

THE BEACON HILL SOCIETY

Minutes for Beacon Hill Society Meeting held on Wednesday

1st November 2017

**Somerset Earth Science Centre, Moon's Hill Quarry, Stoke St. Michael
7.00pm**

1. **Chairman: Welcome and apologies for absence**

Present:- Richard Raynsford (Chairman), Bo Walsh (Secretary), Peter Banks (Treasurer), Jennie O'Kane, Fran Britten, Lesley Stewart, Janet Raynsford, Christine Mayle, Marion Black, Lesley Rowan

Guest:- Paul Allen (Woodland Trust)

Apologies:- Rick Gledhill, Mary Newman, David Van Dyk, Paula Jordan, Rod Hill, Mark Adler, Alan Stone, Rod Hill, Jo Baverstock, Lucy Chard, Nicola Stoate, Victoria Britten

2. **Minutes of previous meeting (09/08/2017)**

These were read and approved

3. **Matters arising from the Minutes & not on the agenda**

None

4. **Officers Reports:-**

Chairman - Richard introduced Paul Allen of the Woodland Trust to the meeting. Richard reported that the Society continues to progress well and there are several upcoming matters which will be discussed through the agenda.

Secretary – Bo confirmed all was going well. He has spoken again with Sharon Blyth of SPARK and it has been suggested that interested committee members meet with her and Bo during the working week to discuss matter further. BW to arrange

Treasurer – Income: the current balance is £786.43. The cost of laminating and printing, detailed at the last meeting, totalled £56.85 and has been paid to Peter.

The costs for the St Aldhelm's School visit (Hill bequest) have been settled.

Membership Secretary – In Mary's absence, Peter was able to confirm that there are 32 members of the Society, one of whom joined at the recent Mid Somerset Show.

Web-master / Social Media co-ordinator –There was a brief discussion about the ongoing situation with the Society's presence on social media forums and the website. It was agreed that there should be a more concerted effort to effect wider accessibility and it was suggested a sub-committee be set up to oversee this. This will be revisited at a future meeting.

5. Future Events and Activities

i. Mid-Somerset Show – it was agreed that the Show had been a success – including the recruitment of a new member.

ii. Forest School / Family Day – Kaye Watts has been unwell and this matter has not progressed further. It will be revisited at a future date.

Lesley Rowan referred to the Health Walk in May which had been a success and it was agreed that this should be encouraged again with the Society approaching the WI in order to co-ordinate this with them. PB/BW will liaise with Jo Smith

iii. Arrangements for the proposed Geology Field Trip did not take place due to communication problems caused by issues of access, land owners permissions and crops being harvested. However, Fran was able to confirm that there is a strong possibility that 2 walks will take place (ploughing, access and weather permitting,) the first being along Newman Street and the second at Tadhil with dates to be confirmed, although the first walk was anticipated for the 12th November; members felt this was too short notice so Fran Britten will continue to liaise with Roy Vbranch.

iv. The fungal foray was confirmed as a great success, with the weather being good and a fine array of examples found and photographed. Based on the photographs taken and the possibility of an art group visiting the Woods, Marion Black extended an invitation to members and others to attend an Art Group at St Aldhem's School on Mondays between 10 and 12.30. BW will send details to members by email.

v. It was confirmed that the clearing of some undergrowth from the tumuli within the woods did not take place prior to Joe Middleton leaving on sabbatical.

vi. Litter picking was again discussed. Paul Allen (Woodland Trust) confirmed that the Trust has paid employees who clear litter, usually in May/June and September. He asked that the Society keep him informed that this is being undertaken. Richard explained that litter picking is undertaken by the members prior to

the Bluebell season, usually on a Sunday because of the danger from the traffic along the roadside of the Woods.

6. Woodland Trust Management Plan – Paul Allen introduced himself as the permanent replacement for Joe Middleton. He is involved in management plans for woodland areas in Devon, West Dorset and Somerset. He confirmed that the Management Plan has been approved and the initial clearing and replanting will begin for autumn/winter 2018 following receipt a felling permit. He delighted the members by confirming that the felled timbers will be cleared by horse loggers. Regeneration of the cleared areas will be monitored and there will be additional planting of oaks and other native trees suitable for the acid soil. He stressed the awareness of the Woodland Trust of the archaeological significance of the site. He confirmed that the agreed path clearing of leaf debris and mud will commence in the next 2 to 3 weeks. Peter asked that he confirm the paths to be cleared ie. The path through the Hollow – way plus the location and extent of any others eg at the eastern to the woods. Paul has agreed to liaise with Peter over this. The potential for the public to be able to watch the horse loggers clearing the felled timber was discussed. It was felt that this would be an ideal opportunity for the Society to show how the Woods are being maintained. Paul was agreeable to this subject to the practicalities.

7. Any Other Business

1. Litter picking – TBA
2. Fran suggested that the Society produce a calendar of upcoming events in the woods. This will be discussed again
3. Bo told the meeting of an encounter with freelance photographer who expressed interest in visiting the woods. It was agreed that this may be an opportunity to investigate the possibility of the Society producing a calendar using season photos of the woods. BW to discuss further
4. Steve Tofts has approached the Society for access to the Woods by another archaeological society. It was agreed that he should speak directly with Paul Allen for the necessary permissions. Peter Banks agreed that he would be happy to unlock the gate when everything has been arranged.
5. Peter raised the question of the Society Constitution which is now in need of updating; having been drawn up in 1996! It was agreed that Peter would consult with members in order to draft a proposal to put before the next AGM.

6. Dates for future meetings were agreed on a quarterly basis.

These will be: January 17th, 2018

AGM and meeting: April 18th, 2018

July 18th, 2018

October 17th, 2018

Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 17th January 2018 @ 7pm. Venue: Somerset Earth Science Centre , Moons Hill Quarry

Meeting closed at 20.52pm

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