

minutes

**Meeting Minutes of the
Boughton Fen Sub-Committee
Date: 30th January 2008
Location: 'Winward', Boughton**

1 Present

Mark Pogmore (MP) – Chair
Frank Reid (FR)
Angela Faherty (AF)
Allan Hale (AH)
Kevin Fisher (KF)

2 Apologies

David Cooper (DC)

3 Matters Arising/Action List from Meeting of 12th December 2007

3.1 No specific matters arising.

3.2 BFSC reviewed action list, updates appended to these minutes.

4 Natural England £5000 Funding

4.1 A letter from Natural England confirming the funding approval and order has been received by the Parish.

4.2 Two contractors (Natural England recommended) engaged to discuss scope of works, two quotes received for 10 days scrub clearance. Aiming for 1st two weeks of March for contractor start.

BFSC agreed that obtaining a third quotation in the limited time frame we have for spending the money would not be feasible.

It was agreed by the BFSC to appoint the cheaper of the two contractors

Action 28: AH/FR/MP to supervise contractor works on the Fen, as appropriate, and ensure compliance with our needs.

4.3 A '360' Digger hired from Mr Chapman will also be used to assist in this clearance.

Action 29: MP/AH to agree and co-ordinate the dates and times of digger use with the scrub clearance contractor.

Action 30: BFSC to undertake some tree lopping in advance to ensure clear

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entrance to Fen for Contractors.

Action 31: FR/AH to undertake application of 'roundup' to tree stumps to prevent regrowth.

5 ELS/HLS Agreement

5.1 Farm Environment Plan - Assistance imminent to take us through completion of all relevant forms and application.

5.2 Management Plan – Covered in review of minutes.

5.3 Common Land Access – Discussion with Natural England elicits the recommendation that parts of the Fen should be fenced as part of a controlled Management Plan. It is further recommended that the Lower Fen is fully enclosed, the Middle Fen left as is and partial fencing for Highland Fen. It was suggested that simple post and wire fencing would be appropriate.

Action 32: BFSC to investigate options for informing the village of proposed work on the Fen. Group4 News article and Open Day.

Action 33: MP to provide KJF with website address of town in Hertfordshire that has one through a similar exercise to help identify suggestions for successful consultation.

Action 34: KJF to pursue the mechanism for DEFRA application for the fencing of Common Land.

5.4 Grazing – The option of grazing cattle to minimise/eliminate scrub encroachment is being actively pursued by MP. The proposed cattle breed is Belted Galloway.

6 Health & Safety

6.1 Much discussion ensued on H&S issues. The following recommendations were made and agreed:

1. Risk Assessments to be conducted for any village working parties.

Action 35: KJF to conduct Risk Assessments and produce a safety leaflet, Andrew Faherty to review.

2. Safety equipment is to be made available to working party members. As a minimum, this is to include safety goggles/glasses/visors and gloves. A quantity of each is to be procured by the BFSC accommodating, male and female adults and children. The following quantity was suggested as an initial starter: 10 pairs of adult gloves, 5 pairs of children's gloves, 20 pairs of adults goggles, 5 children's visors/goggles.

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Action 36: MP/FR to identify suitable source and purchase before the next working party on the 2nd March.

Action 37: DC to see whether British Sugar would be able to assist in provision of safety equipment

3. Chainsaw/Strimmer Use – Training and certification to be undertaken. Chainsaw and strimmer to be purchased from Parish funds to ‘test the system’. Could Natural England advise on any suitable machines?

Action 38: MP to investigate purchase of suitable chainsaw and strimmer.

Action 39: FR to see whether Paul Coultlen would be prepared to take training.

Action 40: MP to identify suitable training organisation and determine cost and dates. If possible to be performed before next working party.

4. Safety talk to be given to volunteers before commencement of work at the next working party.

Action 41: MP to conduct safety talk.

7 Working Parties

7.1 2nd March next village party. Reassess future working parties after Contractors have completed their work.

8 NE Permits etc.

8.1 All work to be undertaken needs NE agreement, a process has been established and this process must be adhered to for all future works.

9 Other Sources of Funding

9.1 Dawn Chorus – AH has kindly agreed to do a ‘Dawn Chorus’ talk and walk on the morning of Sunday 4th May, expected start is 04:30am. It was agreed that this could be accompanied with a BBQ breakfast (Bacon Butties!). FR agreed to do the cooking. Proposed price for tickets £5 adult, £2.50 children. All proceeds towards Boughton Fen.

Action 42: AF to arrange and publicise event with BVC assistance.

9.2 BVC – It was queried whether the BVC would be able to make a donation to the BFSC. MP was asked to raise this at the next BVC meeting.

9.3 British Sugar – FR mentioned that British Sugar were generous donators to local causes and suggested that DC could make enquiries. See Action 37.

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- 9.4 Norfolk County Council – Provide funding on a percentage match basis and this could be a revenue stream to pursue.....

Post Meeting Note: Norfolk Rural Community Council also provide grants of up to £1500 to cover up to 75% of total project costs.

10 Neighbours

- 10.1 Boughton Fen has a number of 'neighbours'/stakeholders. BFSC to ensure appropriate communication and information is provided to our 'neighbours'. When there is public consultation, ensure that neighbours and stakeholders receive invite or personal approach.

11 Visits to Similar Areas

- 11.1 An invite has been extended for a visit to Lakenheath Fen. How about Wicken Fen?

Action 43: AH to follow up Wicken Fen possibility.

12 AOB

- 12.1 Two credible otter sightings at the Fen.

- 12.2 Three bird feeders put up at the Fen, AH to e:mail BFSC to see netting of birds.

- 12.3 Flora records for Boughton Fen still in English Nature records. AH to view. Phone call from Norfolk flora group, wanting access to Fen to draw up list of what is on the Fen in August. Marsh Carpet Moth presence at the Fen to be confirmed later this year as it thrives on Common Meadow Rue.

- 12.4 How do we seal off access to the Fen for 'unwanted persons'? Make it a difficult temporary access for Land Rover/Digger? Do not want to be too conspicuous!

- 12.5 Middle Fen – Reed cutting, do we need to start thinking about this? Wait till HLS entry and then think about afterwards. Possibly next autumn.

Action 44: AH to see whether there are any reed cutters around to tell us how to do it.

- 12.6 MP advises of a dragonfly/moth expert who has an interest in coming to the Fen.

- 12.7 Before and after photographs of the Fen, AH to take.

- 12.8 Registered details for the Fen are still under Steve Saunders domain. KJF had difficulty speaking to RLR because of this although has requested that a Land

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Registration form is sent to Steve.

Action 45: MP to ensure 'change of details' happens and inform Steve of the above.

12.9 Boughton Book !!!! – This has been discussed elsewhere and needs further thought but there is now plentiful information available to look at the possibility of producing an updated Boughton Book.

13 Next Meeting

13.1 The next meeting date is 'To Be Confirmed'.

Action 46: MP to propose dates by e:mail.