

FRIENDS OF NAPHILL COMMON

COMMITTEE MEETING NO 25

26th March 2012

1. Attendees

Philip Hussey, Ron Collins, Chris Miller, Peter Davis, Marek Pawlik, Steve Rodrick, David Greenwood, Stephanie Morgan, Neil Harris (invited visitor from National Trust).

2. Apologies

Peggy Ewart, Kevin Bennett.

3. Previous minutes and matters arising

- Item 3, Clumps. Neil Harris and Trevor explained that the felling of trees on the Clumps had been reviewed. Several trees on the banks of the Clumps were rerieved and the red spots removed. Some of the horse chestnut trees are diseased and in a serious condition. They will be reduced to eco-pollards within a few weeks. I.e. The tops will be removed but the trunks will be left. (Some suggestions were made about wood sculpture.) The felling of other trees, including those outside the Clumps will begin in late summer or early autumn.
- Item 3. No news has been received about progress on the Wessex Woodland Management scheme for work on the Common. They have been sent a list and map concerning significant features to be protected.
- Item 3. Jonathan Clark of BCC has been contacted about the state of the paths leading to the Common and a map has been sent to the authorities concerned. There has been an assurance that the matter will be investigated but no progress has been reported. We were told that money is short.
- Item 7. A grant of £300 has been received from BCC via. Riched Pushman.

The minutes for 7th February were signed.

4. Treasurer's report

Peggy had prepared a written report to be read in her absence:-

Income		Hire of VH - AGM	£ 24.00
Bfwd	£1302.40	Insurance	£254.69
Income - subs	£ 533.00	Admin	£ 86.99
Total	£1835.40	Total	£550.68
Expenditure		Balance	£1284.72 at 22/3/12
Jill Eyers	£60	This excludes the £300 from the BCC.	
CCB - Commons	£125		

5. Membership Secretary's report

Stephanie reported that 116 people had renewed their membership to date with several more promised. A number of the winners of the photographic competition were not members. Thanks were expressed to Stephanie for the drinks and biscuits.

6. The Clumps project

Neil Harris of National Trust, showed us an illustration for the NT project on West Wycombe Hill. This picture is intended to stimulate a public consultation process leading to a scheme for improvements, including grazing and thus some fencing. It was suggested that a similar illustration could be placed on an information board near The Clumps, not for consultation but to show what we are trying to achieve. Neil said that, as well as returning The Clumps to something like their original form, the NT would like to return the nearby meadow to grass and provide a place for the juniper cuttings to be planted. It was decided that we would take photographs of the present condition of The Clumps and that Philip would do a sketch of proposed form of The Clumps from roughly where the 1905 photograph was taken that showed the Tilbury sisters. This sketch would be presented to our next meeting in May and to Neil and, following discussion, would serve as a basis for a painting, also by Philip, for use on the proposed information board, along with the 1905 photo and other material. It was decided that the information board, provided by the NT, should be in position near The Clumps before any felling begins i.e. by late summer. Neil confirmed that he would like us to continue clearing holly from the side of the path next to The Clumps, leaving a fringe near the edge of the Common. He also said that the holly stumps will have to be treated with herbicide. Neil was reminded of the need to remove the existing pile of holly brash. Our members were reminded that some have not yet registered as NT volunteers.

7. Programme of events

(i) Geology survey. Jill Eyers is negotiating with West Wycombe Estate for permission for the project, which is due to start with a session in the Village Hall on Sunday 13th May. We assume that Natural England will then agree to the survey.

(ii) Bat walk. It is confirmed that Bridget Parslow will lead the walk on Friday 15th June. We need to confirm a starting time.

(iii) Butterfly walk to see purple emperors. Dennis Dell, Mick and Wendy Cambell will lead the walk on Wednesday 4th July. Trevor is to give them a tour of the possible sites on Monday 2nd April.

(iv) It was decided not to proceed with plans for a mid-summer bonfire at The Clumps. It may be possible in the Autumn.

(v) A Mini-beast Safari will be led by John Tyler on Sunday 22nd July.

(vi) The Fungus foray will be on Sunday 4th November.

(vii) The pond survey by Tony Marshall will start in February 2013 if we can get permission from West Wycombe Estate and Natural England.

(viii) FONC will have a stand at Naphill Fete on Saturday 23rd June, with a quiz.

8. Historical and Archaeological Group

(i) Tank tracks. Oral history recordings have not yet started. It was suggested that the tank project would be a good topic for an article in the Naphill Gazette. We could also produce a poster asking for people to come forward if they have memories, photos etc., of the tanks. Neil said that the NT would be willing to display a poster near their WWII material at Hughenden Manor.

(ii) Romano-British Farmstead. The Risborough group are now keen to do further surveys tracing the line of the bank and ditch. They will return in May.

(iii) John Morris woodland archaeology day. This is on Wednesday 18th April. £10 for the day. Concern was expressed about advertising and recruitment. Trevor is to contact Kevin and Philip is to do a poster using information from Kevin.

(iv) Trevor announced that Andrew Muir is planning to do research into "Common Edge Settlements", comparing Ibstone and Naphill Commons. He will start in Late April and it was agreed that he would have our support.

(v) Trevor said that he had visited Nigel Rolf's garden in Battingswood Gardens to inspect a bank on the boundary of the property. It seems likely that it was once the boundary of Naphill Common, but at a time before it had shrunk to the shape shown on the pre-enclosure map of c1850.

9. Walks for Health

The Sort Walks will be on Wednesdays: 4th April; 2nd May; 6th June. Thanks were expressed to Chris for taking on the leadership of these walks.

The Long Walks are on Mondays: 16th April; 21st May; 18th June; 16th July; 20th August; 24th Sept; 15th October; 19th November and 17th December, led by Ron Collins. Philip will produce a poster for both lots of walks.

10. Working parties.

Concern was expressed about continuing work parties into the bird nesting season. It was decided to finish working on the "Ladies Mile" path on Sunday 1st April and thereafter to do minor trimming of some of the paths leading into the Common from the side path, clearing holly and yew but avoiding cutting brambles.

11. Any Other Business

(i) David said that the RAF held a run on Naphill Common and left yellow arrows screwed to trees and posts. Neil knows of a contact at the RAF and Trevor will write.

(ii) Trevor mentioned a talk at Parmoor House on Friday 30th March.

12. Date of Next Meeting.

Tuesday 15th May at 7.30 pm. Neil Harris is invited if he wishes to attend.