

THE BEACON HILL SOCIETY

Minutes of the AGM held at 7.00pm on Wednesday 13th April 2016 at the "Earth Science Centre", Moons Hill Quarry, Stoke St Michael

Agenda

1. Chairman's Welcome and apologies for absence.

Present:-

Richard Raynsford (Chairman), Peter Banks (Treasurer), Bo Walsh (Secretary & Mendip DC), Mary Newman (Membership Secretary and Doultling PC), Fran Britten, Jake Britten, Janet Raynsford, Lucy Chard, Christine Mayle, Rick Gledhill, Jennie O' Kane.

Apologies:-

Joe Middleton (Woodland Trust), Alan Stone, Alan Connock, Gloria Cawood, Victoria Higgins, Brenda Rogers, Julian Back, Stuart Jenkins, Michael Mepstead, Paul Newman, Rod Hill, Elizabeth Gibbs.

2. Minutes of previous meeting 13th January 2016 - accepted

3. Matters arising from the Minutes & not on the agenda - none

4. Officers Reports:-

Chairman (Richard Raynsford) - nothing to declare.

Secretary (Bo Walsh) - reported a successful litter pick at the wood on the 7th February - a gallant crew turned up, despite the potential of stormy weather carrying on from the day before, a half dozen or so bags collected and ready for pick-up by the council (Mendip) who, it transpires, can hire out litter picking kits to community groups (free of charge); then a brief up-date on behalf of Joe Middleton (Woodland Trust) - Joe wanted to express his thanks the Society for all its help in looking after the wood and for the co-operation and hard work in keeping people aware of and interested in Beacon Hill - unfortunately we were not successful in being chosen as one of the "Welcoming Woods" programme of investment by the Woodland Trust - however the car park is due to be resurfaced soon and Joe still intends to look into improving fences, welcome sign / interpretation boards, etc.

The new web-site is linked to the Beacon Hill Society Facebook page and Twitter account so that we can communicate with the wider community using modern parlance - it does look good, I hope you have managed to take a look - <http://www.beaconhillsociety.org.uk/>

I think you'll agree that Scott has done an amazing job and do please let us know if there's anything you'd like to see on the web-site! For instance. If you have photos of the bluebells or have an item of interest please get in touch.

Treasurer (Peter Banks) - announced we are still in the black, subscriptions due for this year (£5.00), the biggest expenditure of the last year being the purchase of the dog bin by the main entrance which cost £310.18, followed by the purchase of the new web-site - approx £50.00 - for the next 10 years; the new web-site has been set up and is administered by Scott Baldwin, a contact of Richard Raynsford from Pilton.

It was agreed that the accounts should receive a review by a second person to verify them as being accurate and fair - a volunteer was nominated - Janet Raynsford - TBC / followed up.

PB requested the meeting to agree who should be signatories for the Beacon Hill Society bank account. Richard Raynsford and Bo Walsh were confirmed, together with present signatories Mary Newman & Peter Banks. Any two being required to sign all cheques.

Membership Secretary (Mary Newman) - we have had a request from a member asking if they could use a different method of payment - e.g. electronically / BACS / other ? Members felt there was probably a way of paying by direct bank transfer - to be researched (Committee).

A brief discussion was had later in the evening regarding whether or not we should increase the membership fees, the conclusion - this was not thought to be necessary, as we presently have a healthy financial situation.

5. Election of Officers:-

Chairman - Richard Raynsford - agreed to stand again - elected
Secretary - Bo Walsh - elected
Treasurer - Peter Banks - agreed to stand again for the coming year - elected
Membership Secretary - Mary Newman - agreed to stand again - elected

New Officer role - Webmaster/ Social Media - to handle up-dates in communications - to be appointed - potentially Victoria Higgins - TBC

Organisation of Society - remains the same - committee and members

6. Motor bikes in the wood - Jake Britten confirmed there have been reports of motor bikes in the wood over some weekends recently. The Police were contacted and the Woodland Trust has placed signs at entrances to the wood to discourage riders.

Peter Banks gave a brief history of how the riding of non-road legal motor-bikes throughout the wood has been an occasional, unauthorised, activity for many years. The riding of road legal, i.e. taxed & insured, trail bikes along the Right of Way (RoW) has now been outlawed by the inception of Acts of Parliament in 2000 & 2006. These Acts have done nothing to deter those who ride illegally, indeed those who rode motorcycles responsibly along the RoW helped discourage the inappropriate activities of those who rode elsewhere in the wood (note; horse drawn carts still have a right to use the RoW!).

7. Events, Up-dates and Activities:- this had to be cut short as our allotted time at the Earth Science Centre was fast running out.

For expedience / time's sake we jumped to item 7. iv. Series of events to help celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Beacon Hill Society – summer picnic.

To organise this event in July - we aim to hold a “party planning meeting” on **11th May at 7.00pm** - hopefully at the Waggon and Horses - I shall confirm as soon as I have made the arrangements (Bo) , etc.

8. Any Other Business - the Bluebells have been slow to show themselves in Beacon Hill Wood, but are now making an appearance - hooray!

Somerset Wildlife Trust are promoting two events -

1. Woodland Networks in East Mendip Walk - Sunday 8th May 10 - 1pm - a walk in Asham Wood SSSI, and

2. Scything for smallholders workshop - Saturday 16th June 2016 - 10am - 4pm, near Frome.

Both events are free, but booking is essential - email lila.morris@somersetwildlife.org or ring 01823 652474

We would like to invite and positively encourage members of the Beacon Hill Society to express an interest or make comment on the running of the society and promotion of its role as champion of Beacon Hill wood.

We are “thinking” of creating ‘working groups’ for various activities, projects and round the table discussions - please do not hesitate to get in touch - we really would appreciate and need your thoughts, comments and needless to say, fresh ideas - always welcome. Thank you

9. Date of next meeting - **11th May 2016** - please do try and come along - we need enthusiastic party planners.....

<http://www.beaconhillsociety.org.uk/>