

THE BEACON HILL SOCIETY

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Minutes of the Meeting on Monday, 6th February 2012 at the Waggon and Horses, Doulting

Present: Julian Back (secretary, webmaster), Peter Banks (treasurer), Caroline Gentinetta (editor), Mary Newman (mem. sec & Doulting PC), Jonathan Burgess (Woodland Trust), Brenda Rogers, Fran Britten, Christine Mayle, Alan Stone, Philip Malcolm, Paul Newman, Alan Connock

Apologies: Jennie O'Kane, Eileen Bird, Elizabeth Gibbs, Richard Raynsford, Bo Walsh

1 Welcome & Apologies

Julian welcomed us to the meeting.

2 Minutes of previous meeting 12th September, 2011

The previous minutes were accepted

3 Matters arising

The Fungus Foray was very successful. We also had a litter pick on 9th October. The society was also represented at some local events.

4 Officers reports

Webmaster: Some minor updates to the website have been made..

Treasurer: Peter Banks reported on the society funds. Deposit account: £265.24, current account: £691.94.

Membership Secretary: Mary Newman told us that there are currently 18 paid up members and reminded us that society subscriptions will be due on 1st April (before the next meeting).

Editor: Caroline Gentinetta had nothing to report. The next newsletter will probably be in the summer.

5 Future Events

Dawn Chorus Walk. Julian had contacted local birder Bruce Taylor about this and his opinion was that Beacon Hill was not a great location for birds as it is too exposed but he suggested a Moth Identification Evening instead. The Dawn Chorus Walk idea was dropped.

Moth Evening. Paul Newman is also a member of the Somerset Moth Group and he offered to contact SMG members to see if a date in the summer could be arranged this year or next year. It will probably have to be a week day. Maybe have a BBQ in the wood before the Moth Event.

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Litter Picking, Sunday, 26th February, 2pm. We will also check paths for overgrowing brambles and brash. Alan Connock will join us to look at improvements to the car parking area by his Road Up Gang later in the year.

Visit to the Earth Science Centre at Moons Hill Quarry – Julian reported that the earliest available dates are in July. This will have to be a weekday. Julian to go ahead and book. **This has now been booked for Friday, 20th July at 2pm.** The visit will take about 2 ½ hours and is limited to 12 people. Please let the secretary know (contact details below) if you would like to come.

Winter Hedge Laying – The hedge layer used previously by Fran & Steve Britten has retired. Other suggestions are: Peter Drake, Hedge Laying Competition for Mid Somerset Show, Somerset Hedge Group (Pete Grainger) or BTCV.

Rubbish Removal from the Fosseway – Fran Britten will get a quote from Will Davis of Bodden. Since the meeting Steve Britten has estimated that the cost will be about £200.

Archaeological Fortnight 2012 – possibility of a walk/talk by Dr Jodie Lewis, Mendip archaeology researcher from Worcester University. No reply from email, suggest any members attending U3A event at Draycot try to talk to Jodie Lewis there.

Other Maintenance Work – path clearing, rut levelling.

6 Money donated on behalf of Mr Dennis Hill

The money has enabled the children of Douling School to visit the wood. It paid for coaches and portable toilets, total cost £289. The school visit was very successful and several society members attended to help with the event. It would be good to get some articles or artwork from the children for our next newsletter.

Mr Hill's nephews have now offered to provide £300 per year each for 5 years to enable Douling School to make further visits. This money would be administered by the Beacon Hill Society.

Jon Burgess suggested that if the money went through the Woodland Trust it could be gift-aided which means tax could be recovered.

Jon also suggested looking at the Nature Detectives part of the Woodland Trust website for future activities for the schoolchildren.

7 Dedication of an area of the wood by the Woodland Trust

Several members expressed concern that a bench with a plaque dedicating an area of the wood had been installed by the Woodland Trust without sufficient consultation with Society members. Jonathan Burgess responded that he had notified the Society Secretary prior to installation and

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the Secretary said he had notified society members in the minutes of the June 27th 2011 meeting. Jon also said that this concern had not occurred in other locations where similar benches and dedications had occurred. Jon offered to put a temporary hold on any further dedications until a more thorough investigation has taken place. He will also send a map of other dedications in the wood (since received and attached to these minutes).

8 Any other business

Asbestos was dumped in the entrance to the wood. It was removed by Somerset Council.

The Bronze Age urn found at Beacon Hill is not on display in the re-opened Somerset Museum in Taunton. We would support having it returned to Wells Museum for display there.

Beacon Hill is Wood of the Month on the Woodland Trust website. This may cause an increase in traffic to the Beacon Hill Society website. Julian will check the website stats.

Beacon Hill Wood may be submitted by the Woodland Trust to the Royal Forestry Society for judging.

9 Next Meeting

AGM, Wednesday, 18th April 2012, 7.30pm at Doultling Village Hall

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