

Minutes of the Bromyard Downs Common Association (BDCA)

Meeting Tuesday 13th September 2023 7:30 Falcon Hotel, Bromyard

Committee Attendees

James Hawkins – Vice Chair

Nicki Howard

David Grant

Clive Brazier

Andrew McClean (Mac) -
Treasurer

Paul Symons

Pete Stoddart- Bromyard/ Bringsty Ward Councillor Lisa Laws – Bromyard Town Council

Steve Scott

Emily Palmer – Secretary

Non-Committee Member attendees – Jan Densham

1. Welcome & Apologies for absence

Jenny Hartwright

Jo Stoddart - Chair

David Grant

Mark Franklin – Bromyard
Town Council Rep

Welcome to all for the AGM of the BDCA

The Vice Chair introduced Emily Palmer to the Committee as a temporary stand in for Lauren. All of our well wishes are sent to Lauren on a speedy recovery.

2. Action points from the last general meeting

- **Website Update**

Mac advised we are currently battling with 123 Reg in regards to the domain name for the website. Discussion was had with all present and if no further forward in a couple of weeks to look into other options to get the website up and running quicker.

- **Training – to receive update at next meeting from David Grant (absent)**

3. Volunteer Update - Nicki

Nicki advised there have been 7 working parties since the last meeting with an average of between 4-7 volunteers attending. Numbers have been down most likely due to holidays. Any more volunteers are always welcome. **Action:** Steve to speak to Jo to get a post in Bromyard info for more volunteers

As well as the planned working parties, key volunteers have continued to work to support the main working parties by ensuring that supplies such as petrol, oil and new or replacement equipment has been readily available.

The unit has now been relocated to the quarry, a new gate put up and a secure post has been installed for the trailer. Many thanks to all involved.

Areas that have been covered include;

- Ragwort pulling and disposal
- Clearing around the Orchid pond and removing some of the weed in the pond
- Filling the potholes on the main carpark and cutting back the overhanging trees
- Wide areas flailed to open certain areas working from Muddy Lane up toward the main road/school
- Cutting back over hanging trees/branches to allow access for the tractor and flail to keep paths open
- Large area on Malvern Road/area of the Downs flailed
- Upper Downs track cleared/flailed
- Maintaining/checking of chainsaws, tractor and other equipment
- Clearing Ash die back

One volunteer has now completed the chainsaw course.

Future plans include training for the volunteers to update their tractor driving skills with the new tractor.

Vice Chair thanks all involved.

4. Financial Report – Mac

Balance at the date of the last meeting £66,248.19 and the balance at the date of this meeting £66,563.86. We have £1,761.03 in the current account and £64,802.83 in the reserve account.

Received the Caravan and Motorhome Club rent totalling £1,268.99 and a Grant from Bromyard and Winslow Parish Council of £150.00 for scalping's to fill pot holes in the main car park.

Purchased the new pole saw agreed at the last meeting for £336.59.

Purchased a gate and posts for the quarry for £332.68.

Before the next meeting we should receive a donation of £600.00 from the Round the Downs Race organisers.

After the part exchange we have a balance of £19,976 to pay for the new tractor. This will be paid in the next week or two.

Mrs Boddington has generously donated the late Dr Boddington's trailer to the BDCA. She is aware we already have a trailer and happy for us to either use or sell the trailer to raise funds.

Steve asked about future training and budget. Mac explained that First Aid training was being staggered to ensure we always have someone with a valid certificate. We have budget (in the region of £1,000) for more equipment training and this will be considered on a needs basis for regular attending volunteers expressing an interest in training.

5. HLS and Downs Management

James updates attendees that the hay cutting has been done. 202 bales have been received from the Common, 108 bales were part payment to the contractor (value of £1000).

Action: Meeting to be had with James/Graham & Mac to discuss possibly needing bigger tack for scrub cutting during the winter.

Grant for the gravel has been well received from the Town Council **Action:** Letter of thanks to be sent – Jo/Pete.

Fundraising – Suggestion from Karen to reinstate the old race track for a fun Hobby Horse event. James worried about having to cross the road twice, might make this difficult. No other suggestions currently.

Ponds – James has received an email with a check list of work needing to be carried out (8 ponds in total). Some of the work is already in place **Action:** James to hand out list again to any Committee members that would like a copy
Steve has suggested a copy may need to be put where people can see more easily to ensure everyone is on the same page as to what work is needed. When the website is up and running a copy can be downloaded from here. A copy has already been put up in Dr's & Dentists locally.

6. Public Member Questions

Q. Mac on behalf of Brockhampton Primary School – Could we please have a litter bin by the school and another slightly further along? Having a lot of issues with litter/poo bags.

Action- Mac to ask the Council if 2 bins are possible, collection dates & if will supply bags.

Q. Pete has received an enquiry for a memorial bench on the Downs, is this possible? Karen has suggested a tree trunk instead of a bench. **Action –** Karen to take pictures and possibly locations as an example.

Jan – Few points to note please. Park Head heather is thriving since relocation. Aware no tracks have been done for the last couple of years meaning currently very overgrown, and is offering her services again as has the necessary training required. Near Rookery Wood lots of brash thrown over as well as dead/falling trees over the path making this inaccessible. Golf Lane there is a tree coming down and also a leak at the top end – James doesn't think this is a Welsh Water issue. Cars are parking on the junction at the top of Buckenhill, is there anything that can be done to deter this? Comments made that Tom? Mows this and the only possible action would be to put ditches in – Difficult as would think common sense would be used as to where to park but public can technically park here.

Nicki responded to the above to advise a start has been made at Park Head to get ready for flailing and we would be absolutely thrilled to have Jan join again for any volunteer work.

Whether this be regular or as and when Jan can do. James apologised this hasn't been done sooner.

Nicki has commented on cars being up the downs again, had one 1/2 way up the side of her house but couldn't go any further and wasn't there when went to check. Pete has also made a comment about cars on the downs.

7. Any Other Business

Mac on behalf of Graham: 18 months ago a bigger chainsaw was purchased. Currently have 2 small original chainsaws, 1 of these is not of much use currently. Graham has made some enquiries into repairs £55 +VAT per hour before repairs are made. Current sale value is between £70 - £90 so has put forward to sell one and replace with a slightly bigger, easier to replace parts/service chainsaw. Will be looking at £450 - £650 to purchase new chainsaw but will benefit long term, volunteers will also still be able to use the new one. All members agreed to the sale of the chainsaw – **Action** – To speak to Andrew Simmons to see if able to fix the current one enough to be able to sell

Updates from Pete –

Re-location of the library ? Maylords

Pot hole funds of 2.5M Balfour – prep work and to surface the roads next year (2024)

Capital Programme review – 4M – to take from Hereford City and distribute to others

Speed signs should be going up (Burying Lane & Linton area). These will flash speed and also records all speeds which will support a case against lowering speed limits in these areas

Welsh Water caused footpath damage by Brockhampton school – this has now been replaced but all tarmac has been dumped and not taken away. Feb – Mar 24 will be back to fix curb stones **Action:** Will email and chase this up

Drains along the Malvern Road to be cleared every couple of months

Date of next meeting – Tuesday 12th December 2023 at 7.30pm in The Falcon Hotel, Bromyard.

Meeting Closed at 8.40pm

Minutes recorded and written up by Emily Palmer BDCA Secretary

<mailto:bromyardbdca@gmail.com>

Future BDCA Meetings - 7:30 Falcon Hotel Bromyard	
<i>Tuesday 12th December 2023</i>	
<i>Wednesday 13th March 2024</i>	
Tuesday 14th June AGM	
<i>September 2024</i>	