

## Meeting of the Castlemorton Common Co-ordinating Committee

Castlemorton Parish Hall

Wednesday 9 May 2018 8.00pm

---

**Present:** Lionel Bartlett, Phil Birley, Ann Brennan (standing in for Med Snookes), Mick Davies (Chair), Matt Gardner, Peter Hancock, Don Lupton, Chris Rouse, Keith Stevens, Barbara Wilkes, Sue Windle.

In attendance: From Malvern Hills Trust (MHT): CEO, Secretary to the Board and 1 member of the public, David Smallwood.

### 1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Med Snookes, Jonathan Bills (MHT) and Roger Gillard. The Committee sent their good wishes to Med Snookes and wished him a speedy recovery.

### 2. To receive the report of the meeting held on 8 November 2017

The minutes were approved by the meeting and signed as such by the Chair.

### 3. Committee membership

The Chair reported the resignation of David Smallwood and thanked him for his past contribution to the committee. Barbara Wilkes had agreed to sit on the committee as an active commoner and Castlemorton Parish Council had appointed 2 new members: Don Lupton and Keith Stevens. Phil Birley had offered to join the committee as a representative of recreational users and was duly appointed.

### 4. Matters Arising

4Cs web site

An alternative suggestion was to have a Facebook page, but this would still require someone to administer it. Following a discussion, it was agreed that the information on the MHT web site about 4Cs was sufficient. The issue could be revisited if necessary.

British Camp

The CEO confirmed that the outcome of Severn Trent's application to Malvern Hills District Council was that they were required to carry out an Environmental Impact Assessment in relation to the work they were proposing to carry out to

decommission the reservoir. MHT had heard nothing further since the determination of the application.

**5. Report from Malvern Hills Trust (including from the Conservation Manager)**

The CEO reported that grazing had been maintained at a reasonable level (about 450 sheep and 70 cattle). It had been a difficult spring and a temporary enclosure had been created on the common at the request of Roy Shale to help with lambing. This would be removed on 1 June. About 3ha of scrub clearance had been carried out over the winter. Committee members were invited to suggest areas for scrub clearance during winter 2018/9. Keith Stevens asked if some scrub clearance could be carried out around Eight Oaks. He felt that once cleared, it was important to follow up to reduce re-growth. The CEO confirmed that Brackenburn, who had harvested bracken off the common over the last 2 years, had ceased to trade. He was hoping that someone else might take over. The other option was rolling, but this only reduced the vigour of the plant.

Eight trees had been pollarded around the pond at the junction of New Road/Gullet Road. A new biking and walking map of the Hills had been launched and was available free of charge. The aim was to encourage more responsible mountain biking on the Hills and to make it clear to cyclists where they were allowed to go. This would be followed up by a series of trail guides together with some way-marking on the main Hills.

When MHT produced new leaflets and guides, this was publicised in the press, on the web site and on Social Media.

Mr Hancock asked whether MHT had any success criteria in relation to the mountain biking guide. The CEO said the target was to see a reduction in the number of conflicts between other users of the Hills and cyclists and a reduction in the use by cyclists of unauthorised paths.

The CEO explained that MHT were applying to the Charity Commission for a Scheme under s 73 Charities Act to update its Acts of parliament. Informal consultation was ongoing but there would be a full public consultation later in the year.

**6. Incidents/byelaw breaches**

Barbara Wilkes said she had had problems with people walking through her sheep (not chasing them but disturbing them) and Matt Gardner also reported members of the public walking through cows with their calves. It was agreed that this was an aspect of use of the common where education was required. It unsettled the stock and pushed them off the areas where they were supposed to be grazing. It was potentially a safety issue with the cows and calves. The CEO said there had been a spring campaign asking people to keep dogs under control but this was not the issue here. Mrs Wilkes asked if this could be highlighted in the dog training which MHT sponsored.

**7. Stock visibility/casualties**

Mrs Wilkes had had a total of 4 sheep and lambs killed as a result of road accidents since March. She also reported a mixed level of understanding amongst members of the police force about legal obligations in relation to road accidents involving stock on the common. Mr Gardner reported having lost one lamb as a result of a dog attack, and there had been another reported incident although no animal casualty had been found.

If there was an incident involving stock, MHT had an out of hours number and should be able to help the police identify whose animal was involved, if required.

**8. Reports from CCA**

Mr Bartlett suggested MHT should re-visit the pollards along Hancocks Lane with a view to removing the limbs which had been left at the time of pollarding. He asked about liability for damage to vehicles being driven onto the common. He had damaged his car on a rock. The CEO said that the onus was on the driver to ensure it was safe if they drove off the highway.

Generally MHT would ask homeowners to remove any rocks or posts placed on MHT land and asked Mr Bartlett to clarify where the stone/s in question were. Mr Birley reported that cars were frequently parking along the road verge outside Swinyard's car park. The CEO explained that consideration was being given to putting in stobs to prevent parking on the verges there. MHT was looking at changing the ticket machines this year. He reminded everyone that annual car passes were available for frequent users of the car parks. Ms Brennan said there were more and more cars driving off Gullet Road onto the common, and could the ditches be reinstated? Mr Gardner pointed out that scrub and ant hills discouraged people from driving off the common.

**9. Reports from other represented bodies**

Mrs Windle reported that those involved in caring for Coombe Green Common were looking at clearing some of the pits and were hoping that Mr Gardner would put some cattle on the common before the end of the year. They planned another fundraising event and the Parish Council had agreed to match fund any sums raised.

**10. Information and Any Other Business**

The CEO had confirmed that he had spoken to the owner of Hollybeds Cottage about the orange netting which had been erected on the common over the winter.

In response to a question, the CEO said that one of the elements proposed in the Charity Commission Scheme was fencing for up to a year for animal welfare reasons. This had been prompted by advice that the internal parasites which affected the sheep had built up a resistance to the commonly used treatments and that the solution was to rest the common for a period of time.

The CEO had contacted the police about the phone box by the Plume of Feathers and he now understood they were not intending to adopt it. Mr Hancock asked if some maintenance could be carried out to the parking area/path at the Welland end of Castlemorton Common. The pond was flooding over the path in wet weather.

**11. Date of next meeting**

14 November 2018 8pm

**The meeting closed at 9.27pm**