

## Friends of Pontesford Hill Committee Meeting 29<sup>th</sup> July 2015

7.30pm at Pontesbury Congregational Church

### Minutes

**Present:** Mike Mortimer (Chair), David Morgan (Vice Chair), Brian Simmonds (Treasurer), Ken Day, Adrian Donnelly, Jan Pursaill and Christopher Cooke.  
Shropshire Wildlife Trust: Sara Pearce and Beth Williams.

Mike welcomed Jan to her first Committee meeting. Christopher offered to take the minutes.

1. **Apologies** were received from Dave Taplin and Val Whittall.
2. **Minutes of the Meeting of 18<sup>th</sup> May 2015** were accepted as a true record.
3. **Matters arising from the last Minutes.** Mike reflected that the numbers at the General Meeting were rather disappointing. However, there was good discussion at the meeting.
4. **Current Financial Position.**  
Mike reported that the **Appeal** had reached £266,326 and there was £43,000 in Gift Aid to come.  
Brian reported that the **Friends** had £9,254 in the bank account and £52.40 was cash/cheques in hand. This gives us a total of £9,306.40.  
Membership was at the General Meeting figure with an income of £1,780.  
The **Down to Earth** grant is included in the overall Friends figure. We were given £3,794 and so far we have spent £140 on the Mammal Survey and £21 on hiring a hall. This leaves £3,633 to be used to pay for Beth's work etc. Brian said there were some other event monies that had not been included in the Friends total.
  - **Little and Large** (Everest) Evening. All the monies were being handled by Adam Booth. The ticket sales of £1,117.50 would be going to SWT. The buckets, raffle and teas of £448.65 would be going to the Nepal Appeal.
  - **The Shropshire Field** afternoon raised £400 and it was agreed that this would go to SWT.
5. **Friends Picnic/Grand Draw.**  
Mike reported that it had been difficult to find entertainment for the Picnic because of clashes with other events. We could go ahead without entertainment, postpone or cancel the event. All the committee agreed that the last course should be adopted.  
Mike thought we should produce three large **Thank You Banners** to

thank the community for reaching the Appeal target. This was agreed by all. One would go by St. George's Church, one on Hall Bank and one by Wynnstay. Mike would approach Wynnstay about this. Adrian offered to help produce the banners.

**Notices Cancelling the Picnic** will be produced with the help of SWT and would be put up around the village by Beth with a helper.

Consideration would be given at a future meeting as to whether we should hold an event in the late Autumn in the Public Hall.

**The Grand Draw** would continue to go ahead on 11<sup>th</sup> July but it will be held on **School Green**. Young Ffion would draw the winning tickets.

Christopher reported that he was now handing Brian £95 which brought the total Draw receipts so far to £1,046. He was handed more stubs and monies by Committee members.

- 6. Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Fund/ Down to Earth.** David said that we had yet to claim the £500 from the AONB Fund. He would handle the forms. David also said that there may be more money available from Down to Earth in the future.

**7 & Survey Reports/Consultation Programme.**

- 9.** Three new surveys are being pursued at the moment:

1. To appeal donors concerning what motivated them to contribute.
2. The Hill Management strategy.
3. FOPH Volunteering.

In addition, Beth, David, Dave and Mike have been conducting Hill User Surveys i.e. asking users of Pontesford Hill what they think. These will be fully analysed later. However, initial responses strongly suggest that most users want the Hill to remain much the same and not be sanitised and made user-friendly as at Haughmond Hill et al. However, maps and information points (e.g. Lower Camp) can be used but must blend in. Mike said that the Shropshire Woodcarvers would be happy to be involved.

Beth has drafted a cover page for an e-survey about the future management of the Hill. This will primarily be directed at the Friends. The cover note has been simplified by Sara and John Hughes. The survey would be sent to Committee Members at the end of the week as a pilot and we are all asked to fill it in and also to make comments if it can be improved. Details of how to participate with the link to the e-survey would be made available at the car park and other places.

David wondered whether it could also be produced as a paper leaflet that people could fill in manually. There was discussion of this idea but the conclusion was that for various reasons we will adopt only the e version.

We can target various groups e.g. parents of the Schools as well as the older pupils at Mary Webb School with information about the link to filling in the questionnaire on-line.

- 8. SWT/FOPH Management Plan.** The above consultation will inform the Management Plan. Joe Penfold's map and suggestions which came out of

the Training Days that Dave, David and Adrian attended, have some very good ideas but these must not be seen as a “done deal”. They are part of the consultation process.

- 10. P3 Work/Works on the Hill.** Mike reported that the P3 Group would be happy to do quite a lot of the needed work for free such as removing bracken from certain areas. There would be a meeting with Joe Penfold about this.

Adrian said he would also be interested in helping Mike with the ash saplings that need to be removed.

SWT would approach Tarmac to see if there would be any free stone available.

Mike has e-mailed the Planning Office about the car park and what planning consent may be needed. Beth was going to e-mail Mike another contact in the village who knows about planning issues.

- 11. Any Other Business.**

Jan Pursaill asked about posters and leaflets for the **Moth Event** on 15<sup>th</sup> August. Mike said that this was in hand and he was liaising with David Smith.

During earlier discussions, reference was made to the **Forestry Commission 2007 Report**. If these plans had gone ahead, they would have clear-felled a large section of Pontesford Hill. Beth had a paper copy of their report but had not had time to photocopy it ahead of the meeting. She said she would do so and would distribute copies to the committee.

- 12. Date of the next meeting will be 7.30pm on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> August.**