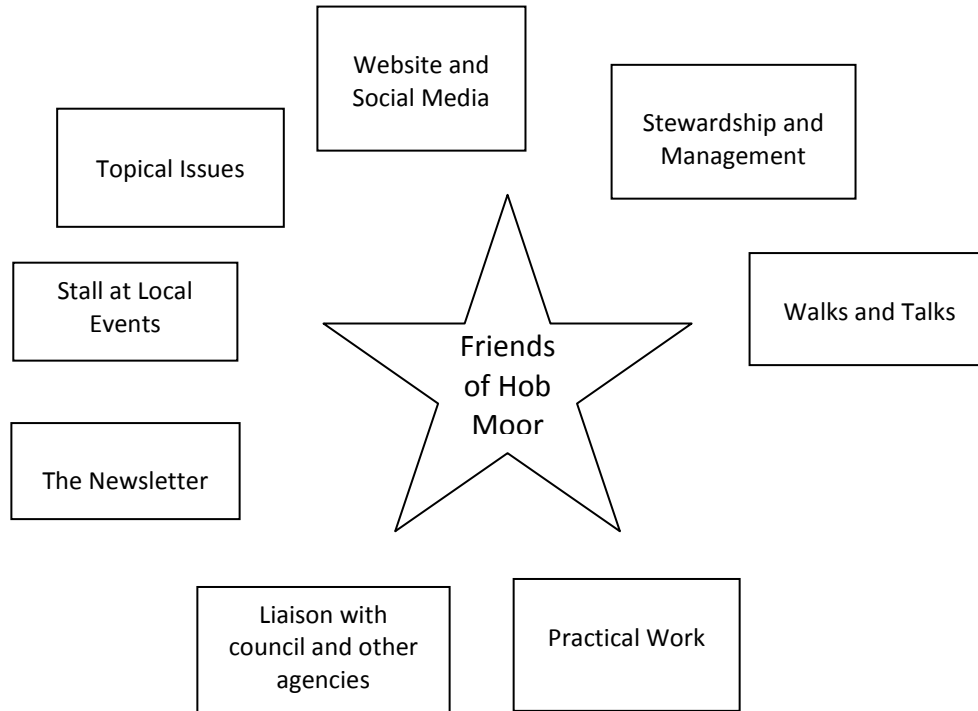


FRIENDS OF HOB MOOR
Registered Charity No.1084566
ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2015

The Friends of Hob Moor Committee met five times during the course of the year. We worked for the members by concentrating on the following topics, with individual members contributing in their areas of expertise and interest. The membership in September 2015 consisted of 49 life, 12 standing order, and the rest being annual or 6 year members making a total of 164 members from 136 different households.



1 Web Site and Social Media

A major piece of work this year has been to refresh our website www.fohm.org.uk. Our new Committee member, Peter Monether, with help from previous Committee Member David Mcloy, has worked hard to transfer all the information from the old website to a new web platform. The new website has a more modern design intended to be more accessible and attractive to Members. It has a contacts page listing essential contact details, as well as highlighting events and an interactive Comments page. Leaflets, Membership Application Forms and our Newsletter can all be downloaded from the site. We hope you like it but please let us know if you would like to see any particular changes or features and we will try to accommodate them.

We have also increased our activity on social media through our Facebook page and Twitter account. We can be found on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/FriendsOfHobMoor> where we respond to Members comments and promote events. It continues to attract interest and its use is growing with currently 160 “likes”.

We have recently started a Twitter account which can be found @hobmoorfriens on Twitter. This is also used to promote events of ours and other like-minded groups. We currently have 68 followers which is encouraging given that it is only a very recent development. Our tweets are linked to our website.

We hope you'll make good use of the new website and "like" our Facebook page and follow us on Twitter – as you probably know with social media, the more people who use it, the more useful it becomes and we can spread the word about our work far and wide!

2 Stewardship and the Management of the Moor

We are reaching the end of the fourth year that Hob Moor has been in the Higher Level Stewardship Scheme. All the capital works have now been completed with wildflower meadow enhancement works, new footbridges and fencing all now in place. A continuous hedge around the moor is now complete. The outstanding capital work is the expansion of the wildflower meadow on Little Hob Moor and this will now be done since the electric cabling work has now been completed.

The remaining six years of the Stewardship Scheme involve managing the moor as agreed under the plan. The focus will be on controlling the grazing and removing hay crops from the meadows in North Lane field and the Triangle. We will be working with the Council to make sure that the Stewardship scheme is implemented in the best interests of the Moor.

3 Walks & Talks & other events

Together with Jenny Cairns [Smarter York Officer] we have arranged a number of walks on the Moor open to both members and the general public; topics have included a History of Hob Moor, Bat Walk and a Butterfly Walk. In addition this year we have celebrated both the Winter and Summer Solstices, and hosted a foraging walk led by York Timebank. These are all important ways of getting people, including children, onto the Moor.

For some reason we have had a reduction in the number of people attending our walks and talks. We are not sure why this is, as they have been well publicised. We are keen to hear from any Friends about ways in which we can refresh our events programme to make it more popular, or ways in which we can get the word out more widely.

4 Facilities and Surveys

There have been no new facilities funded by Friends of Hob Moor on the Moor in the last year. Elizabeth Smith is still in consultation with Dr Helen Goodchild of York University's Dept of Archaeology about the possibility of doing a project with some students and members of the community on the south west end of the main track on the Moor to see whether its age can be determined and to see what sort of foundations there might be.

5 Practical Work

Members continue to be involved with litter clearing and tree monitoring. We have also arranged working parties to pull out Himalayan Balsam and cut back some thick brambles behind a Friend's garden. We fixed and filled some leaflet dispensers to the notice boards but sadly they did not last long, being removed by vandals / cattle! Information notices about various aspects of life and events on the Moor are placed in the notice boards throughout the year. We also keep a keen eye out for any activity which may undermine the Moor, though thankfully this is rare.

6 Liaison

We have continued to work with various officers of City of York. Jenny Cairns has attended some of our committee meetings and continues to respond quickly to any concerns we have despite the extra pressures now on her in her new role. We continue to liaise with the Police, Planning [over the new Hob Stone development] Cycle officers [over the cycle track and cycle barriers] the farmer [over the summer grazing of cattle] the Environmental Agency [over

beck clearance] and many others. We have worked particularly hard to ensure City of York Council meets its obligations regarding management of the Moor, in particular getting agreement for a work programme to rectify damage done by a contractor while laying cables and other work on site. This programme is set to start in September 2015 and replanting will take place in Spring 2016. It is clear that CYC officers are very stretched due to cutbacks so it will be even more important for Friends and the Committee to be proactive in spotting what needs doing and where possible helping out.

7 The Newsletter

The Newsletter has been produced twice annually as before, with Madeline Evans continuing in the editorial role. Members' feedback indicates that this continues to be one of the most valued activities of the organisation. The newsletter was sent to 57 members by post and some 107 by email and it is available on the website. It would be much appreciated if any members presently receiving the newsletter by post and who would be prepared to receive it by email could let us know.

8 Stall at Local Events

We decided again in 2015 that we did not have the time or resources to run a Summer Fair on the Moor. We did however attend West Bank Park Summer Fair in June which was a great success. We enlisted 11 new members on the day, and sold numerous postcards while spreading the word about all the work the Friends group does.

9 Topical Issues

The issues and concerns around the development of the Hob Stone housing site (where Our Lady's RC Primary School was) have largely been overcome. There is ongoing concern about the proximity of some of the new houses to important trees on the Moor. The Committee is liaising with City of York Council Planners about this issue and we will continue to monitor the situation. Work on site was halted for some weeks over the spring and summer due to the contractor going into administration. A new contractor has now been appointed and work continues on site.

The cattle have as usual come onto the Moor this year. No major incidents have been reported. However we are in touch with the stockman so if any Friends have any concerns please contact the numbers on our website.

We continue to be concerned for the future of the Friends of Hob Moor. We have a good number of Friends, but very few who actively take part in our work. With the resignation of our Chair, Membership Secretary and Newsletter Co-ordinator (Imelda Havers, Jenny Jagger and Madeline Evans respectively) we are urgently in need of more committee members, and others who can help out.

We are therefore looking for:

- Chair
- Membership Secretary
- Newsletter Co-ordinator
- Events Organiser
- Committee members

We hope next year will be another positive and interesting one for Hob Moor and the Friends.

The Management Committee - October 2015