

# **Friends of Horton Country Park**

#### **Minutes**

For the meeting held on the 03/06/2008

#### **Present**

Brendan Kilby (Chair), Anne Cheshire, Alan Cheshire, Laurence Coley (Membership Secretary), Rosemary Eyres, Ray Eyres, Tony Gibbs, Brenda Hammond-Gibbs, Sarah Hallums (Countryside Officer), Pat Lowe (Minutes Secretary), Terry Summerfield (Treasurer).

## Matters arising from previous minutes:

## **Membership Drive**

40 -50 leaflets were given out and 4 new members joined. Laurence said that it was still possible that others who had been given leaflets might send in their application forms. Brenda and Tony asked for leaflets to give out at Chessington Church fete. Anne's query, at the last meeting, about neighbours who had sent fees had been sorted out. Laurence will send out acknowledgements to new members who have sent in fees and reminders, by letter or e-mail, to those who have not yet paid.

## **Apple Day and Woodland Craft Day**

Brendan asked members to decide whether it would be possible to organise this in time for October. Sarah pointed out that it was too late to book stall-holders who needed to be notified well in advance. Brendan said it would therefore have to be just the sale of apples from the orchard and anything the Friends could organise themselves. After discussion of this and the need to get organised well in advance for the 2009 Autumn Fair it was decided that Apple Day would not be held this year, but that we would start organising the Autumn Fair now instead.

Ray asked if the Rangers would be involved. Sarah replied that we could only rely on herself and Stewart and possibly Annette's replacement. It was suggested and agreed that a separate, specific meeting to arrange what was needed and who would do it. This will be on 22<sup>nd</sup> July at 7.30 in the New Hall.

It was suggested that in order to raise public awareness of the Friends we could have a stall at the Epsom Common Living Woodlands Day on  $20^{th}$  July, 11am to 4pm. Brendan asked anyone who wanted to take part to ring him on 0208 391 5925 and leave a message if he is not available.

#### Newsletter

A newsletter will be printed soon so that copies of it can be given to new members. As always we would be very grateful for articles on any aspect of the Country Park, for example information on birds.

#### A.O.B

#### Wildlife

More stag beetles have been seen this year. Sarah asked members to bury dead wood in their gardens to encourage them.

Harlequin ladybirds have spread massively. Brenda has killed over 500 in her garden! Laurence has seen lots of moles – his cat brings them home!

Terry has counted 17 heron's nests in Great Wood. Some have 2 or 3 young in them. Not all nests are active, Tony told us that they build some nests that they do not use. Sarah will contact Alison Fure to check the status of the Bats, voles and dormice.

#### **Information Centre**

The new signs need to be put up outside and in the car park, and the exhibits put in the display cabinets. It is planned to open the new room in the Information Centre to visitors from 27<sup>th</sup> June. A date for an official Opening Ceremony will be decided later. Sarah thanked Alan and Ray for the display cabinets they made and all the other work they had done to make this possible.

## Coppicing

Sarah has shown a coppice worker round and he will be putting in his proposal for managing the coppiced woodland. It is hoped that eventually his services will be free as he will make his living from selling the wood.

Volunteers have been cutting back and clearing growth in Butchers Grove.

### Flora Walk

Members have asked previously for a walk in the park to help them identify the flora. Sarah said she would do one but it would have to be a pooling of knowledge rather than instruction from her. Sarah will lead the walk but Members are asked to bring along the own books on flora so we can work out together what any unknown plants are. It will be on 25<sup>th</sup> June starting at 6.30 pm from the Rangers Office.

Brendan expressed his gratitude to Pat for her work on the minutes, which members seconded.

Members enquired about the well-being of Bill Facer. Brendan will contact him and let us know.

#### **Tasks**

There will be another membership push on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> August. This time we will take membership fees on the day or names and addresses. It was felt that on the last one people expressed interest but then went away and forgot to apply. Sarah will provide collecting tins and receipt books so it will be seen as official.

Laurence suggested that we also book a date for the next task so that we could invite interested people to come on the next task. It will be on 21<sup>st</sup> September, the task to be decided at the next meeting.

## **Dates**

Wed 25<sup>th</sup> June Members Flora Walk, meet at 6.30 p.m at Rangers Office.

Fri 27<sup>th</sup> June Information Centre open.

Sun 20<sup>th</sup> July Epsom Common Living Woodlands Day, Charcoal area 11 to 4.

Tues 22<sup>nd</sup> July Autumn Fair 2009 Meeting, New Hall 7.30 p.m

Sun 10<sup>th</sup> Aug New Membership Task, Rangers Office 10 a.m.

Sat 6<sup>th</sup> Sept Bat Walk, Rangers office 7.30 p.m.

Sun 14<sup>th</sup> Sept Fruit and Nut Walk, Rangers Office 2 p.m.

Sun 21<sup>st</sup> Sept Task to be decided.

## Next Meeting 5th August in the New Hall at 7.30 p.m.

Members are asked <u>not to park</u> outside the hall but to use the public car park. Sarah will make sure we are not locked in!