



**PULBOROUGH PARISH COUNCIL**

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**MINUTES OF THE  
RECREATION AND OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE  
MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 15<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2015  
AT THE SPORTS PAVILION**

**PRESENT:** Cllrs Wallace (Chairman), Clarke, Qusted, Lawson, Mills, Henly & Wilson.

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Lisa Underwood (Assistant Clerk) and 1 member of the public.

**The meeting opened at 7.42pm**

**88. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

**89. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

All members declared a non pecuniary interest in agenda item 5, Nutbourne Common as the Council is the Trustee of the ground.

**90. MINUTES**

The Committee **RESOLVED** to agree and approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 20th November 2014 as a true and accurate record of the proceedings and the Chairman signed them.

**CLERK'S REPORT - FROM MEETING HELD ON 20TH NOVEMBER 2014**

Item 76 – Clerk's Report - Cousins Way Trim Trail

Available dates, for a public meeting to discuss the trim trail, were sent from Sgt Mundy and PCSO Dunning and having had responses from some of the R&OS Committee, the preferred date is Tuesday 17th March at 7.30pm. Peter Jones (LAT) has confirmed he can also attend this date, however Dan Jenkins, the Youth Worker, is unable to attend. The Assistant Clerk will arrange to advertise this meeting in the Parish Newsletter, on the Pulborough Parish Council (PPC) website and on notice boards. The residents, who attended the first meeting will also be advised. Clarification required as to who will chair the meeting. *Cllr. Qusted confirmed that he will chair the meeting.*

Item 81 – Allotments

An inspection date, with all available R&OS Committee members has been arranged for Tuesday 27th January 2015 at 12pm.

Item 82 – Memorial Garden

Stepping stones have now been placed in the memorial garden to enable access to the notice board.

An article will be placed in the February Parish newsletter asking for volunteers to help with weeding in the memorial garden. St Mary's School were not able to offer any helpers from their Gardening Club or Forest Schools Group.

Item 83 – Lime Tree on Footpath, along Bowling Green

This tree is not included in the tri-annual tree survey programme, and has not been assessed for some time. Two quotations have been obtained to have the re-growth cut back to the previous pollard points, which are in the region of £950.00 + VAT. A quotation has also been received to remove deadwood and all dangerous and over hanging branches at a cost of £240.00 + VAT. *Are the Committee happy to proceed with the £240.00 quotation, which the Clerk has the authority to accept under delegated responsibilities, and then this tree will be added to the next tri-annual survey or would the Committee like this item to be added to the next R&OS agenda to discuss the full works to this tree and receive the necessary quotations. **The Committee AGREED to proceed with the £240.00 quotation and add the lime tree to the tri annual survey. The Assistant Clerk was instructed to organise the works.***

**91. PUBLIC SPEAKING**

There were no public speakers.

**92. NUTBOURNE COMMON RECREATION GROUND (NCRG)**

Members received a report from the Wealden Heaths Area Manager regarding NCRG (see Appendix 1). Members felt the report was comprehensive and educational. The report stated that NCRG ‘has become a very important new heath site within West Sussex’. The report confirms that to maintain the central clearing area as heath, bracken, oak leaves, bramble and silver birch saplings need to be kept under control. Members noted that bracken spraying should be restricted to the central clearing only. Cllrs Quested and Lawson advised that they have been clearing the silver birch saplings on a regular basis and that other volunteers are welcome to help also. Members noted that the report confirms Pulborough Parish Council have the support of the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) and the Wealden Heaths Area team, who have offered volunteers and advice. They also donated heather brushings for the area.

Cllr. Quested commented that when speaking to the tree works Contractor, he advised that cutting all loose tree branches, due to storm damage, is not always necessary. The branches can stay in that position for some time and they actually attract birds. Also when the branches fall down, they should be left to create habitat piles, although it was noted that the habitat piles are being taken away from the area, by parties unknown.

The Assistant Clerk advised that the Clerk suggested that the public meeting regarding the future works at NCRG be held at the Annual Parish Meeting, as more residents may be in attendance. Members AGREED this was a good idea, and instructed the Assistant Clerk to facilitate and to invite the Wealden Heaths Area Manager to this meeting, to help with any questions.

The Assistant Clerk was also instructed to display the report on the Lower St car park notice board, and send it to volunteers, who worked on the site originally, so they could see how NCRG has progressed.

**93. POCKET PARK**

The Assistant Clerk advised that West Sussex County Council (WSCC) have been to the site to inspect why the culvert is not flowing properly, and they have advised that as there is a water pipe running through the culvert, there is not an option to remove it and replace it. However, they have confirmed that if both sides are heavily cleared and the ditch on the Council’s side is scraped out to re-expose the pipe, the culvert should become functional again, reducing the chance of overflowing and damaging the path further. WSCC also confirmed that Harwoods have agreed to clear back the vegetation on their side. The Assistant Clerk also advised that funding maybe available under ‘Operation Watershed’.

After some discussion the Committee AGREED that 3 quotations should be obtained to clear the ditch and re-expose the culvert, and then funding requested under 'Operation Watershed'. Cllr. E Wallace confirmed that she will be in attendance when the Contractors visit to quote. Members commented that the Contractors must understand how the drainage works. The Assistant Clerk was instructed to obtain the quotations, apply for funding, and correspond with Harwoods and advise them of our intentions.

It was noted that Phil Williams, Tree Warden, has advised that there are some rare plants in this area, and members instructed the Assistant Clerk to liaise with Phil, so he can advise where the plants are before any work is carried out.

After the culvert work has been completed the Committee will then look at the works noted from the Councillor's visit on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2014, and also the paving.

**94. BIN BY BANDSTAND**

Cllr. Mills advised that having spoken to some of the teenagers who congregate by the bandstand, she feels that having a bin by the bandstand would prevent litter dropping. The teenagers used to bring the bin from the bottom of the recreation ground to the bandstand, but now that has been permanently fixed, they can't use it. The Assistant Clerk advised that a bin previously placed in that area was set fire to. Members AGREED that a bin should be located there and instructed the Assistant Clerk to obtain costs for a metal bin.

**95. TREE REMOVAL BY WSCC FROM RECTORY CLOSE/LINK LANE**

Members received information advising that HDC's dustcart had hit a PPC tree, resulting in WSCC removing the tree as they considered it dangerous. After some discussion, members AGREED that HDC should replace the tree with the same type, but have it planted further away from the road, so as not to have the same incident occur again. The Assistant Clerk was instructed to contact HDC accordingly.

**Resolved: The Assistant Clerk will advise HDC to replace the tree, further away from the road.**

**96. CORRESPONDENCE**

**Nutbourne Residents Association (NRA)**

NRA Winter newsletter. Copied to Committee.

**West Sussex County Council (WSCC)**

Letter from WSCC regarding the management of the Public Rights of Way in Sussex. Copied to Committee.

**97. MATTERS RAISED BY COUNCILLORS FOR INCLUSION ON NEXT AGENDA**

- WSCC - Management of the public rights of way in Sussex (ALL)
- Pocket Park working party (RQ)
- Flooding behind Carpenters Meadow (SM)
- Brambles & broken fence obstructing parking in Carpenters Meadow (EW)

**98. PAYMENTS RESOLVED:**

That the payment of the following payments be approved and cheques signed:

<b>PAYEE</b>	<b>AMOUNT/£</b>
New Call Telecom Ltd t/a Fuel Broadband	5.24
Pulborough Social Centre	59.50
Kent County Council	425.94
West Sussex County Council	11247.44
Brunel Engraving Co. Ltd	34.80
Natwest	26.37

**The meeting closed at 8.52pm**

.....**CHAIRMAN**

.....**DATE**

## **Nutbourne Common 2014**

### **Report by the South Downs National Park Authority – Wealden Heath Area.**



Pulborough Parish Council own Nutbourne Common. This report has been produced at their request by Bruce Middleton the Wealden Heaths Area Manager.

### **Site Description**

Nutbourne Common is registered common land or designated Open Access land under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. Public access is permissive on the site. The common is about four acres in size. There is a Public Right of Way that goes through it and there are some informal paths on it too.

It is located approximately 500m to the north of Hurston Warren Site of Scientific Interest (SSSI) and 1.6 KM from Parham Park SSSI. The soils are light, acidic and sandy, similar to those found on the neighbouring SSSIs.

The site is bounded by an old boundary bank with the occasional mature oak and remains of a holly hedge upon it. There are a few old oaks but the majority of the rest are about forty years old. Much of the ground flora within the woodland is dominated by bracken but there is a good stand of Bluebells on the western side. At the centre of the secondary wood - a clearing has been created. The clearing was created by the Sussex Wealden Greensand Heaths Project with the help of local volunteers starting back in the winter of 2006. Each winter since then there have been a few volunteer tasks to maintain the clearing. After the initial creation of the clearing - heather brashings were spread out - and a few more times since. These heather brashings came from another SSSI site at Iping.

Lowland heathland and unimproved acid grassland are rarer than rain forest if we are to look at these habitats globally. Conserving and restoring these habitats is considered of high priority in



order to safeguard the many rare species associated with them, particularly a number of invertebrate species at the northern most limits of their European range and birds including Nightjar. Britain has 20% of the world's lowland heath and only 1% of the heath we had in this country two hundred years ago still remains. The demise of this rare habitat has come about because of changes in farming practices, the abandonment of commoning (such as firewood cutting, unfenced grazing and gathering bracken for livestock bedding) housing development, sand pit creation and the planting of conifers for timber.

There are four key heath plant indicator species found on site and they are the Ling *Calluna vulgaris*, Bell Heath *Erica cinerea*, Dwarf Gorse *Ulex minor* and Birdsfoot *Ornithopus perpusillus*.



*Birdsfoot*



*Dwarf Gorse*



*Ling*



*Bell Heath*

To maintain the clearing area as heath - some plants need to be kept in check and because of the small size of the clearing - much of this work can be carried out by hand if needs be. Bracken will keep encroaching on to this site because there is a natural source besides the clearing in the wood. This could be controlled if the bracken is regularly pulled up by hand. If bracken is allowed to take hold then it enriches the soil and lessens the chance for heather to survive because the heather needs impoverished soil. Another similar problem is that around the perimeter of the clearing there are numerous oak trees and they drop their leaves – these leaves enrich the soil and so the heather struggles again – so by raking off the oak leaves in the autumn will help. At present there is some bramble appearing and this plant is taking advantage of enriched soil – now this plant is a very good source of food and nectar for wildlife. However, if it is not kept under control it again can take over – so leave some around the edges but remove it from the centre of the clearing. Another plant that can be a problem is gorse and although desirable on a heath it is from the legume family that fixes nitrogen from the atmosphere and tends to enrich the soil too. So as and when or if the gorse starts to take off on this site - it can be kept in check if it is sporadically coppiced back. There is some Dwarf Gorse on site but this can be left alone because it is rarely invasive.



*Common Gorse*



*Common Oak leaves*



*Bramble*



*Bracken*

Another plant that is at present kept under control is the Silver Birch. When young birch saplings appear in the clearing they should be pulled up or otherwise within a few years the clearing could be swamped and shade out the heather.

The small clearing was created with the hope of making a stepping stone for the heath in the area and although it is a small site the heather seed has taken and the clearing has become a very important new heath site within West Sussex. Nutbourne Common has now become part of a cluster of heath sites within the area within the last ten years. Heathland creation has been expanded on Hurston Warren and at Parham as well as some new sites at Monkmead Woods and Wiggonholt. This means that Nutbourne although on the edge of this cluster of fragmented Lowland Heath sites is helping keeping rare species alive. It would be desirable to create more small sites close to Nutbourne Common – perhaps out in the more open fields where there would be less competition with shade, bracken and leaf litter especially oak leaves.

### **South Downs National Park Authority**

The South Downs National Park Authority was established on the ground on April the 1<sup>st</sup>. 2011 Although Nutbourne Common is just outside the National Park - because of the heath interest the Authority is happy to support the Parish Council in the future management of the site. The Wealden Heaths Area team are happy to support the site with staff and volunteer time and more heather brushings if needed in the future.

### **List of plant species found in heath clearing - November 2014**

**Trees**

*Betula pendula* Silver Birch  
*Quercus robur* Pedunculate Oak

**Shrubs**

*Calluna vulgaris* Ling  
*Erica cinerea* Bell Heath  
*Ulex europea* Common Gorse  
*Ulex minor* Dwarf Gorse

**Flowers**

*Anagallis arvensis* Scarlet Pimpernel  
*Cerastium fontanum* Common Mouse-ear  
*Cirsium arvense* Creeping Thistle  
*Crepis capillaris* Smooth Hawks-beard  
*Digitalis purpurea* Foxglove  
*Galium saxatile* Heath Bedstraw  
*Myosotis arvensis* Field Forget-me-not  
*Ornithopus perpusillus* Bird'sfoot  
*Primula vulgaris* Primrose  
*Rubus fruticosus agg* Bramble  
*Rumex acetosella* Sheeps Sorrel  
*Sagina apetala* Annual Pearlwort  
*Senecio jacobea* Common Ragwort  
*Soncus asper* Prickly Sow-thistle  
*Taraxacum officinale agg* Dandelion  
*Urtica dioica* Stinging Nettle  
*Veronica serpyllifolia* Thyme-leaved Speedwell

**GRASSES**

*Agrostis capillaris* Common Bent  
*Agrostis stolonifera* Creeping Bent  
*Anthoxanthum odoratum* Sweet Vernal-grass  
*Deschampsia flexuosa* Wavy Hairgrass  
*Festuca rubra* Red Fescue  
*Holcus lanatus* Yorkshire Fog  
*Poa annua* Annual Meadow-grass

**SEDGES**

*Carex pilulifera* Pill Sedge

**WOOD-RUSHES**

*Luzula campestris* Field Wood-rush

**FERNS**

*Pteridium aquilinum* Bracken

**MOSSES**

*Funaria hygrometrica* Bonfire-moss  
*Bryum capillare* Capillary Thread-moss  
*Campylopus introflexus* Heath Star-moss  
*Ceratodon purpureus* Redshank  
*Dicranum scoparium* Broom Fork-moss

*Kindbergia praelonga* Common Feather-moss  
*Polytrichum juniperinum* Juniper Haircap

**LIVERWORTS**

*Marchantia polymorpha* Common Liverwort

**LICHENS**

*Cladonia coniocraea*  
*Cladonia fimbriata*  
*Cladonia furcata*