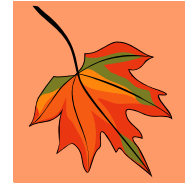


Woodsmen



The Booker Common and Woods Protection Society

Registered Charity No.289871

Newsletter No.72 Spring 2010

The 30th Annual General Meeting

To be held in Booker Memorial Hall on Tuesday 11th May 2010 at 8.00 pm.

To begin the evening, the Allan Duggin Memorial Award will be presented to Sean Slade, a student of Countryside Conservation at Berkshire College of Agriculture.

This award is given annually in co-operation with the Wycombe Ranger Service to encourage young people in conservation.

Following this, the Guest Speaker will be Mr Charles Pugh, Curator/Historic Properties Adviser for the National Trust, on National Trust Properties in our area.

Election of Committee 2010/2011.

Subscribing members of the Society are invited to apply for election to the committee. Please phone nominations to Rita Luxton on 436807 before 7th May. Serving members are: Rita Luxton (Chair), Paul Baker, Katherine Belcher, Simon Fraser (Planning), Jeff Harvey, Charles Pugh, Tim Speechley (Hon Sec), Ron Walker, Vic West and Brian Wilson (Hon Treasurer). Hedley Luxton (JCC Air Park) is a co-opted member.

We believe we have a good cross-section of Common residents, though we may be one short since the almost irreplaceable Colin Kennedy retired. Commitment is for six meetings a year. If you think we're missing an angle, please propose an addition, alternative perception, or even *volunteer*. We need your help.

Planning

High Heavens. There has been a vast improvement in the operation of the composting facility (frankly it seemed experimental and the cost is frightening), though the covering of the clamps seems left in abeyance. There has been no incidence of odour complaint to the Environment Agency since 30th October, though altogether there were 21 complaints in 2009, and compliance inspection by EA has been very satisfactory. The waste water treatment plant is now operational and the tanker recovery of waste liquid should almost be over. A further deodorant spray system (belt and braces) is to be installed. Booker's compostable waste is still not collected?

The delay in planning of the Waste Transfer Station is due to a legal contretemps between providers of the EfW (Energy from Waste) incinerator. This is not to infer that the situation of the plant may be any closer to Booker, but may change the quantity of transferred waste material through Cressex Road and Booker.

Environment

While we still feel that the common is a safe and relatively healthy place for children to play and walkers to enjoy the first flush of spring, we continue to be concerned by the behaviour of the few.

In spite of the provision and strategic situation of doggie bins, some sad person/s continue to collect dogs' faeces in bags and throw it high into trees. What with the quantity and numbers of blue plastic bags involved, it appears someone is bringing it from further afield - probably their kitchen floor.

Another seems to think that tearing down the litter notices is somehow productive. Message. Since your brain has so atrophied, please stay at home and play with your games console.

Motor-cycles are again becoming an occasional hazard. Since up to five hundred people use the common footpaths daily on a fine weekend, please report any sightings to your local bobby and try to pre-empt injury. I believe everyone has a mobile - but me. By the way, helmetless riding whether on cycle or motorcycle is just as dangerous in the common as on the road. A mature tree is probably less resilient than a modern car.

Tissues are litter; yes they bio-degrade, but they do take time, are unsightly and their contents may take longer. Other "less intelligent" (moot) animals may pick them up and inadvertently contract what you threw away. Take the tissues home, bin or burn them.

We don't appear to be "working resting and playing" so often, but I suspect the generator of this particular readily identifiable litter will be delighted to have a mention, and will no doubt make further effort to minimise the contents of their dustbin.

So be careful out there. The nuts are not all on the trees.

This society does not as a group contribute to garden bird survey, however this year there seems to be a greater variety than of late, with total numbers about the same. Birdsong is loud and extremely varied if you get up early enough. You can't stay asleep for the noise of the dawn chorus.

As for the magic triangle below the Squirrel, nothing to say about growth or maintenance, spring has been a little late this year. Still a large fallen tree to be removed. Slow action being taken.

Just because your granny picked wild flowers, doesn't mean it's right, but it is why there are so few varieties. Wild flowers are protected by law, with fines of up to a £1000 for their removal.

Communication

We had a good on-line response from members to our concern regarding the "proposed development" on Green Belt at the airfield (Newsletter 71a). None were in favour. Unfortunately, not everyone can currently read others' opinions as in a blog. Work in progress. WDC continue to deny that there is such a proposal, which is why they have allocated £500,000 to projected amendment to the Local Plan. They call it "Core Strategy Alteration".

Thanks are also due to non committee members Sue, Denise, Penny, Margaret, Trish and Heather who participated in a doorstep survey regarding the above.

WDC appeared unhappy with the distribution of our "Woodsmen 71a". We were unimpressed by WDC's attempt to censor its dissemination, though as a result, it seems we are now being kept "in the information loop". Our major source of information remains The Bucks Free Press.

Membership Subscriptions for 2010.

See the balance sheet at the AGM. Our membership secretary has our burgeoning records under control.

Litter

The spring collection took place on 28th March. What with the tardiness of growth, the litter became more visible, but all in all there wasn't much. (Bonus points were awarded for a motorcycle engine, a bicycle crank and a spoke-less wheel eh? Jeff). Whether education is at last paying dividends, or more people are casually collecting is not clear; let's just say it's unlikely to go away entirely while takeaways continue to flourish from out of car windows. Some new pickers were welcomed.

WDC did their prompt recovery of our bags. Well done them. Credit where due. It's always awkward at Easter. This dissuades others from adding to our small "tips".