulated on attracting 21 people. Following suggestions from some of the walkers, it was suggested that maps could be given out on future walks.

5. Treasurers report and current membership

Peggy reported that we have had £480.10 income, £98.4 expenditure, leaving £386.5 balance. We now have 84 members.

6. Insurance

It was decided to postpone taking out insurance (which is expensive) until we need it, i.e when are ready to form working parties etc.

7. Membership secretary

We are urgently in need of a membership secretary. Peggy has been doing this job as well as being treasurer and is willing to continue for a while, but when we begin having to renew memberships a separate membership secretary will be required. **Action: Whole Committee.**

8. Practical work.

It was agreed that letters will be sent to West Wycombe Estate and to Doug Wallace of Natural England, asking for permission to undertake minor work on the common, similar to that undertaken by the Chiltern Society, thus allowing us to form working parties for path maintenance etc. **Action: Trevor Hussey.**

9. Programme of events.

The committee discussed the various events presented in the programme to be published in the Gazette. Action is required on some of them.

(1) Naphill Fete. (Saturday 6th June) We have to set up a table and gazebo, and mount a display. Steve agreed to supply the table and gazebo, Peter will produce some photographs and membership forms. Trevor and others will help erect the set-up and attend during the day. Marek will supply the display boards – to be collected on Friday morning. **Action Steve, Peter, Trevor and any others available.**

(2) Walk for Health (Monday 8th June) Ron to lead; poster needed.

Midsummer picnic (Sunday 21st June) poster needed. Walk for Health

(Monday 20th July) Ron to lead; poster needed. **Action Ron & Philip.**

(3) Looking at Grasses (Wednesday 24th June) and Botany Walk (5th August) support needed. **Action: all committee.**

10. AOB.

The committee discussed the suggestion, from Kevin Bennett, that we could produce a calendar using some of the photos on the website and thought it a good idea. Peter Davis agreed to investigate. **Action Peter.**

11. Date of next meeting.

Tuesday 21st July 2009 at 7.30 pm at Poland House.