

HACKINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

TYLER HILL MEADOW

Notes on a meeting of the Management Committee held on Monday 26th February 2018 at 3.30pm at 5, Link Road, Tyler Hill

Present: Ray Evison, Irene Pellett, Trish Hulks, Clare Jones and Lynne Evison
Apologies for absence from Penny Reilly

Matters arising from a meeting of the Committee held on 30th Nov 2016

The minutes had been previously circulated and there were no matters arising.

It was noted that the Meadow had been cut in the autumn and the inside of the roadside hedge had been cut in December. It was noted that the hedge was quite sparse in places and in need of some replanting. The ditches had been cleared at the same time as the hedge cutting. All the work had been done by the Stour Valley Group volunteers to whom the Parish Council had made a donation

The outside of road side hedge had again been cut at very modest cost.

The Stour Valley Group had kindly offered to arrange for the two sets of steps to be mended, perhaps in spring 2018.

Involvement of 'non-local' bodies in the Reserve.

Members agreed to talk with friends and colleagues to encourage greater use of the Reserve particularly by children and young people.

Review of activity in the year

It was pleasing to note that David & Clare Jones had along with I P visited the Reserve during the year chiefly to clear paths. DJ had clearly marked out the paths through the wooded area. RE had cut down a large hawthorn tree which was growing into the walnut tree and cleared an area all round the walnut. All the debris had been disposed of. In the autumn when it was low, the pond had been cleared of leaf debris.

Review of Surveys undertaken in 2016.

Dormice : Unfortunately once again no dormice had been observed during the year. T H had monitored the boxes but had only found birds in the spring using the boxes.

Amphibians : We have yet to identify an expert to advise us. We will advertise for assistance.

Birds: We have yet to identify an expert to advise us. We will advertise for assistance.

Butterflies : I P has observed butterflies this year and reports on her observations in a separately attached report.

Flowers; I P had continued her surveying and reports separately

Grasses: Penny Reilly was not present to report on her observations.

Trees: Lynne Evison has monitored the trees in the Reserve.

Pond: We have yet to identify an expert to advise us. We will advertise for assistance.

Small mammals: We have not yet secured the services of an expert on small mammals. We will advertise for assistance.

Reptiles: Slowworms were observed on several occasions under the refugia and are reported on separately

It was agreed that we should advertise for surveyors of those species that we at present do not have cover for. Penny Whiting would be asked to include information in her Kentish Gazette column and information will be placed on the Parish Council website.

Surveys in 2018.

The same surveys as in 2016 would be undertaken this year.

Work Parties in 2018.

The following work to be undertaken was agreed:

There would be a small work party on a Friday morning in March when hawthorn whips would be planted to improve the road-side hedge.

A limited area around the near edge of the pond would be levelled and the far side would have similar treatment but there would not be paths created round the pond

The Stour Valley group have agreed to assist in restoring broken steps in several locations.

The log seat that had been dismantled will be reassembled by R E.

The entrance gate and the notice board structure need to be cleaned and new protection applied. When this work is done in early spring notice of it will be given on the Parish website and to Penny Whiting for inclusion in her newspaper item.

Photographic file.

Irene Pellett was congratulated on her continuing efforts to build a photographic record of the Reserve. She had printed and mounted several more photos taken during the year both of work parties and of flora and fauna.. There was need for an additional album, the cost of which will be covered by the Parish Council.

It was agreed that a selection of photos from I P's record would be mounted and placed in the Memorial hall to provoke more interest in the Reserve.

We will continue to seek to recruit a young photography enthusiast to assist with the photographic record of the Reserve.

Other matters.

It was agreed to invite the B H & T H Society to visit the Reserve in early summer and enjoy a conducted tour.

There would be need to update the Management Plan at the next meeting. R E to prepare the update document.

Tyler Hill Meadow: surveys conducted 2017 by I P

A cold late spring held back flowers till late April. Native bluebells flowered for the first time, both in the meadow entrance, near the gate and at the top of the sunken area of the wood. Spanish bluebells have always flowered at the back of the wood near the footpath entrance (garden escapes from dumped garden waste). Oak, hawthorn, field maple, plum, wild cherry all flowered very well in April. Lots of bumble bees all year resulting in bumper harvests in the Autumn. Plenty of lush growth by late May. As meadow not mown last autumn scrub (hawthorn, oak, bramble) has encroached and forced out flowers, 50% few recorded. Only 1 orchid as too much coarse grass. Good summer for bumble bees.

Autumn: bumper crops of blackberries, plums (yellow & black), sloes, hips and haws, plump acorns, hazel-nuts and walnuts (all taken by squirrels).

Flowers:

7 Surveys carried out in 2017 from 25th April – mid September. 25th

April: 10 flowers in meadow: 10 in wood. Total: 20

29th April: 12 in meadow: 12 in wood. Total: 24

26th May: 18 flowers in meadow: 13 in wood. Total: 31

20th June: 15 flowers in meadow: 9 in wood. Total: 24

6th August: 11 flowers in meadow: 5 in wood. Total: 16

29th August: 13 flowers in meadow: 8 in wood. Total: 21

Mid September: after mowing: 3 flowers.

Butterflies:

April: 3 oranges tip (2 males: 1 female). 2 speckled wood (1 very tattered).
1 common blue.

May: 2 speckled wood. 1 comma.

June: lots of meadow browns & whites; 1 common blue, 2 comma.

August (early): lots of meadow browns. Gatekeepers, whites, speckled wood.
August (late): meadow browns; whites; speckled wood.

Under mats:

Slow-worms: April (1 small), May, June, August (5 all sizes).

Grass Snake: May: 1 (quite long). June: 3 grass snakes (1 large, 2 very small).

Plenty of ants: red, brown and black.

Slugs

Other Comments:

Bumble bees, ladybird, grasshoppers

Mole activity (April).

1 rabbit. 1 squirrel. Heard: chiff-chaff, wood pigeons.

Fungi