

# Minutes of the Bromyard Downs Common Association

## General Meeting

Wednesday 28 June 2017

7:30 - 9:30 Falcon Hotel Bromyard

### Committee Attendees

James Hawkins (Chair)  
Clive Brazier (Treasurer)  
Nicki Howard  
Nigel Shaw  
Jan Densham

Lauren Smith (Secretary)  
David Boddington  
Gill Churchill  
Karen Rock  
Nic Hinchcliffe

Ben Hiley (Vice Chair)  
Jo Stoddart  
Jo Allsopp  
Ray Pullen  
David Grant

### 1. Welcome & Apologies for absence;

George Thompson

Graham Cooper

### 2. Action points ongoing from previous meetings

2.1 **Interpretation Boards** – Now available for Ben and the volunteers to erect in Warren wood – Nic to discuss and pinpoint suitable site - action closed

2.2 **School poetry and art competition** – James has made initial contact with the schools; the competition is scheduled for the spring – Gill to revisit and set up meeting - **Ongoing**

2.3 **Wheelchair access to Downs** –Stones by Brockhampton School are to be moved to allow a wider access for wheelchairs – Buckenhill drive access point to be made wider and stones laid to improve ground access – Ongoing awaiting contractor to also erect monolith and new notice boards by the school - **Ongoing**

2.4 Memorial Bench – James still awaiting quote - **Ongoing**

2.5 **Dog Bag dispensers – Are they useful or adding to the problem** – General consensus is that some people are misusing the dispenser by taking handfuls of bags and when empty people are re-posting the full bags into the dispenser for our volunteers to empty. This is clearly unacceptable - **Action to take forward** to close the bins and post a notice that due to some visitor's abuse of the facility we regret we will be closing and eventually removing the bins

We will continue to investigate other ways to mitigate the Dog mess problem on the Downs.

2.6 **Nomination of deputies for the main BDCA Roles** - It was discussed that there should be a deputy available for each role if someone cannot make the meeting – **Action - for each role holder to discuss and agree a deputy before the next meeting**

2.7/8 **Scheme of Management and Byelaws** – Copies of all the main documents will be sent to each committee member as a welcome pack and byelaws posted on the notice boards once they are available – **Lauren to Action**

## **Minutes of the last meeting approved**

### **3. Finance Update**

Current Balance = £8100 Balance – Please see attached finance sheet attached for detail.

We are still waiting the final HLF funding and balance of expenditure for the project closure.

Question raised – Is the committee financially liable if there are insufficient funds to cover our expenditure. There is insurance available we should check whether this is in place.

Audited Accounts are not as yet available

### **4. Parish Council Update**

Karen noted the sad loss of Janet Fellows. Janet had been a great help in the introduction and set up of the BDCA.

The Council are actively looking at ways that the layby at Brockhampton School that has been cordoned off with bags and plastic buffers can be permanently closed for use.

Planning Permission is not in place for the drainage work at Clater Park and may have an adverse effect on the Downs land in the locality.

Introduce a Town Council Update to the agenda. **Action** Lauren

## **5 Downs Management**

### **5.1 Update from Chair**

Actively looking at options for hay cutting, but we have the same problems as last year that no one is interested in purchasing the Hay. We would be happy for someone just to cut and take.

**Action** - Karen to pass the Equine rescue number on to James; they may be interested in taking the hay.

The quality of the grass is not good enough for silage.

if any areas need to be left uncut, inform James in advance, so the area can be marked

We will always follow best practise with due attention to ground nesting birds and seed distribution to ensure minimum disruption to wildlife.

Footpaths to be maintained and cut by volunteers; this will commence next week using the BDCA tractor. Due care will be taken with a volunteer walking ahead of the tractor to point out any obstacles.

Fencing next Steps James will take forward the temporary fencing applications for Park Head and Malvern Road with the view to commencing grazing in those areas. James will look into compartments for temporary fencing along the top Downs ready for autumn grazing.

General consensus was that we should look towards erecting temporary fencing in more prominent areas and try to build up a collection of graziers who would use the

Downs. This would help in familiarising Downs's users and residents in seeing fencing and sheep on the Downs.

Cattle grazing on the Downs are not a viable option, with the TB restrictions in force in adjoining holdings.

Fixed/Permanent fencing - It was decided to put fixed fencing on hold, for a couple of years, whilst we try and establish a collection of graziers who would utilise the grazing on the Downs.

Future Funding – The High-level scheme from Natural England will not be available until 2018. This will mean more funds but will come with further management obligations.

**Action** – James to arrange a funding meeting to research funding available.

## 5.2 **General Management**

The Management Plan does not specify work over the summer months. Most of the work is scheduled for the autumn. However, scrub clearance is a necessity and we should prioritise areas which need clearance. Such as views from benches, Thin out trees where necessary, monitor Ash Die back and remove infected trees.

**Action** – Volunteer group to meet and prioritise areas for scrub clearance.

Events to consider – Herefordshire Harriers have expressed interest in using the racecourse for a race event

Nigel Shaw updated the committee; that a new Dog Control Order to cover all Herefordshire open spaces was being proposed however Bromyard Downs had not been included in the list of open spaces. The Committee agreed that we should approach Hereford Council to include Bromyard Downs.

## 6. **Public Member Questions**

No questions

## 7. **Any Other Business**

7.1 One of the new picnic benches has been stolen although it was securely fixed. Police are to be informed.

Decision taken to ensure all future picnic tables and benches are brand marked as BDCA Property.

## **Date of next meeting**

**Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> May 2017** – Falcon Hotel Bromyard 7:30 – 9:30

## **Meeting Close**

Lauren Smith

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<b>BDCA Meeting Schedule for the coming Year</b>	
<b><i>Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> September</i></b>	<b><i>All meetings currently scheduled to meet at the Falcon Hotel Bromyard From 7:30 -9:30.</i></b>
<b><i>Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> November</i></b>	
<b><i>Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2018</i></b>	
<b><i>Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> March</i></b>	
<b><i>Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> May</i></b>	
<b><i>AGM Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2018</i></b>	