



# NEWSLETTER

Issue No. 34 April 2015

## **Changes afoot at Friends of Hob Moor**

Welcome to the latest Friends of Hob Moor Newsletter. There have been quite a few changes on the Committee in recent months. Peter Green retired as Chair at the AGM in October 2014, and I was elected to replace him. We also have new Committee members Peter Monether (Website and Social Media), Stephanie Luxton (Secretary) and Jenny Jagger (Membership Secretary). We continue to be ably supported by Ian Tomlinson, Pam Haney, Madeline Evans, Richard Gray (Treasurer) and John Wood, who bring much-needed experience and continuity to the Committee.

We have lots of new ideas for the next year at Friends of Hob Moor, but we can only make them happen with your support. We really need more Friends to get actively involved in caring for and promoting the Moor, and with more Committee members due for retirement later this year, we will soon be looking for Committee members and a new person to take over the Newsletter. So please get in touch with us if you want to get involved or have ideas about what other activities we could organise. Finally, our new look website is now launched, thanks to Peter's hard work, so please take a look at it and tell us what you think.

We look forward to seeing more of you in 2015!

Imelda Havers, Chair, Friends of Hob Moor

## **Volunteering Opportunities**

### **Litter**

Volunteers are always needed to help with the routine maintenance of the Moor. Litter is a perennial problem. By the time you read this, there should have been a big clearing of litter from the Moor organised by the Smarter York team on March 29th. The Friends have organised litter picking 'events' in the past but these have not been well attended and it seems to be best done by concerned individuals as and when they can. We have litter pickers available for anyone who would like one: contact Madeline Evans on 07811 393123/ m.evans104@gmail.com

### **Balsam Bashing**

Jenny Cairns, our Smarter York Officer, is organising the removal of the invasive Himalayan Balsam from the Moor in the summer. All help gratefully received. Please contact Jenny: jennifer.cairns@york.gov.uk/ 07833 436832

### **Wild Flower Plug Planting**

The Friends are paying for several hundred wild flower plugs to be planted on the Moor. We need volunteers to help: please contact Jenny Cairns who is organising the planting.

## **Thistles**

Although reduced in numbers, there are still too many thistles on the Moor. If you would like to help with thistle cutting, please get in touch with Jenny.

## **Our Lady's School Site**

It has been interesting to hear of residents near the new housing development in Osbaldwick having to resort to direct action to get the contractors to abide by planning regulations after appeals to the Council had met with no improvement to their situation. Within 24 hours a manager from the developers was suddenly available to sort the matter out. This is very similar to the problems local residents have had with the developer of Our Lady's school site, now renamed Hob Stone, and it shows that taking action into your own hands gets results.

The building work at what we must now call Hob Stone continues. It is not just social housing as we were originally told it would be, but a mix of private and social. As is already obvious from the cleared site and visible boundaries, the impact on the Moor will be enormous once residents have moved in and there are street lights on all night, noise from people and traffic and dozens of extra cats around.

There seems to be far less birdsong and bird life around the site and on that side of the Moor, partly because the mature trees that surrounded the old school site have been felled and partly because of the activity of the contractors. Although the developers have promised to plant young trees, it will be decades before they mature and provide a habitat for birds comparable to the one which has been removed. We have just seen the felling of mature trees on the Terry's site despite much local opposition. It seems as though the Council either doesn't have the power to protect our environment or the will to do it and the developers get what they want.

## **Cable Laying**

There have already been further depredations on the Moor from the cable contractors. The areas damaged by cable laying last year have not been levelled and reseeded as they should have been and the main path the contractors used across the Moor has become rutted and potholed. In fact one of the pits was dug up again in February with vehicles again driving across the Moor. They did not use the access designated for their use but instead came through the gate near Lidl, leaving the area completely churned up and muddy. The Council, or at least the relevant council department, was not aware that this was going to happen or had indeed happened until the Friends pointed it out. We have made repeated requests to the Council for the damage to be repaired, and copied in local councillors, but no action has been taken yet.

Although these last items may seem negative, they show that we need to be vigilant to protect the Moor and the Friends need as much support as we can get. Please encourage friends and neighbours to become members and take an active part in looking after the Moor and protecting it. You don't need to join the committee; even reporting what's happening on the Moor via the website is a help.

## **Cows**

The cows were taken off early at the end of last summer. There were repeated incidents of gates being left open by contractors or others and cows wandering off the Moor, as described in the last Newsletter, so in the end the grazier had to take them away. We expect them back on in early April as usual.

## In Brief

- ❖ The high point for excitement on the Moor has to be when a red hot air balloon almost landed on the Moor at around 8.30am on 11 September. It descended towards the Moor as if it would land, hovered for 5 minutes, then took off again as residents, dog walkers and parents taking children to school stopped to watch and take photos.
- ❖ A new sewer has been built across the west side of the Moor (the Lidl end) for the Hob Stone development and linked into the existing drainage system.
- ❖ We are delighted to have a new member to look after our website and social media presence. He has been revising and updating it and bringing up to date our Facebook and Twitter presence. Do take a look: [friendsofhobmoor.org.uk](http://friendsofhobmoor.org.uk)
- ❖ A kingfisher has been sighted on the beck alongside Hob Moor Drive but there has been neither sight nor sound of a skylark.
- ❖ We are disappointed that Mark Tyszka is unable to lead his popular walk this year as he has done so many times in the past. We look forward to him being able to continue in the future.
- ❖ The banks that were repaired on the north side of the Moor by Hob Moor Drive have regrown but the snowdrops that were there in such profusion have vanished. We hoped that they might have appeared on the Moor where the mud from the bank was dumped, but unfortunately this has not been the case.
- ❖ A select group of five braved the elements to celebrate the Winter Solstice on the Moor on December 21<sup>st</sup>. It was bitterly cold but the Famous Five had a good time (they said). The Summer Solstice is a much warmer (usually, but this is Yorkshire) and better attended occasion with food, drink and music. Do join us. Details are on the events page.
- ❖ One of the horse chestnut trees on Little Hob Moor next to Tadcaster Road has had to be felled because it was diseased.
- ❖ Elizabeth Smith, who will be leading a walk on the Moor on 31<sup>st</sup> May, gave a very interesting and well received talk on the history of Hob Moor at the West Thorpe Ladies Group in March. Apparently there was so much interest in the Friends she ran out of leaflets!

## USEFUL CONTACT DETAILS

Chris the Stockman – for any problems with the cattle on the Moor  
City of York Council - for removal of rubbish, fly-tipping, graffiti etc

07979 613613  
01904 551551

Contact us about Hob Moor or Friends through the website or by email:

Website: [www.friendsofhobmoor.org.uk](http://www.friendsofhobmoor.org.uk) or [www.fohm.org.uk](http://www.fohm.org.uk)  
Email: [admin@friendsofhobmoor.org.uk](mailto:admin@friendsofhobmoor.org.uk)

# Walks & Talks on Hob Moor Spring & Summer 2015

## **Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> May**

2pm – 3.30pm

Meet at the Hob Stone on Little Hob Moor, Tadcaster Rd entrance

## **The history of Hob Moor with Elizabeth Smith**

Come for an amble through Hob Moor's past with the person who probably knows more about it than anyone else

## **Sunday 21st June**

6pm onwards

Meet at the North Lane entrance to Hob Moor

## **Summer Solstice Celebration**

Celebrate the Solstice with music, story telling and shared food and drink. Gather at the bench by the railway tunnel on the south side of the Moor.

## **Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> July**

1.30pm-3.30pm

Meet at the Hob Moor Drive entrance to Hob Moor

## **Butterfly Walk with Tony Fairburn**

Hope for a still, dry and sunny day to see the butterflies which live on the Moor.

## **Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> August**

8.30-9.30pm

Meet at the Hob Stone, Little Hob Moor, Tadcaster Rd entrance

## **Bat Night with Clair Merrifield**

Discover the secrets of the Moor at dusk. Come and spot the bats that come out just when you thought there was nothing to see on the Moor. You'll need a torch, suitable footwear and warm clothes. Booking essential.

Email: [clair.suddaby@gmail.com](mailto:clair.suddaby@gmail.com)

Phone: 07873 524239

*Children are welcome at all these events.  
Please note that they will not take place if it is raining heavily.*

## **Summer Fairs**

Although there is no fair on Hob Moor again this year, the Friends and gazebo will be at:

**West Bank Park Fair** on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> June 1pm-4pm

Do come and say hello to us there.