

Minutes of the Bromyard Downs Common Association

Ordinary Meeting

Wednesday 13th January 2015

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

Attendees

James Hawkins (Chair)	Lauren Smith (Secretary)	Clive Brazier (Treasurer)
Ben Hiley (Vice Chair)	Helen Allan	Nigel Shaw (BwC)
Ray Pullen	David Boddington	Nick Hinchcliffe (NT)
David Grant	Jayne Cabara(Ponds Officer)	
Roger Steed	Karen Rock	

1. Welcome & Apologies for absence;

Graham Cooper	Hannah Welsh (P Manager)	
<i>Dave Cave (BGPC)</i>	<i>Fred Clark (BTC)</i>	<i>Ben Turner</i>
<i>Neville Turner</i>	<i>George Thompson(HC)</i>	

2.

Action points from the last meeting

- 2.1 Site Meeting to discuss problem of flooding from Downs into Muddy Lane - Meeting has taken place and actions to mitigate the problem have been agreed and will be carried out asap – **Action Closed**
- 2.2 Lease of quarry – Item held until we receive further information
- 2.3 Wood carving commission – BDCA to consider and confirm whether to go ahead with the idea and commission a sculpture — A further sculptor who actually lives on the Downs along the Malvern Road was suggested **Action** to ask Hannah to contact and collate some ideas and prices that the committee could look at the next meeting
- 2.4 Simplification of management plan – Ongoing Graham Cooper
- 2.5 formal apology to be sent to Mr Watkins – **Action completed & Closed**
Mr Watkins kindly offered to donate the wood which was cut, to any pensioners living on the common.
- 2.6 Work party procedure to be drafted to be followed in case of accidents to action as part of the ongoing Health and Safety procedure – **Action Closed**
- 2.7 Consider purchasing a trailer to transport equipment – Agreed to purchase a trailer Ben has sourced at a cost of £449.89 – **Action** Ben H to purchase

Further funding has also been sourced Ben to forward forms to Hannah as she will have the necessary information to complete - **Action** Hannah to complete and request grant for trailer

- 2.8 Ponds Project officer to contact David Boddington to discuss ponds management plan – Meeting has taken place – **Action Closed**

Minutes of the October meeting approved and signed

3 Financial Report

- 3.1 BDCA finance breakdown attached - Bank account balance currently stands at £9481.46
- 3.2 It was decided to hold on making a final decision on the use of the reallocation of wage budget until nearer the end of the project when we could decide which area of the project would best benefit from the additional cash
- 3.3 Despite several enquires we have still not been informed by Hereford Council as to when the Caravan Club Lease expires – **Action** Nigel Shaw to make enquires

4 Brockhampton Group Parish Council Update

- 4.1 The Brockhampton Group Parish Council has not met as yet to ask about further supplies of Dog poo bags, In the meantime Hannah has purchased some supplies which can be collected from Warren Farm –
Action – Clive Brazier to agree with Parish Council on purchase of bags
Action - David Grant to confirm process of collecting bags and inform volunteers
- 4.2 All the current notice boards are now broken and it is difficult to ensure any notices posted are on view for any length of time as there are no longer any functioning doors – It was discussed and agreed to offer to go halves with the Parish Council on purchasing further much stronger all weather notice boards – **Action Ben H to research notice boards and costs**

5 Downs Management Plan

- 5.1 The site meeting to discuss how to mitigate the flooding in Muddy Lane decided that the originating water source which is flowing down from the top downs road needs to be dealt with as a start:
- Overflows from the road ditches, to be diverted into a scrape/pond by the white railings to try and slow down the flow - **Action** request a quote for work to clear out a seasonal scrape or catchment pools to catch water, to be presented at the next meeting (possible ponds project add on for the second phase)
 - Blocked road Culverts to be cleared to stop water flowing across the road – **Action** ask Council Contractors to clear
- 5.2 Work parties have been successful in clearing several flushes on the Downs and remaining stumps painted and wood chipped – The Chair extended his thanks to all the volunteers responsible. The ideal way forward would be to re-introduce grazing to these areas to keep the scrub in check

5.3 Issues had been raised from residents on the pond sites and trees which had been cut – The BDCA committee fully agrees that we are not being kept fully up to date on action being taken on the Downs and that our communications to residents needs to be improved

A website has been launched and members of the committee will be trained to take this forward as an information site. A letter to all residents and commons rights holders will be sent prior to the next AGM. We are always open to any further ideas or suggestions of how to keep residents informed

5.4 Vehicle encroachment during this spell of very wet weather has caused areas of damage. Western Power contractors have been working on poles near Washcroft by the A44 Malvern junction. Clive did receive a request some time ago that work was needed, and permission was granted however it was not expected that up to 6 vehicles were on the Downs after one of the wettest Decembers on record. The damage caused is quite extensive.

Action Lauren to take photos and draft letter of complaint to Western Power

Action was discussed to try and stop vehicles being able to access the Downs

Ideas tendered:

- Use of bollards or staggered posts at entries
- Notice posted that vehicles are not permitted
- Tree trunks laid at entry point
- Ditches

Action - Agreed to erect staggered posts at entries to stop vehicles – Nik Hinchcliffe offered 200 posts from the National Trust which were no longer required for this use Post's to be collected and erected when possible

5.5 The committee independently of Hannah have undertaken to arrange an event on the Downs as a separate project

Ideas tendered for the event have included

- Hobby Horse Race
- Steeple Chase with runners following old race course
- Bonfire event and pig Roast
- Soap cart race down hill
- Kite festival
- Mountain bike race

A separate small sub group has been set up to initially manage the project consisting of, Lauren Smith, James Hawkins, Clive Brazier and David Grant. Ben Hiley also expressed an interest, although all members will be expected to help with the project

5.6 Looking forward we do need to look to future funding options to raise funds for management, We are asking all members to keep an eye out for any opportunities we can look into

Ideas so far

- Tesco Ground work grant
- Severn Waste

5.7 Ponds Project Update – All ponds are now dug and work party dates have been scheduled up to end March

After the recent rain all the ponds are looking very full

Interpretation boards will be erected by each pond. The committee was asked if we were satisfied with the current names of the ponds and it was decided to rename some with more appropriate names

Ideas were as follows:-

- Golf Lane Pond – no change
- Rods Pond
- Orchid Pools
- Cops Pond
- Bods Pond (Ashtrack)
- Reservoir & Store Pool

5.8 Washcroft Pond – Jane noted that a wildlife consultant would charge around £350 a day to draft a management plan for the pond. This seemed excessive and we really haven't the money to spare. We need to know what actions we can take within the legal parameters to manage the problem of the invasive weed and the possibility that the pond has Great Crested Newts, although this has not been officially recorded

Action - Further research to see what actions we can take - consult with Natural England.

Action – Next work party due on the 23rd February to clear out the scrub around the pond

Action - James H to inform the nearest residents at Washcroft of the work

6. Public Member questions

6.1 The Local hunt had asked through Nigel Shaw asked that if any birch is cut down that they can collect as this is the best wood for making horse jumps. In fact very little of the scrub and wood cut on the downs is birch. However, locals were able to direct Nigel to where there was a birch hedge that would need cutting back

6.2 Karen Rock noted that the minutes had not been deposited at the information centre recently. Minutes were lodged on the Bromyard Information site but lately contacts have changed and this has not happened although the secretary keeps hard copies that are available on request. David Grant offered to post the minutes on the Bromyard Info site – **Action** Lauren to send minutes to David

6.3 Roger Steed noted that it was a shame we did not use the Royal Oak on Bromyard Downs for meetings. And wondered if it was worth asking again - Although we have asked the landlords to host meetings on the premises and for support for local events they are not interested in supporting the Committee or any events we have arranged. In contrast The Falcon Hotel has been extremely supportive only charging a token amount for use of the meeting rooms for meetings and events.

6.4. Roger also noted that the Town Council representative has not attended the last couple of meetings and concern was voiced that we are not communicating effectively to advertise events and meetings with the Bromyard residents and Town Council. - There is only so much we can do as volunteers. The project and management of the Downs has been widely advertised with Posters in Bromyard and articles in the Bromyard Record, which includes contact names, if any further information is required. We will shortly be doing far more with the Bromyard Downs website but further ideas are welcome.

7. Any Other business

Nothing raised

8 Date of Next General Meeting – Tuesday 1st March 2016 – 7:30 Falcon Hotel Bromyard

Future meetings to note

Date	Type	Time & Venue
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
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Latest finance update attached;

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		100057	falcon room hire	-10.00	9041.49
14/07/15	falcon		100058	falcon room hire	-10.00	9031.49
13/08/15		lottery		1 st payment	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
	byd timber		100086	fencing	-259.20	6600.8
10/11/15	willder		100087	chainsaw training	-640.00	5960.8
01/10/15	hwt		100088	Q2/15[11428.88]+full cost recovery[2837.50]	-14266.38	-8305.58
14/12/15	b hiley		100089	car park materials	-43.00	-8348.58
20/11/15		lottery		2 nd payment	17108.16	8759.58
06/01/16		cvan club		site lease	1181.77	9941.35
13/01/16	gratkowski		100090	trailer purchase	-449.89	9491.46
13/01/16	falcon		100091	room hire	-10.00	9481.46