

MEETING of the **BOARD** of the **MALVERN HILLS CONSERVATORS** held immediately after the Annual General Meeting of Council Tax Payers on Thursday, 14 July 2005.

Present:- Mr. M. Angell, Mr. M. Cordey, Mr. P. Harling, Mr. A. Macmillan, Mr. D. Masters, Mr. J. Mills, Mr. A. Myatt, Mr. B. Pilcher, Mrs. P. Raven, Mr. R. Roberts, Mr. C. Rouse, Mr. P. Rumney, Dr. B. Smith (Chairman), Mrs. S. Thetford, Mr. R. Thomas, Mr. J. Tretheway, Mr. J. Webb, Mr. B. Wilcock, Mrs. J. Wildin.

In attendance:- The Director, Administrative Officer, Financial Consultant.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE. Mrs. S. Adeney, Mr. R. Hall-Jones, Mr. A. Phillips, Mr. J. Plant, Mr. S. Try, Mr. W. Watts, Mr. R. Witcomb.

2. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

2.1 Conservation Officer. The Chairman announced that Mr. Rob Havard had been appointed to the post of Conservation Officer and would commence his duties on the 8 August 2005. This was **NOTED**.

3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS.

3.1 Mrs. P. Burgess asked four questions regarding the disposal of Conservators' stock which included sending a video which she requested Conservators to watch.

In response the Chairman advised that arrangements had been made for two showings of the video to which all Conservators had been invited. With regard to disposal of stock, through a Board member the Director had made contact with the owner of the local abattoir who was willing to take the Conservators' sheep. It was not intended for a Conservator to go to the slaughterhouse as a vet is on hand at the abattoir whose job it is to check that the process is carried out as it should be. However the Director would arrange a visit should a Conservator wish to attend. There would be a small proportion of older ewes taken off the Hills and offered first to the local abattoir.

3.2 Ms. J. Pritchard asked four questions asking the Conservators to justify their policy as set out in their Management Plan to preserve the present grass-topped Hills which was stated in a committee report to be "a totally man-made and maintained landscape" with their duty laid down by the Malvern Hills Acts to "preserve the natural aspect of the Hills". Ms Pritchard other questions related to the use of cattle as a management tool to preserve this landscape.

In response the Chairman stated that in 1884 the word "conservation" was not used and therefore what was meant by the natural aspect was not what today would be known as conservation. The Conservators were guided by their Management Plan and the legal duty under the Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000 to carry out management in accordance with English Nature's guidance of Sites of Special Scientific Interest.

With regard to the cattle grazing the Hills, under the Dangerous Animals Act stock-owners cannot knowingly keep a dangerous animal in an area with public access and the Conservators fully comply with the relevant legislation. If the animal was not dangerous in an enclosure it would not be dangerous when it is at large. Commoners do have rights to graze livestock. In the countryside farm animals had been part of the country scene for many generations. Unfortunately there were occasionally incidents associated with this practice. The Conservators have public liability cover if they were found to be negligent. The latest premium paid was £1,392.75 which covered the whole of the project. The owners of the relevant stock were liable if found negligent. It was for the individual grazier to have necessary insurance and as they graze the hills under common rights that information was not in the public domain. It was confirmed however that the commoner who was working

with the Conservators on the grazing project had public liability cover. No Conservators' cattle had been injured. Three ewes had died at lambing of prolapse; one lamb killed at Brockhill field by a dog and four mauled by the same dog and survived and were back on the hill. Three lambs died from natural causes. As the Conservators were not responsible for commoners' stock, no information was available. The individual farmer would keep those records, but again it was information in the private domain.

In view of the complex issues involved in answer to question 1, regarding the land management policy, the Chairman stated that a letter would be sent to Ms Pritchard giving a fuller answer. This was **NOTED**.

3.3 Mr. R. C. Dawe asked two questions as to why the unsuccessful prosecution was brought against him in view of his status as Chairman of the Hollybed Commoners Association and why the problems at the Gullet Lake not been handled in the right and proper manner.

The Chairman responded that at the meeting of the Board on the 13 May 2004 all Board members present voted to prosecute Mr. Dawe as a result of evidence received and with the support of the Police. As a legal matter this was discussed in private and all members present had the full facts before voting.

With regard to the Gullet Lake, after the last tragic incident at the lake the Health & Safety Executive carried out an enquiry which involved various recommendations that had since been carried out. At no time was it suggested that a lifeguard be posted at the lake as this would be recognising it as an official bathing area for which it was clearly not suitable. The Conservators had regular meetings with the Fire Service. However a meeting had not yet been held with the new officer, Mr. Amos, but the Conservators would look at any suggestions he might put forward.

Mr. Tretheway stated that although from time to time letters had been received on paper headed Hollybed Commoners Association he understood that despite requests the Board had no recent knowledge of formal meetings of the Association, its membership, nor copies of its published accounts. Mr. Tretheway concluded therefore that the time had come for the Board to demand absolute proof of its existence and accordingly **MOVED** that until such proof was provided the Board of the Malvern Hills Conservators did not recognise the Hollybed Commoners Association. This was seconded by Mr. Wilcock and **CARRIED** by 18 votes with one abstention.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST. None.

5. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES. On the proposal of Mr. Roberts, seconded by Mr. Wilcock, it was **AGREED** that the Minutes of the meeting held on the 12 May 2005 should be **CONFIRMED** and **SIGNED** as a true and correct record.

6. MATTERS ARISING.

6.1 7.1 Hearing Loop System. Mr. Roberts advised that representatives from the RNID were visiting in early August to give advice on a suitable system. This was **NOTED**.

6.2 7.2 Car Park at The Kettle Sings, Gardener's Common. The Director advised that the construction of the car park had been completed and the seeding of the banks would take place in October. This was **NOTED**.

6.3 9.1.4 Charity Fair and Colwall Show. Mr. Roberts reported on a successful afternoon at Colwall Show where he had been helped with the manning of the display by Mr. Ward. This was **NOTED**.

6.4 12.1.1 Wardens. The Director stated that he had had discussions to try and alleviate the traffic problems on roads around the Hills at busy weekends but no satisfactory conclusion had been forthcoming. This was **NOTED**.

6.4 12.1(c) Notice Board. Mr. Pilcher reported that the Hang Gliding notice at Gardiners Quarry had been refurbished. This was **NOTED**.

7. FINANCIAL REPORTS. None.

8. COMMITTEE REPORTS.

8.1 ACCESS & INFORMATION. Mr. Roberts presented the following report of the meeting held on the 19 May 2005 and thanked the 14 Board members who had helped with manning the stand at the Three Counties Show, as well as Conservators' and AONB staff, Mr. Dudley Brook, Mr. Trevor Bayliss for supplying the sheep and two ladies who gave spinning demonstrations. A full report would be made at the next meeting of the Committee. In seconding the report Mr. Tretheway on behalf of members thanked Mr. Roberts for all his work.

MEETING of the **ACCESS & INFORMATION COMMITTEE** held on Thursday, 19 May 2005 at 2 p.m.

Present:- Mrs. S. Adeney, Mr. J. R. Mills, Mr. R. Roberts (Chairman), Dr. B. Smith, Mr. J. Tretheway, Mr. W. Watts.

In attendance:- The Director, Administrative Officer and Mrs. S. Thetford.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE. Professor J. Raine, Mr. R. Stockton.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

Mrs. S. Adeney declared an interest in item 13
Mr. J. Tretheway declared an interest in item 13

3. CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS.

3.1 CLA Big Breakfast. An invitation was extended to members to join the Director at this event organised by the CLA to be held at Three Counties Showground at 7.45 a.m. on the 17 June, the guest speaker being the Transitional Director of Natural England. This was **NOTED**.

3.2 Web Site. The Chairman reported that in May the number of visits to the web site had increased by almost 50% to approximately 50,000 during the month. It was felt that this was in some part due to the fact that the recent staff vacancies had been advertised. This was **NOTED**.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MEETING HELD ON THE 17 MARCH 2005.

4.1 3.2 Great Malvern Centre Partnership Meeting. The meeting scheduled for the 7 April had been cancelled and the next meeting had been planned for the 6 June 2005. This was **NOTED**.

4.2 9. Colwall Show. The Chairman advised that Mr. Rumney and Mr. Ward had agreed to help on the Conservators' stand. This was **NOTED**.

5. ST. ANN'S WELL GARDENS. The Director reminded members of the layout for the landscaping of the gardens and advised that the surface immediately adjacent to the cafe would be a resin material. Tenders had gone out for the work but only one quotation had been received. In the circumstances the AONB Officer would be re-tendering. With regard to the two Victorian metal seats, one had been repaired and was back in situ, the other was with the blacksmith for repair. The Director would source a company which could make replicas of these seats.

6. THREE COUNTIES SHOW. The Chairman advised that the double stand would be in a corner position similar to last year. The main theme would be the Heritage Lottery Fund bid and water

features. It was hoped that as last year the stand would have sheep supplied by Mr. Bayliss. The costs were within budget and although there had been some response from Conservators to help man the stand, more people were needed. This was **NOTED**.

7. APPLICATION FOR EASEMENT AT 7 NEWTOWN ROAD, MALVERN. It was **NOTED** that Local Authority planning permission had been refused for the development and in the circumstances no further action was taken.

8. APPLICATION FOR EASEMENT AND PARKING AT BRAESIDE DOWER, WYCHE ROAD, MALVERN. Following a site visit it was **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED** on the proposal of Dr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Tretheway, to refuse the application in view of the precedent that could be set by permitting parking on the Common and the ecological and visual impact that a surfaced track would make. Under the Conservators' usual policy the householder could take a vehicle for occasional deliveries to the property, subject to obtaining prior confirmation from the Director that ground conditions were suitable.

It was **AGREED** to review the illegal parking policy at the next meeting.

9. APPLICATION FOR EASEMENT TO ACCESS LAND TO THE REAR OF 83 AND 85 POOLBROOK ROAD, MALVERN. Following a site visit it was **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED** on the proposal of Mr. Watts, seconded by Mr. Mills, to postpone a decision until the result of a Local Authority planning application was known.

10. POLICY GUIDELINES FOR UTILITY COMPANIES WORKING ON COMMON LAND. Subject to the inclusion that common land is private land and reinforcing the fact that the policy must be adhered to, it was **AGREED** that it should be circulated to the companies.

11. PATH REPAIR PROGRAMME 2005. This was **NOTED**.

12. INFORMATION. There were no items of information.

On the proposal of the Chairman, seconded by Dr. Smith, it was **AGREED** that item 13 should be taken in committee as the matter to be discussed was confidential.

There being no further business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 3.45 p.m.

The report, including item 13, was **CARRIED**

8.2 LAND MANAGEMENT. Mrs. Thetford presented the following report of the meeting held on the 2 June 2005 and moved its adoption. This was seconded by Mr. Pilcher.

MEETING of the **LAND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE** held at Manor House on Thursday, 2 June 2005 at 2 p.m.

Present:- Mr. A. J. Phillips, Mr. B. J. M. Pilcher, Mr. J. G. Plant, Mr. C. Rouse, Dr. B. G. Smith, Mrs. S. Thetford (Chairman), Mr. J. A. Tretheway, Mr. J. Webb, Mr. R. Witcomb.

In attendance:- Director, Conservation Officer, Administrative Officer, Mr. R. Roberts, Mr. R. Thomas.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE. Mrs. P. Raven.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST. None.

3. CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS. None.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MEETING HELD ON THE 31 MARCH 2005.

4.1 4.1 Geraldine Road/Barnards Green Road and Poolbrook Road/Barnards Green Road Junctions. On the proposal of Dr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Pilcher, members **CONFIRMED** the sale to the Highway Authority of the small area of common at Poolbrook Road/Barnards Green Road junction.

4.2 4.2 Common Land and the Single Payment Scheme. Application had been made to the Rural Payments Agency before the deadline of the 15 May but to date no decision had been received. No payment figures were yet available for common land. This was **NOTED**.

4.3 5. Grazing Monitoring Group Meeting – 4 March 2005. Response was still awaited from other organisations regarding the economics of flock replacements. When these were received they would be considered by the Grazing Monitoring Group. This was **NOTED**.

4.4 7. Draft Woodland Management Plan – Actions. In answer to a question, the Conservation Officer stated that in locations where it was not possible to remove the material it was left in 'windrows' at a suitable location as leaving it in situ did encourage bramble growth. However where possible the policy was to remove it from site. This was **NOTED**.

5. BRITISH CAMP IMPROVEMENTS. Pat Johnston of Arthur Amos Associates, project managers for the Liveability funded replacement path on the southern side of British Camp, gave a presentation to members of the plans for the work. This was for a two metre path along the route of the original Victorian path. The path would be constructed using stone from Clee Hill Quarry. As the site was a Scheduled Ancient Monument as well as a Site of Special Scientific Interest archaeological contractors had been employed with a remit for undertaking an initial evaluation of the site. Their report was expected shortly but it did not appear that any archaeological artefacts had been found. Tenders for the construction work were to be despatched within the next few days with a return date of the 20 June. It was hoped that the construction work would start by the 11 July. The estimated duration of the work would be six weeks. The main compound for materials would be the car park and the contractors would need to provide appropriate vehicles for transportation to the site as well as a suitable material to be placed on the land to prevent damage by the storage of materials at the site.

Members were concerned at the width of the path which they felt excessive. Ms. Johnston stated that this had received approval from the Herefordshire Council Archaeologist as it was adequate for two people to pass without straying onto the adjoining land with the consequent erosion. Ms. Johnston would however look into reducing the width and would enquire of the Herefordshire Archaeologist as to his rationale. (The Director has written to Arthur Amos Associates and Herefordshire Council Archaeology Department indicating that the Conservators would want the path to be 4 ft. wide.

With regard to the stone to be used, members would prefer a lighter Clee Hill Stone than the samples shown and that Malvern stone from the existing path was re-used when possible. The Director agreed to contact the District Council's Planning Services to enquire into the possibility of using spoil from quarries on the Hills.

6. ST. ANN'S WELL LANDSCAPING. The Director reported that the AONB Officer had invited tenders from four local contractors to carry out the landscaping work but only one had quoted for the work. The reasons given by the other three for not responding was the tender period, concern at timing of the work during the cafe's busy period, adverse publicity and vandalism of their equipment and planting schemes. The AONB Officer would be re-tendering and inviting firms from farther afield. Once a contractor had been appointed they would be invited to make a presentation to the Committee. This was **NOTED**.

7. MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW 1 – RESTORING AND MAINTAINING THE ACID GRASSLAND. In presenting his report on the first part of the review of the Management Plan the Conservation Officer advised that as the main focus of the previous plan was the reintroduction of grazing on the Hills, he felt the process needed to be gone through as to why grazing was appropriate, to give a thorough assessment and look at the different options to manage the grassland as well as the limitations on those methods. The conclusion had been reached was that grazing was the only long term solution for managing the grassland. He hoped the paper gave a basis on which to build to develop grazing in the next five years. This was **NOTED** with appreciation and members registered their thanks to the Conservation Officer for the excellent paper. In view of the answers the paper gave to often raised questions regarding grazing, it was **AGREED** to look into producing it on the web and for circulation at the Three Counties Show.

The Conservation Officer confirmed that the Conservators were members of the Grazing Animals Project and it was **AGREED** to make the newsletter available to members of the Committee.

8. WELFARE OF LIVESTOCK. The Conservation Officer presented his report which had been requested at the last meeting following queries raised over the legal requirements for keeping and checking sheep. It was **NOTED** that the standard of welfare of the Conservators' flock came well within the requirements. In answer to a question, the Director advised that a local person had been sourced to take the surplus stock and that the AONB Project Officer who would be starting soon would also be looking into this matter. He would therefore report on his findings in due course.

9. CONSERVATION OFFICER'S VISIT TO ASHDOWN FOREST. The Conservation Officer presented his report following a site visit to Ashdown Forest with representatives from Epping Forest Conservators to look at an invertebrate monitoring study which had investigated the impacts of grazing. This was **NOTED**. It was pointed out that in the future Commons Associations could limit grazing to certain times of the year and it was therefore **AGREED** to discuss this at a future Tripartite Meeting.

10. LANDSCAPING PROPOSAL, TOWNSEND WAY, MALVERN. On the proposal of Dr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Pilcher, it was **AGREED** to accept the Conservation Officer's proposal that members refuse consent for the planting of a formal flower bed and for lettering on their land in view of their duty to keep the land open and unbuilt upon.

11. INFORMATION.

11.1 Conservation Officer vacancy. The Director advised that the closing date for applications for the post had expired and seven applicants would be interviewed on the 16 June 2005 by the Chairman of the Board, Chairman of the Committee and himself. This was **NOTED**.

The Chairman on behalf of members thanked the Conservation Officer, David Whitehorne, for all he had done over the last six years and wished him well in his new post.

It was **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED** that items 12, 13 and 14 should be taken in committee as the matters to be discussed were confidential.

14. MANAGEMENT OF STOCK ON THE HILLS. On the proposal of Dr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Pilcher, it was **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED** to accept the recommendation contained in Option 3 that the Conservators keep their own stock and continue the scheme of Countryside Stewardship that is working reasonably successfully for the next 7 years. The Conservators would work in partnership and share the Countryside Stewardship money with any graziers who wanted to graze the Hills.

Arising.

8.2.1 5. British Camp Improvements. The Director advised that the path would be constructed to a width of 4 feet and that a contractor had been employed to carry out the work. With regard to spoil from quarries, a favourable response had been received from Malvern Hills District Council and he would be contacting Worcestershire County Council as the waste authority. This was **NOTED**.

8.2.2 8. Welfare of Livestock. In answer to a question the Director advised that the Board was trying to balance welfare issues with the market value of stock. The decision had been made to use a local abattoir and the money received for stock would be monitored. This was **NOTED**. The Director confirmed that the Conservators no longer leased the land belonging to Mr. Cameron at Castlemorton and no negotiations were taking place at present to obtain further land. This was **NOTED**.

The report, including items 12, 13 and 14 taken in committee, was **CARRIED**.

8.3 ADMINISTRATION & RESOURCES. Mr. Wilcock presented the following report of the meeting held on the 20 June 2005 and moved its adoption. This was seconded by Mr. Angell.

MEETING of the **ADMINISTRATION & RESOURCES COMMITTEE** held at Manor House on Monday, 20 June 2005 at 7 p.m.

Present:- Mr. M. Angell, Mr. M. K. Cordey, Mr. R. F. Hall-Jones, Mr. A. Myatt, Mr. P. Rumney, Dr. B. G. Smith, Mr. J. A. Tretheway, Mr. B. A. Wilcock (Chairman).

In attendance:- The Director, Administrative Officer, Mr. R. Roberts, Mrs. S. Thetford, Mr. R. Thomas.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE. None.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST. None.

3. CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS. None.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MEETING HELD ON THE 28 APRIL 2005. None.

5. ANNUAL ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2005. The Financial Consultant presented the annual accounts which had received an unqualified report from the Auditors. The Auditors had drawn attention to several matters arising from the audit which although did not materially affect the view given by the accounts, they felt should be considered when approving the accounts as follows:-

- (a) The balances on some of the restricted funds would not agree to the corresponding cash fund because some amounts had not been transferred out from the fund bank accounts at 31 March and some amounts had not been paid by 31 March and were included in creditors. It was important for members to bear in mind that fund balances were not always covered by cash balances.
- (b) As agreed by the Board last year the accounts included a prior year adjustment relating to depreciation arising in earlier years and was explained in the notes to the accounts.
- (c) There had been an incoming receipt into the Parliamentary Fund during the year of £325,000 relating to the granting of an easement. The Auditors felt that this should be mentioned in the notes to the accounts due to its size and nature.
- (d) The wages and salaries figures in note 4 were not a direct comparison with the 2004 figures as the 2004 figures did not include the shepherd's salary. The 2005 figures included all wages and salaries, including the shepherd. In both years, reimbursement of the shepherd's salary was included in the grant income figures.

With regard to item (c), the Financial Consultant advised that having spoken to officers it was recommended not to make specific mention as this income could not be classed as exceptional. This was noted.

In answer to a question, the Financial Consultant advised that a paper regarding the deficit on the pension fund would be submitted to the Committee in the autumn so that this could be taken into account when considering the budget estimates for 2006/07. After consideration, it was **UNANIMOUSLY AGREED** to recommend to the Board that the Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2005 be adopted.

6. BYELAW OFFENCES. The report was **NOTED**.

7. INFORMATION.

7.1 Malvern Pride Week. The Director advised that the organisers were interested in having an exhibition of paintings and photographs of the area in the town and had asked if it would be possible to borrow the Conservators' painting 'A Fair Field Full of Folk – All manner of men'. It was **AGREED** to recommend to the Board that arrangements for this be delegated to the Director.

7.2 Committees. Dr. Smith advised that before the meeting he had met with Chairmen and Vice Chairmen of Committees to discuss concerns regarding the low attendance at some meetings and the

remit of the Land Management and Access & Information Committees. In order to strengthen decisions made at committee meetings it was suggested that either the committee Chairmen or Vice Chairmen be permitted to attend the other two committees as a voting member. This was noted and a further suggestion was made that members be allowed to substitute another member to attend and vote on their behalf. It was **AGREED** to put these two suggestions to the Board.

It was **AGREED** that items 8 and 9 should be taken in committee as the matters to be discussed were confidential.

Arising.

8.3.1 6. Byelaw Offences. Members would be advised of the full costs of bringing these prosecutions in due course. This was **NOTED**.

8.3.2 7.2 Committees. On the proposal of Mr. Wilcock, seconded by Mr. Tretheway, it was **AGREED** on the vote of 11 to 2 that at future meetings of the three committees members who find themselves unable to attend should inform the office of their appointed deputy.

The report, including items 8 and 9 taken in committee was **CARRIED**.

9. REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES.

9.1 Malvern Spa Association. Mr. Roberts reported that it was anticipated that work under the Heritage Lottery project is likely to commence in the autumn, subject to any reviews and alterations that might be required. This was **NOTED**.

9.2 Malvern Hills AONB Joint Advisory Committee. The Chairman advised that the meeting of the JAC had been postponed until September 2005. This was **NOTED**.

10. There were no items of urgent business.

11. INFORMATION.

11.1 Newland Common. The Director reported that a vehicle had spilled diesel on the common and arrangements had been made for the contamination to be removed. The diesel was being carried on a trailer and the Environment Agency was trying to identify the vehicle involved. This was **NOTED**.

11.2 Sheep Numbers. The sheep numbers were currently 197 ewes, 26 ewe lambs (last years), 213 lambs and 4 rams.

11.3 Management Report. The Director presented his report which was **NOTED**.

MANAGEMENT REPORT

DATE: 14 JULY 2005

DIRECTOR

- Met with Clerk to Malvern Town Council
- Signed off building contract for British Camp Toilets
- Overseeing of Kettle Sings Car Park and safe crossing point at British Camp
- Talk to Mathon Parish Council
- Visit from officers at Epping Forest Conservators to look at grazing scheme
- Visit from Cleeve Common Conservators
- Attended interview for AONB Manager
- Help with organisation of Malvern Pride Week (15-20 August)
- Attended Wardens' training session
- Attended joint meeting with Castlemorton Common Association and Castlemorton Parish Council

FIELD STAFF

- Mowing commons and roadside verges
- Spraying Giant Hogweed at Lower Wyche Road
- Moved cattle to End Hill
- Improved path at the top of Thirds Wood below Jubilee Hill
- Early morning sheep gathering for routine maintenance
- Early morning sheep gathering for shearing
- Installed railings at Hancocks Lane
- Moved cattle to Table Hill
- Attended illegal gypsy encampment on Link Common and Newland
- Cleared fallen trees and boughs from various footpaths
- Bracken rolling Malvern Common, Ballards Land and Castlemorton
- Clearing little from illegal gypsy encampments

WARDENS

- New induction pack and process in place for Voluntary Wardens
- Induction completed for 1 Voluntary Warden and 1 Reporting Volunteer
- Partnership meetings with Worcestershire Wardens Feasibility Project. 2 of our Voluntary Wardens benefited from tree training day.
- Embroidered jackets for Voluntary Wardens completed.
- Printed tee-shirts for Voluntary Conservation Group completed.
- Nigel Hand gave talk to Volunteers about reptiles as main part of social event.
- Working with Youth Offending Service clearing around recently planted trees.
- Beacon Newsletter produced.
- Strimming car parks.
- Conservation Days held every first Saturday of each month.
- Voluntary Wardens' meeting.
- Byelaw incidents:-

| | |
|-------------------------|----|
| Driving on common | 4 |
| Signs | 3 |
| Skips | 4 |
| Flytipping | 10 |
| Campers | 4 |
| Vandalism | 2 |
| Small fires | 9 |
| Motorbikes on common | 2 |
| Padlocks broken | 5 |
| Cars for sale on common | 5 |
| Dogs chasing sheep | 1 |
| Boundary issues | 2 |
| Utilities | 3 |

STAFF

- A new member of the Field Staff, Daniel Lovatt, commenced work 1 July
- Appointed new Conservation Officer, Rob Havard, who commences work 8 August
- Employed a student for 2 months to clear footpaths and work with Field Staff

ADMINISTRATION

- ❖ Looked at 15 Local Authority Planning Applications
- ❖ The Board's seal was attached to Deeds of Grant for vehicular access to Camargue, Hancocks Lane, Castlemorton and 91 Poolbrook Road.

Arising.

11.3.1 British Camp Improvements. Mr. Masters asked why the Conservators had not applied to DEFRA for permission for the exchange of land involved in changing the layout of the common and highway. He proposed, seconded by Mr. Macmillan, that a retrospective

formal application should be made to DEFRA. However on being put to the vote the motion was lost by 12 votes. The Administrative Officer advised that all the land involved in the realignment was metalled and there had been no net loss of land. In the circumstances it had not considered necessary to apply for permission under Section 9 of the 1930 Act. However a letter could be sent to DEFRA advising them of the work. This was **NOTED**.

11.3.2 Mowing. In answer to a question the Director advised that the Operations Manager had contacted the contractors about the unsatisfactory cutting of grass on Townsend Way and Guarlford and they had carried out a further mowing of these areas free of charge. This was **NOTED**.

11.3.3 Staff. The Director advised that as a result of personal problems the student who had been offered two months work with the Field Staff had not taken up the post. This was **NOTED**.

11.4 Identification Sign at Clevelode. In answer to a question the Director reported that the sign had been erected following a policy made by the Board in 1998 that enclosed areas of land owned by the Conservators should be identified. This was **NOTED**.

There being no further business the Chairman declared the meeting closed at 8.20 p.m.

