

Minutes of the Bromyard Downs Common Association

Ordinary Meeting

Tuesday 14 July 2015

7:30 - 9:30 Oak Room Falcon Hotel Bromyard

Attendees

James Hawkins (Chair)	Lauren Smith (Secretary)	Clive Brazier (Treasurer)
David Boddington	Ben Hiley (Vice Chair)	
Dave Cave	Ray Pullen	Nick Hinchcliffe (NT)
Helen Allan	Hannah Welsh (P Manager)	Ben Turner
Alan G	David Grant	Neville Turner
Nigel Shaw		

1. Welcome & Apologies for absence;

George Thompson Graham Cooper Andrew Morris

2. Action points from the last meeting

- 2.1 Proposal for the BDCA to take over ownership of common from Hereford Council – Further research has been carried out we are waiting for further information from Hereford Council until we can take any further action to consider offer – **On hold until all information is available**
- 2.2 Byelaws – assess current byelaws and bring up to date — Clive Brazier has taken the lead for a small group to redraft the byelaws
- **Action Awaiting confirmation from Hereford Council to consider a redraft**
 - **Action Lauren In the meantime current byelaws to be displayed on all notice boards**
- 2.3 Lease of Quarry – Ben has received a draft Heads of Terms proposing the BDCA take on the lease of the quarry
Ben H Proposed that the BDCA take on the quarry lease in accordance with the draft Heads of Terms (attached) subject to an agreed insurance quote
Seconded – David Cave & David Boddington
BDCA vote carried
Action – Lauren to e-mail officially to Helen Beale to agree to take on the quarry subject to insurance
- 2.4 Dog mess bag dispensers to be erecting around the Downs – **Action James H will arrange for the dispensers to be set up. Hannah to arrange publicity in August**
- 2.5 Simplification of management plan – **Action** in hand - Graham ongoing
- 2.6 Full expenditure details to be circulated to all committee members to approve – **Action - Hannah to place in drop box for all members to note**
- 2.7 Health and Safety Policy and site risk assessments – This is now drafted and is with the Hereford Nature Trust. The policy will be presented to the next Steering

- group and BDCA meetings – Action **presented to volunteer group HWT policy will be redrafted to suit BDCA action closed**
- 2.8 Equipment Log – in hand this will now be presented at the next volunteering day on 11th June – **Action Hannah closed**
- 2.9 Hay and Fire Break Cut – James has this in hand but it is proving difficult even with the offer of free hay, due the surplus of hay from last year- **Action no one wants hay this year due to surplus contractors have been approached but will probably have to pay to have the hay cut and removed - closed**
David Boddington voiced his concerns over blanket cutting as this would severely suppress self-propagation of certain species and could there be exemptions possible under the ELS scheme to leave areas uncut? - **Action Discussed with Natural England who will check Areas left uncut and deduct premium payment for areas left certain areas will also be left as late as possible to allow reseeding before hay is cut– Closed**
- 2.10 Update on Car Park refurbishment – Ben - **Notice board has been removed and repainted – still trying to source poles to fence the carpark areas but idea put forward to coppice the ash on the Downs and use the logs to fence the carpark Action** Ben to arrange volunteer party to cut ash
- 2.11 **HLF Annual Review – Action** Lauren meeting to be arranged with review part in August
- 2.12 **Site survey to be arranged to discuss problem with flooding from Downs into muddy lane – Action** James to arrange site visit after the tracks and hay cut has been completed. Noted that Hereford Council would prioritise ditch clearance if houses were in danger of flooding
- 2.13 **Brash piles still in evidence on the racecourse** this has caused some complaints from residents – Lessons must be learnt from the last volunteer party cut – more thought in how the brash is cleared - if burnt must be cleared immediately and not allow brash piles to become a habitat

Minutes of the June meeting approved and signed

3 Financial Report

- 3.1 BDCA finance – no changes from last meeting although HWT will be claiming for project costs once the next phase of the Delivery budget is received.

4 Brockhampton Group Parish Council Update

- 4.1 No news to update – the next meeting is due on Thursday 16th July

5 Downs Management Plan

- 5.1 Priority – action to arrange fire break cut and open tracks - Martin Pullen is arranging to hire a tractor to complete the cut in the next fortnight
- 5.2 Hay cut is proving hard to sell and we may have to pay this year to clear due to hay surplus
- 5.3 Newsletter has been agreed and will be sent out to all residents and common rights holders by the end of the week

- 5.4 Ted Green is due to visit the Downs on the 28th July to give a talk and walk around the Downs to discuss the ancient Trees
- 5.5 The fencing of the Downs is due to commence in September notices will be erected prior to the fencing to ensure all residents are informed of the action to be taken to commence conservation grazing- Interest for grazing both cows and sheep has been noted although more interest is needed
- 5.6 Archeologically investigations on the rifle butts will commence in August with walks and talks being arranged for anyone interested in taking part
- 5.7 Work Party days will be advertised via the newsletter and on the websites
- 5.8 Summer picnic is being arranged for September 19th – Hannah has asked for volunteers to help on the day
 Art 360 had proposed to set up a large land art sculpture of sheep made from sheep's wool, however concern was voiced as to how this would be cleared, the proposal to let it stay and compost did not meet with approval and all agreed that the art should be cleared after the event if this was to go ahead. The cost would be around £600 - £1000
 Other exhibitors - Legg's pies producing a Bromyard pie, Country Crafts, willow sculpting, Kite flying, Woodworking
 Further ideas to be forward to Hannah
- 5.9 Hannah has attended a valuation and effective management commons course which will be of help in evaluating the project
- 5.10 A bat survey was carried out on Sunday 12th July with the second survey taking place on Saturday 18th – Common and soprano pipistrelles were recorded
- 5.11 The campaign for dog fouling and bag dispensers will start as soon as the bag dispensers are set up

6. Public Member questions

- 6.1 No Questions

7. Any Other business

David Boddington noted how the orchids although showing smaller heads in the dryer areas are abundant in the wetter areas and are starting to spread above the racecourse and below the Downs road. It was also noted the orchids are flowering along the meadow at Park Head

Ben Hiley asked the new Town Council Rep David Shaw to take up and further the request to impose a speed limit outside Brockhampton School, David Shaw agreed but noted the request would still be in a long queue of road traffic requests

James noted he had submitted an expression of interest to Natural England for the Downs to be considered for the Higher Level Scheme.

Nick Hintchcliffe asked if the National Trust could rent the use of the BCS mower. – it was voiced that due to Nick helping out and being the NT Representative on the

committee and was trained in its use; the committee would be happy for him to use subject to repairs if anything went wrong

Ray commented that if any further topping of the ash groves were carried out could we ensure that the cuts were taken as low as possible as currently the stumps left are too high and could cause damage to the tractor when the track cutting and clearance was taking place – Agreed

Use of Hugh Davies stump grinder to clear some of the stumps left – to be considered

8 Date of Next General Meeting – Wednesday 16th September 2015 – 7:30 Falcon Hotel Bromyard

Future meetings to note

Date	Type	Time & Venue
Wednesday 16 September 2015	Ordinary	7:30 – 9:30 - Falcon Hotel Bromyard
Tuesday 10 November 2015	Ordinary	7:30 – 9:30 - Falcon Hotel Bromyard
Wednesday 13 January 2016	Ordinary	7:30 – 9:30 - Falcon Hotel Bromyard
Tuesday 1 March 2016	Ordinary	7:30 – 9:30 - Falcon Hotel Bromyard
Wednesday 12 April 2016	Ordinary	7:30 – 9:30 - Falcon Hotel Bromyard
Wednesday 11 May 2016	AGM	7:30 – 9:30 - Falcon Hotel Bromyard

Meeting Close

Lauren Smith
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BDCA FINANCES

DATE	MONEY TO	MONEY FROM	DOC	DESCRIPTION	EXP(-) INC	BALANCE
31/03/15				opening balance		9336.79
29/04/15	secy		100053	falcon room hire	-10.00	9326.79
29/04/15	warren fm		100054	catering for celebration event	-225.00	9101.79
29/04/15	treasurer		100055	stamps stationery	-13.30	9088.49
29/04/15	falcon		100056	agm room and refreshments	-37.00	9051.49
03/06/15	falcon		10057	falcon room hire	-10.00	9041.49