

**Notes of Ordinary Meeting of the Friends of Badock's Wood
held on Tuesday 19th September 2017 at 7.30 p.m.
The Greenway Centre, Doncaster Road, Southmead, BS10 5PY**



Present: Linda Wilson (Vice-Chair), Geoff Perrett (Treasurer), Frances Robertson (Secretary), Christine Callanan, Alex Minshull, Roger Moses, Tony Smith, Mike Townsend, Jan Walker

Apologies: Clare Bishop

**The meeting began with a most interesting illustrated talk about Britain's Hawks and Owls.
Our thanks to Roger Moses for this.**

1. Approval of Notes of Ordinary Meeting held 21st March 2017

Notes approved.

2. Matters arising not already covered on the agenda

2a) Northern Gateway

Frances confirmed that she had written and presented the letter regarding widening the opening of the Northern Gateway to the Neighbourhood Partnership meeting. It was not known what was happening regarding this since the closure of the NP but Sarah Blazier from Parks had not heard anything further and she had confirmed that Parks Department approval would be required.

2b) With regard to issue of schools bringing groups of children to play "Manhunt" in the wood, Frances had happened to meet them soon after the March meeting in the wood. She spoke with the Teacher leading them and explained the concerns regarding any impact of trampling on wildflower species such as the native bluebells and explained it was a designated nature reserve. The teacher called to the children and explained this to them. FOBW is writing to the local schools offering to go into school and talk to children about Badock's Wood and what it means to be a nature reserve.

3. Management Plan

i. Management plan review – update

Linda explained that the Management Plan needed more revisions than had initially been anticipated and it had also been decided to make it a 10 year plan rather than 5. The action plans would be regularly reviewed during that period. There had therefore been an interim action plan drawn up for 2017/18 which had been approved by the Council. The next plan would then cover 2018-2028.

ii. Monitoring

The Scouts had undertaken the pilot survey put together by Mike and Frances. The Scouts had not done any analysis on the results and Frances had recently received the completed forms. She had done a quick tally but no detailed analysis. Her note is appended – significantly 88 dogs were recorded entering the dogs in less than 2 hours at a quiet time of visits. This is useful information for planning resources to manage dog poo, for example.

Bird survey group

The bird monitoring group had taken a 2 month break over the summer but had recently seen a kingfisher flying through the wood along the river. There is no food for it in the river and unlikely to nest as there are no nesting sites in the wood, but probably using it as a thoroughfare!

Riverfly monitoring

Mike has been undertaking Riverfly monitoring for 2 years and having taken stock of the results he has decided that the frequency should be reduced from monthly to quarterly. He had seen fluctuations in species and quality but he had found caddis which is an indicator of good quality.

iii. UoB Volunteer Work parties

Two work parties of staff groups from the University of Bristol had taken place. One day the group worked led by Neil Green from the Avon Invasive Weeds Forum and Roger Moses from FOBW. They “bashed” the non-native invasive Himalayan Balsam growing in Trymside. They had done the whole of Trymside before it had set seed and Neil felt that one more year of such work could significantly cut its impact. Within Badock’s Wood, Mike, Roger and Sian had dealt with the Himalayan Balsam found there but it is not significant and keeping Trymside down is crucial to keeping it out of Badock’s Wood.

The second work party day the volunteers worked on the pond: clearing brambles, repairing the gate and fence, adding more native pond plants. In the afternoon they cleared the weeds from between the paving around the mosaic and cut back the cherry tree branches overhanging Meadow 1 to facilitate the ride-on mower to mow the full width of the meadow. Thanks to Alex for leading this on behalf of FOBW and to Chrissie for suggesting Badock’s Wood to her colleagues as the place to do their volunteer work.

iv Litter Pick Group

The litter pick group continued to regularly work in the woods and they are benefitting from their efforts. Thanks to Mike for organising and leading these.

4. Events and Activities

i. Review of 2017 events

It was felt that the events were going well but attendance was variable. Frances was attending them all as the “host” other than when she was unwell, and requested help. Roger offered to be an alternative host for events. The group’s thanks were given in particular to BNS for providing so many knowledgeable walks leaders for our events, free of charge.

ii. 2018 Programme

The general feeling was that the programme was about right and the same sort of events should be held again next year.

There was a lack of tree walks. There would be winter walks with Nicola Strange and considering a tree walk as part of the May Walking Festival series of walks.

iii. Other activities

Bristol Parks Forum is attended by someone from the Committee, usually by Frances, but no one had been available for the last one. They are working hard to protect our parks and everyone had seen the items in the newsletter and the Petition.

FOBW Social

Those who attended had enjoyed the last social but this was over a year ago. A social in November at The Beehive, Wellington Hill West was mooted. Frances to arrange.

Action: Frances

5. Projects update

i. Hidden Treasures 2015

There are still some funds remaining from the Green Capital year grants to finish off bench refurbishment / replacement. We are working with sculptor Andy O'Neill to see what can be done. Probably a plank and log based bench on the Triangle as it is difficult to move large trunks into that area due to the paths and bridges limiting access.

The Green Man sculptor from 2015 had been vandalised but Tony W had oiled it to make the damaged parts less noticeable and Andy O'Neill to see what he can do in terms of restoration – e.g. replacement nose.

ii. Keeping Badock's Wood Lovely Leaflet

Frances thanked those who had sent her comments and apologised for the delay in getting this sorted but she had been awaiting comments from the Neighbourhood Forum via the Neighbourhood Partnership Coordinator. This had now been shared with the BS10 Parks and Planning Group who were sending her their feedback. The graphic designer had been paid for her work today but there are still some funds remaining to finish this work.

iii. Community Routes

This is a joint project between the Southmead Development Trust (Greenway Centre) and the Friends of Badock's Wood. It was hoped to add some finger posts to signpost visitors into the wood from the Greenway Centre and from the wood to the café and toilets at the Centre. Also in the project plan is adding a lower step to the stile to make it easier to get up onto it from both sides and reprofiling on the Greenway Centre side to make the approach to the stile easier. There would be more noticeboards at entrances and interpretation boards in the Greenway Centre in the Community Garden and Orchard areas linking to the wood and hopefully another totem near the stile on the Greenway side. This project had been the subject of a funding bid to the Co-op Community Fund.

6. Finances / Fundraising

It was noted that the finances had hardly changed since reporting at the AGM. The donations received helped pay for room hire and printing of posters and information leaflets etc by Frances. We were paying annual membership to Bristol Naturalists Society.

7. Draft Constitution amendments

Following previous discussions the Constitution had been re-drafted to reflect that the Friends group covers the whole of the Badock's Wood open space and not just that part within the Local Nature Reserve designation. The amendments had been circulated with the agenda for this meeting and no comments had been received. It was agreed to take it to the next AGM for approval.

Action: Frances

8. Any Other Business

It was reported that there was a forthcoming Somerset Scything Festival that members may be interested in.

9. Next Meetings - AGM – March 2018

The 3rd Tuesday in March was suggested. Frances to check with Tony West and others not present and organise.

Action: Frances

Initial notes from the Visitor Count and survey undertaken May 2017

The 4 count sites were: Northern Gateway, Lake End / bottom of Adventure Playground, Triangle, and Near Greenway Stile. Only visitors thought to be entering the site were recorded to reduce potential for double counting.

The survey and visitor count were drafted by FOBW and the scouts offered to pilot it. It was also used as an opportunity for a wildlife evening in Badock's Wood and the children took it in turns to undertake the count and survey visitors. The detailed analysis of the count and survey responses has not yet been done - e.g. looking at party size and how many had dogs with them and how many did not, but approximately half of the parties recorded had at least one dog with them. As there were parents bringing children to the event and also accompanied by other non-participating children, it is very likely that the numbers of adults and children are much higher than would usually be the case. However, only one of the scout leaders had a dog with them and possibly a handful of parents brought a dog so the dog numbers are more typical of the wood usage. This is also true of cyclists and joggers who were not associated with the scout troop.

Dogs - 6 parties had 2 dogs and one had 3 - all the rest had one dog regardless of the size of the party of visitors. There were no professional dog walkers in the wood, presumably because they only bring dogs during the working day when dog owners cannot walk their own dogs.

In the space of less than two hours 88 dogs were recorded entering the wood. It did not seem particularly busy with dogs at the Northern Gateway but information lacking from the survey form was the location of each counter. The start time and end time had been printed onto the sheets as the whole period of the scout meeting in the wood. Using these again it should be that the date, day, start and end time, and location of surveyor should all be completed by the surveyor at the time. In order to avoid double counting it would be a good idea to have more counters stationed at the main entrances, but again only counting people arriving into the wood. The qualitative survey can be done at various points within the wood and not necessarily on entry. Feedback and observation was that most people approached by the scouts were willing to take part in the survey. It is useful to know dog numbers for several reasons. It is a fair assumption that each dog will poo at least once whilst visiting the wood so for each dog on each visit one can reckon up how many poo bags are hopefully being deposited into the on-site bins.