



Friends of Hollingbury & Burstead Woods

NEWSLETTER, Spring 2018

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Brighton and Hove City Council, which owns the barn which has been FHBW's base since the group was established nearly 30 years ago, has required us to vacate the building by mid-May, as it is going to be offered for sale by auction later in the year. For nearly two years we have been in intermittent discussion about how best to take up the Council's offer to assist with relocation, and it is now intended that the relocation will take place about the time of the AGM. More information will be circulated once the details are confirmed, including identifying the assembly point for the June work session.

Programme

Monthly work sessions, starting 10 a.m.

In May at the barn next to Upper Roedale Cottages,

From June, to be advised

(In bold type, special event: details later in the Newsletter)

Sunday 6 May	Clear Snowdrop and South Tennis Glades; tackle hybrid bluebells in New Glade
Saturday 12 May	AGM
Saturday 2 June	Weed North Hedge and Butterfly Banks; cut perimeter grass
Sunday 24 June	Benfield flower walk
Sunday 1 July	Clear Hollingbury Park Bays
Sunday 1 July	Picnic lunch

Saturday 4 August Clear Forget-Me-Not Glade and both Hazel Coppices

Sunday 2 September Clear Butterfly Banks. Clear Snowdrop and S.Tennis Glades

Saturday 6 October Hollingbury Rise West: prune and weed hedge. Burstead Wood path clearance and maintenance. Butterfly Glade clearance. Gorse planting

*Path and step maintenance on the Southern slopes will be arranged by our Ranger and the Rights of Way officer.

*Ivy control , like litter picking, will take place at all sessions where appropriate.

Summer events

We are sorry that uncertainties concerning our relocation have made it impracticable to plan as full a programme as usual this year

May 12 AGM

Our annual general meeting will be held as usual in the Brian Foster Centre on the Dorothy Stringer School campus. As usual, formal business at 2.30 p.m. will be followed by homemade refreshments, but not, this year, by a talk by a guest speaker – instead, material relevant to the group will be introduced and discussed. Most of the documents needed for the AGM make up the second part of this Newsletter; they will not be dealt with in detail on the day, but any questions will of course be dealt with then.

Please note that recent and imminent changes to the committee will be an important part of AGM business. With effect from this AGM, Adrian Peasgood will be leaving the Committee; this follows the resignation of Brenda Pollack last year. The other members of the Committee - Peter Jarman, Gill Taylor, Jill Spedding, Lesley Brown, Karen Johnston - offer themselves for re-election en bloc

.As noted in the Chairman's report later in this Newsletter, some of Adrian's responsibilities have already been taken on by Jill Spedding, but not all, and some of Brenda's are being dealt with by Gill Taylor, Kirsty Sloman, and Jane Burton, but again not all. We very much hope that successors for the other tasks formerly done by Adrian and Brenda will be forthcoming, either before or at the AGM: Adrian's role in editing and arranging for the distribution of the Newsletter could, we think, be taken on by

someone not on the Committee; the publicity activities formerly managed by Brenda probably could continue to be job-shared, but ideally need a committee member to be in charge, leading and coordinating: familiarity with social media, or eagerness to acquire it, is essential. Any of the present Committee will be pleased to discuss in more details what is involved. **It is important that people come forward to fill the places of those who have stepped down.**

Nominations (with a note of consent from the nominee) or self-nominations should be sent to the Secretary, Gill Taylor, before the AGM, or announced at the AGM.

June 24 Benfield flower walk

Benfield Wildlife and Conservation Group announce a 'guided flower walk'. It will start at Benfield Bridge over the bypass, at 2.00 p.m., and attending it is recommended as this year's FHBW Awayday.. We may be able to offer transport to those of our members who would need it. Details will be announced in due course. (This event is announced in the Benfield group's spring newsletter, which is full of interesting items, and well worth finding on their website.)

July 1 FHBW picnic lunch

We plan to hold another shared picnic (weather dependent) following a shorter work session on this date. Members who have not been at the work session are as welcome as those who have attended, and so are friends of FHBW members.

The aim will be to start the picnic about 12.30 p.m. giving us time to set things up. The picnic will be a short distance from Upper Roedale Cottages and the barn, on the large expanse of grass above the tennis courts. So aim to meet at the barn before 12.30, bringing rugs and anything else to make yourselves comfortable, notably refreshments! We will provide some chairs and a table or two to put things on, plus plates and cutlery.

It's nice to bring different food and drinks to share with one another, so if you can let Karen know what you plan to bring please email her at: karenjanejohnston@hotmail.com.

RECENT WORK

Starting from the north of Hollingbury Wood ...

- Disease resistant Ademuz elms planted
- Topping of roadside elms begun
- Weeding and pruning of North hedge
- Snowdrop glade cleared
- Hollingbury Park bays cleared
- Tennis glade cleared
- Bee Bank weeded
- Snowberry growth reduced
- Gaps in Hollingbury Rise West hedge filled

And in Burstead Wood ...

- Butterfly glade cleared

‘Active’ volunteers currently number about 25, with 18-20 usually attending on any one day.

Subscriptions for 2018-2019. This is the month when we ask members to renew their membership by completing the enclosed membership renewal form and returning it with a cheque to the Treasurer at the address given. The subscription remains at £3 per individual, £5 per household; these low rates can be maintained only because some members add a voluntary donation to the basic charge, and we welcome this expression of support. Please note that Adrian Peasgood has stepped down as Treasurer and that your renewal subscription should be sent to Jill Stebbing, as shown on the renewal form enclosed.

The renewal form permits members to note if they may be available for an occasional extra work session; such extra sessions are usually scheduled for a weekday, though additional weekend days are occasionally needed. **If relevant, please do note your possible availability.** We of course understand that on any particular occasion you may be unable to help.

It is not on the renewal form, but we would very much like to know which members are currently qualified as First Aiders, so **please add a note about that if applicable.** We are required to provide first aid cover on work days, and it would be good to know whom to approach if we know beforehand we might otherwise be without cover on a particular day.

DOCUMENTS FOR THE AGM

Copies will not be available on the day, but there will be an opportunity to put questions about them

(Draft) Minutes, AGM 2016/17

(Draft) Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 20th May 2017
at the Brian Foster Environment Centre, Stringer Way, at 2:30pm

1. Present: 28 including committee members and speaker. Apologies: Madeline Peasgood, Christine Wieting, Geoff Mead, Barbara Pond.
2. Chairman's opening remarks (summarised): Peter Jarman welcomed everyone to the meeting and then spoke about the newly designated Rights of Way through the woods (FP 93,94,95 & BW 96,97). This achievement took two years and involved obtaining statements from the public to prove to the Council that the footpaths had been in use for at least 20 years. Two new Permissive paths were also created; one across the golf course and through Burstead wood and into Wild Park, and the other from the lane to the golf club house, skirting the National Park hazel coppice and up to Hollingbury Iron Age hill fort. Peter explained that the Council has designated the paths through Burstead wood as Permissive paths so we will not be able to claim them as Rights of Way and they will not have the formal protection under the Act. Member Mick Hickman asked the date of the Act but Peter didn't know, but he did explain that it will not be possible to claim rights of way after 2026. [These and related issues arise as a result of the Countryside and Rights of way Act of 2000.]
(The Officers' Reports had already been circulated with the Newsletter so these were not read out.)
3. Matters arising. There were none and the draft Minutes of the 2016 AGM were approved.
4. Project Officer's report (summarised): Lesley Brown thanked Peter for his work on the Rights of Way and explained that now that the paths were formally designated the Council has a statutory duty to maintain them and the safety issue of the disintegrating steps on the southern slopes was now their responsibility. She also thanked Will Furze, our Ranger, for his support and for running a woodland management day at Stanmer for our leadership trained members and a Duke of Edinburgh's award candidate. We now have a strong team of First Aid and Leadership trained people to look after our volunteers on work days. In line with strengthened health & safety procedures we now keep a register of volunteers attending. As well as our usual work tasks we carried out the first cut of the hazel in New glade and used the larger poles to redirect and define the new path made

by the Council in National Park wood so that it skirted the edge of the National Park coppice rather than bisecting it. The twiggy tops were used as woodland scenery for a local drama group and the remaining ones offered to the allotment holders for pea sticks. Lesley reported that sadly our donated bench top in Snowdrop glade had been stolen, but the previously vandalized top was recovered, repaired by our former Ranger Emma, and now resides in Butterfly glade in Burstead wood. Our original plan of forming a low hedge from the elm suckers bordering Ditchling Road was finally agreed by the Council's Arboricultural team. Keeping the trees below the size at which they become vulnerable to the elm bark beetle should not only protect the trees but preserve them as a resource for the white-letter hairstreak butterfly. Nearby, travellers used a mini digger to break through the bund and gain access onto the meadow area and Cityclean hired contractors to remove the rat-infested bund in front of the recycling point. Unfortunately they also removed our hedging in the process, but we are considering a suggestion from Jamie Burston to plant two disease resistant elms in front of the recycling area. Topping the hedge and planting the elms will take place next winter. The chalk banks continue to be an attractive feature although ongoing work is needed to reduce the mugwort and oxeye daisies which are dominating the low-growing downland species. Conversely, we are encouraging creeping thistle in the bays near the tennis courts as its nectar is needed by the white-letter hairstreak and painted lady butterflies. Throughout the glades we are noticing a change in the floral composition in response to our regular glade clearances, with hemp agrimony and violets becoming more frequent, and the wood anemones our volunteers planted in New glade are now flourishing.

5. Questions relating to the Reports and Accounts, or any other business. Member Ed Strauss asked why our education visits to schools ceased - Peter and Lesley explained it was due to a change in the curriculum. No other business was raised.
6. Election of Officers: The entire committee, except for Brenda Pollack who was stepping down, was re-elected; Karen Johnston, co-opted committee member, was formally nominated by Mick Hickman and seconded by Ed Strauss and nominee Jill Spedding was proposed by Peter Jarman and seconded by Brenda Pollack. Peter Jarman thanked Brenda for her work as publicity officer and gave her credit for the increase in our membership and also thanked her for her dedicated efforts on the work involved in updating the information boards. The officers' roles will be decided at the first committee meeting following the AGM.
7. Notices. None was read out as the details of events had been included in the spring newsletter.
8. There followed a break for refreshments when John's homemade cakes went down well and afterwards we resumed our seats to hear our speaker, Dr. Chris Sandom from the University of Sussex.

Talk: *Rewilding Sussex and beyond: what would it mean?* Dr. Chris Sandom explained that rewilding benefits nature, society and the economy and restores natural processes, i.e. how they interact with different species, for example, Red deer versus heather moorland in Scotland, and the interplay of herbivores and predators, restoring ecosystems: colonisation, pollination, seed dispersal, succession, herbivores, disturbance, such as coppicing, predation and decomposition. He warned we are losing the abundance of species; how should we tackle this? Should we be passive, that is, cease to use or manage the land to lessen our impact, or be active and remove drainage ditches/canals and allow areas to flood, or reintroduce animal species such as lynx and wild boar and liberate the natural processes? Much of this will be determined by the land owners but he said they need to be encouraged to experiment and to innovate such as Charlie Burrell on the 3,500 acre Knepp Estate near Horsham. Face Book Rewilding Sussex. www.rewildingbritain.org.uk/assets/uploads/files/knowledge-hub/rewilding_Knowledge_Hub_Summary_V1.OLowkes.pdf

9. We thanked our speaker Chris Sandom, and Rob Sandercock for the use of the Brian Foster Centre, and everyone else for attending and the meeting was closed at 16:40.

Gill Taylor, May 2017

Chairman's Report, 2017/18

This year has been problematic with the intended loss of our home base and the resignation of our treasurer.

The flint barn which has been the centre of operations for most of our group's existence is now to be lost from the 14th May. We have been offered a storage container to be located on Roedale Allotments, but the space for storage will be very limited due to the size of the site available to us.

Our treasurer, Adrian, will stand down at the AGM and will be replaced by Jill Spedding. However, Adrian also did many other duties and these activities will have to be covered by other members. Jill joined the committee at the 2017 AGM and is in the process of taking over treasurer and membership work from Adrian.

We are now seeking a replacement for both Publicity Secretary and Newsletter Editor. Our last AGM took place with normal business followed by an interesting talk by Chris Sandom on Rewilding in Sussex and beyond, which was pertinent to the later awayday visit.

Activities have included a visit to the Knepp Estate to see the Rewilding in practice, ably led by Geoff Mead. We had our Picnic in the Park and the annual dinner (this year at the Cleveland Inn) organised by Karen. Also we had a guided walk with a medical herbalist. Finally, I wish to thank all of our committee members for their service and especially Adrian, who will be so rely missed. I also thank all members especially those that turn up regularly to our work days.

Peter Jarman

Accounts, 2017/18

FRIENDS OF HOLLINGBURY & BURSTEAD WOODS – ACCOUNTS 2017/2018		
A. SUMMARY	2016/2017	2017/2018
<i>Balance brought forward</i>	2196.39	955.63
Total income – for details, see section B	942.12	910.55
Total expenditure – for details, see section C	(2182.88)	(285.36)
<i>Balance carried forward</i>	955.63	1580.82
B. INCOME		
Subscriptions (including top-up donations)	530.00	548.00
Donations not related to subscriptions	390.00	325.00
Grant	0	0.00
Sales, etc., including net profit from competitions	22.12	37.55
Other	0	0.00
Total income	942.12	910.55
C. EXPENDITURE		
Administration: refreshments, photocopying, website, etc.	90.00	249.36
Tools/materials: trees, tools, supplies	198.88	26.00
Training:	300.00	0.00
Social / personal:	0	0.00
Miscellaneous; subscription, £10	1594.00	10.00
Total expenditure	2182.88	285.36

A copy of the accounts signed by the external scrutineer will be available at the AGM.

Adrian Peasgood

FHBW Committee, 2017/18

Chairman: Peter Jarman (01273 541206), peterjarm@sky.com

Secretary: Gill Taylor (07719 943237), gtwizardy2k@hotmail.com

Treasurer / Membership / Newsletter: Adrian Peasgood (01273 508620),
adrian@peasgood.plus.com [resigning May 2018]

Projects: Lesley Brown (01273 707289), lesleyannbrown@yahoo.co.uk

Social secretary: Karen Johnston (01273 552521),

karenjanejohnston@hotmail.com

Jill Spedding: (07745 458545), jill.spedding@btinternet.com