

# Minutes of the Bromyard Downs Common Association

## Ordinary Meeting

Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> November 2015

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

### Attendees

James Hawkins (Chair)	Lauren Smith (Secretary)	Clive Brazier (Treasurer)
Ben Hiley (Vice Chair)	Hannah Welsh (P Manager)	Nigel Shaw
Ray Pullen	David Boddington	Nick Hinchcliffe (NT)
David Grant	Graham Cooper	Ben Turner
Neville Turner	Jane Carbara (Pond Officer)	

### 1. Welcome & Apologies for absence;

George Thompson	Dave Cave	Fred Clark
Helen Allan		

### 2. Action points from the last meeting

- 2.1 **Annual Review Process** subcommittee meeting has taken place and will meet again in late January to look forward for the second year – **action closed**
- 2.2 **Site meeting** to assess drainage in muddy lane - **ongoing**
- 2.3 **Lease of Quarry** – Awaiting copy of legal tenancy from council –**Ongoing**
  - 10million cover insurance required by Hereford Council has been researched and can be taken up with Aviva insurance for an annual cost of £500
  - Committee need to look into the ongoing costs before making final decision Still concerns as to why the quarry cannot be considered under the wider Downs lease and insurance
  - Consider putting on hold until the any decision is reached of taking on the ownership of the common or we see the prospective lease from Hereford Council
- 2.4 **Wood Carving Commission** - Hannah displayed costs and types of sculptures at the meeting – Sculpture could be looked on as part of a sculpture trail/ part of the interpretation board or sculpted from and existing tree trunk  
Concerns were raised as to ongoing maintenance – Hannah was able to confirm there would be no further costs once the sculpture was commissioned
- 2.5 **Simplification of management plan** – **Action** - Graham still ongoing – Hannah in the meantime has drawn up a simplified A4 sheet showing the main objectives of the management plan to be posted around the town **Action** - Hannah to circulate copy to all committee members
- 2.6 **Chainsaw and first Aid Training** – This has taken place – unfortunately the area used for chainsaw training was not part of the Downs and was in fact private land belonging to Mr Philip Watkins.  
**Action** – James will meet Mr Watkins to apologise this will be followed up with a formal letter of apology from the BDCA – **Action** Lauren to draft

BDCA agreed to offer Mr Watkins fencing materials to fence the area if required

**Action** BDCA committee to meet on downs early 2016 to check boundaries

First Aid training has also been completed but several concerns were raised which should be considered when completing work on the common

- Need to be able to identify area of common working when alerting ambulance i.e. identify by using map co-ordinates
- Ambulances will not come off road so may need to transport any casualty to the nearest road – Youngest casualty is always given priority
- Need to draft a procedure to follow in case of accidents. **Action** as part of the ongoing Health and Safety procedure.

2.7 Glades has been identified and are being cleared by volunteer work parties - **Action closed**

2.8 **Skills Audit** – has been completed we do need to identify any further skill gaps but the one easily identified are skills social media and website use – Action as part of ongoing training schedule – **Action closed**

### **Minutes of the September meeting approved and signed**

#### **3 Financial Report**

3.1 BDCA finance breakdown attached Bank account balance currently stands at £7626

3.2 There is still some spare budget that needs reallocating due to the over budget for the Project wages, There are two options to use this;

- Extend the Project by a couple of months
- Purchase additional equipment within the current project

**Action to be considered**

#### **4 Brockhampton Group Parish Council Update**

4.1 The Brockhampton Group Parish Council has not met as yet to ask about purchasing the Dog poo bags, so Hannah proposes to email the Clerk to ask about the process to buy further bags - **Action Hannah**

4.2 The Parish Council are looking at the current byelaws with view to update but hadn't a current digital copy - Action **Lauren** to send Councillor Nigel Shaw the copy the BDCA received from George Thompson

4.3 Further district issues cover the proposed extension onto the Downs of the Brockhampton School carpark – The County Council has no objection as long as a Section 38 application is made.

Once the carpark was extended there were thoughts on closure of the carpark opposite the school. However, general consensus was that this would be difficult as a carpark had always been there and visitors would still continue to park opposite whether the area was closed or not.

4.4 No action as yet with regard to replacing or repairing the current notice boards

#### **5 Downs Management Plan**

5.1 The Sheep grazing trial commenced on the common today with 15 sheep belonging to James Hawkins grazing in the fenced area at the back of Malvern Road Hannah proposed purchasing 15 Soay sheep for the BDCA; However General opinion was that these were horned sheep and although hardy would not be practical given the scrub areas of the Downs where they could become entangled and expert opinion on their general temperament would not be ideal if facing dogs. Next areas to fence would probably be the areas of Park Head and Well Head Hannah will start to post requests on face book and in the newsletter; for conservation graziers to make use of the Downs fenced areas

5.2 Probation workers working each Tuesday have been working on opening up further glades. The concern is to keep these glades open in future as gorse and bracken is quick to grow back

5.3 Need to blitz the ash coppices on the Downs; it is far too expensive to consider hiring a Bobcat Mulcher at £700 per day now that Bringsty don't want to share the cost. An alternative would be to hire two professional men plus a chipper for two days at a total cost of £450

We also need to put more thought into stopping the regrowth

- Ensure the stumps are cut low enough to use the topper
- Reintroduce grazing to keep the new growth down
- Spraying – Needs to be supervised by spray ticket holder and ensure there is no danger to dogs or walkers

**Action** – Hannah to take forward

5.4 There is a need to transport the equipment from Warren Farm lock up on to the Downs on volunteering days; currently Hannah uses the wildlife trust van. However, this will not be practical in the long run and we should consider purchasing a trailer to transport the equipment.

**Action** – Ben and James to research prices on a 6x4 trailer

Nigel James mentioned that there was an Open Spaces Grant of £750 through Hereford Council, which may be available, we would have to match fund but would be worth looking into. **Action** Nigel to supply details

5.5 **Ponds Update** - There has been rapid progress on establishing and clearing out the ponds on the Downs. Jane offered her apologise for not keeping everyone informed of the work and progress but because of the weather and given the short window of opportunity to action the work this was not possible. This did put the whole project ahead of schedule.

21 Ponds have been either created or renovated between Bringsty Common, National Trust and the Downs. Volunteer days will continue to fine tune the ponds to improve overflows and any deal with further clearance

Signs will be posted at each pond in the new year identifying the name of the pond and giving details of the project and work undertaken with a before and after photograph

All the pond dipping and educational equipment will be kept in the resource shed at Brockhampton School

There was some concern over the new pond constructed in Golf Lane. It is not in the original area of the pond and has cut through a pathway – The pond does not appear to be in the lie of the ditches and there are concerns it will not fill -

Jane pointed out that an ecologist identified the area so it should be fine however Jane agreed to monitor the pond and review in 6 months if it is causing difficulties will consider moving.

Ash Trap Pond – Contractors were going to dump the silt in the wrong place but this was stopped in time and the contractors directed to the right area

**Action** - Jane to contact David Boddington to discuss the Management plan of the ponds

**Washcroft Pond** is not part of the Ponds Project due to the fact the Crassula invasion in the pond would cost far too much to try to eradicate. However, we will look at the pond under the Management Plan and raise at the next BDCA meeting to discuss how this could be taken forward as it's a historical drovers pond –

**Action** Hannah and Jayne to forward proposal at the next BDCA Meeting

- 5.7 Need to look forward to events next year any ideas welcome  
Initially we will be hosting a Big Picnic in September and looking to utilise the race course for a fun race
- 5.8 There will be two interpretation boards posted on the Downs; initial sites will be the official carpark and Brockhampton School.
- 5.9 To celebrate the work completed this year Hannah is organising a Christmas get together at the Falcon Hotel
- 5.10 There is evidence of vehicle 4x4 damage on the Downs, we need to be tougher on any encroachment and if possible photograph and report vehicles using the Downs without permission - Ideas to be discussed at the next meeting how to identify and deal with this problem - **Action Committee** to consider options for next BDCA meeting
- 5.11 **Dog fouling campaign** – the dog bag dispensers are all now empty – Hannah will in the interim purchase further dog bags to refill the bins to maintain the impetus of the campaign – We do need to discuss who is responsible for payment with the parish council and put in place a process for purchase and refilling  
Discussion is needed on further ideas to tackle this problem – **Action** to be discussed at the next BDCA meeting

## 6. Public Member questions

. No Questions

7. **Any Other business**

7.1 There is a quantity of building material blocking Golf House Lane – **Action send letter to request the material is moved**

8 **Date of Next General Meeting – Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2016 – 7:30 Falcon Hotel Bromyard**

**Future meetings to note**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Time &amp; Venue</b>
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  
BDCA Secretary  
01885 488223  
<mailto:laurenc@smithaam.plus.com>

*Latest finance update attached;*

				<b>BDCA FINANCES</b>			
	<b>MONEY</b>	<b>MONEY</b>					
<b>DATE</b>	<b>TO</b>	<b>FROM</b>	<b>DOC</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>EXP(-) INC</b>	<b>BALANCE</b>	
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		100057	falcon room hire	-10.00	9041.49	
14/07/15	falcon		100058	falcon room hire	-10.00	9031.49	
13/08/15		lottery			8772.48	17803.97	
16/09/15	falcon		100059	falcon room hire	-10.00	17793.97	
16/09/15	hwt		100060	Q1 2015[9142.51] + interim [1237.90]	10380.41	7413.56	
16/09/15	m pullen		100061	downs topping and fire breaks 2015	-1739.00	5674.56	
29/09/15	b hiley		100080	car park noticeboard repairs	-80.12	5594.44	
29/09/15	secy		100081	office materials	-54.32	5540.12	
15/09/39	b hiley		100082	car park fencing	-348.84	5191.28	
05/10/15		west pwr		Wayleave 1/10/15	755.72	5947	
22/10/15		els		payment	1694.50	7641.5	
03/11/15	b hiley		100083	scythe repair	-15.50	7626	
10/11/15	falcon		100084	room hire	-10.00	7616	
10/11/15	rd fencing		100085	common fencing and gates	-756.00	6860	
10/11/15	willder		100086	chainsaw training	-640.00	6220	
01/10/15	hwt			Q2/15[11428.88]+full cost recovery[2837.50]	14266.38		