



NEWSLETTER

Issue 42 April 2019

THE FUTURE OF HOB MOOR:

Welcome to the April edition of the FOHM newsletter. Both the committee and members have been busy over the past few months and here we have a round up of what we have been doing as well as a look at what events are coming up.

The whole Brexit issue is, we are sure, giving DEFRA and CYC a bit of a headache but one thing we can be sure of is that there will still be a scheme to monitor Land Management which is now called the Countryside Stewardship Scheme. Ecology management at CYC are looking into the details and rules and whether Hob Moor even qualifies.

Cattle will be grazed during the Summer Season and after settling down in North Lane Pasture will be released onto Hob Moor and the gate to North Lane Pasture shut and padlocked. Please be mindful of the Countryside Code.

The signage at entrances to the Moor is being reviewed during the Summer due to mismatch and out of date information. Any replacements will be made with up to date information and in addition the Countryside Code will be quoted for safety where cattle are grazing.

The bridges accessing the whole area of Hob Moor and The Triangle are being inspected during the Summer for any Health & Safety concerns, such as, their stability and their slippery surfaces during wet and snowy weather, which have been brought to our attention, which we have passed to CYC.

In March there will be some Bramble clearance conducted in North Lane Pasture and in The Triangle.

It is hoped that surveys will be done with Wildlife and Wildflower counting of different species. This will be done during April, where there will be the opportunity to try out some Grassland Survey Packs that are being produced for a trial.

We wonder how many of you saw the Countryfile programme at the beginning of the year? The idea was put forward for local Councils to lease one hectare of land to Community Interest Groups to be fenced off and so becoming a wildlife/meadow area. This has been discussed with CYC but fencing from cattle, dogs and the public proved an obstacle. We keep an open mind on this idea and would welcome any feedback from Newsletter readers on this please.

CROWS:

This is a difficult one. We are doing what we can to deter people from feeding the Crows. Recently Gulls also have descended on the Moor due to the mothballing of the landfill site at Harewood Whinn. A new waste recycling facility is being built also at Harewood Whinn. This new facility of Yorwaste's will handle 75,000 tons of waste a year, as landfill is no longer deemed to be the most environmentally friendly option. It is exciting to read that the landfill site will be returned to Meadow. Some of the public have explained that they only feed the Crows through the Winter. If anyone reading this does feed the Crows then it would be really appreciated if you refrain from it now as Spring is here. The nesting Season has begun and Crows are Omnivorous---- eating birds, frogs, mice and bird eggs.

OPEN SPACES LINKS:

We are beginning to establish links with other Open Spaces within York and CYC hold regular meetings where representatives from the various groups get together for support and ideas. We have established links with St. Nicks and Clifton Backies and there will be more for sure. If anyone is interested in attending the City of York Open Spaces meetings, which are held quarterly, then do contact us for more information. With volunteer work and bimonthly meetings, plus meetings with the Council Ecology dept, we are stretched for attendees from the FOHM for the Open Spaces meetings, who can then report back to us proceedings.

THE COPSE:

It is likely that the premature and excessive cutting of grass on the moor last year contributed to a reduction in the number of ground nesting birds, such as the Skylark and Meadow Pipit. This serves as a reminder that any loss of habitat on or around the moor should be a cause for concern. So, when it became known that the council planned to remove some or all of a copse at Hob Moor Oaks School, alarm bells began to ring. The school is adjacent to Hob Moor's north-western boundary where a new playing field was planned. This entailed the partial removal of a copse of about twelve trees. Consequently, during February, two FOHM committee members had an on-site meeting with the council

programme manager, to take a closer look and discuss the development. Following that meeting, a committee member put forward a proposal that could have avoided the removal of any trees. Not unexpectedly, the proposal was rejected and three trees were subsequently removed during half-term week. This incident flags up the need for us all to remain vigilant and report at the first opportunity any activity that threatens the moor's flora and fauna, including the publication of planning applications.

ASKHAM BOG:

Askham Bog (a local SSSI) is under threat from a proposed development which includes 516 homes. This could have an impact on the ecology of Hob Moor.

According to Yorkshire Wildlife Trust (YWT), it could mean:

Disturbing the water table

In order to accommodate new houses, the water level of the surrounding area has to be lowered. This could seriously damage wildlife of the nature reserve.

Connectivity

The proposed development site is the only green space adjacent to Askham Bog, which is surrounded on all other sides by roads, housing and the railway. It forms a vital corridor for wildlife to move in and out of the reserve. Development on this green space would completely isolate already-threatened wildlife populations, and could mean the loss of Askham Bog's wildlife.

Indirect effects

It is also inevitable that a development of this scale and proximity will lead to increases in both predation by domestic animals and damage from vandalism.

FOHM are additionally concerned because the Moor receives water from Askham Bog, a significant reduction or increase of which could adversely affect the moor's ecology.

Local councillors have objected on the grounds that:

- Adequate housing sites have already been identified in the draft Local Plan
- Major engineering works would be needed for the developer to claim that the bog can be protected
- Traffic would increase
- The land is green belt

Sir David Attenborough has also voiced his concerns, saying "York is exceptionally fortunate to have such a wonderful place within its boundaries - why would anyone want to put that at risk?"

Your support in objecting to the development would be greatly appreciated, as detailed in Candi Colbourn's letter to members dated 7th January.

MEMORIES OF HOB MOOR:

We know how much our members value the open space of Hob Moor we are lucky to have on our doorstep. We thought it would nice to hear about people's memories of this over the years. Starting with committee member Ann Gray. If you would like your memories featured in the newsletter then please write to us.

I started at Hob Moor Infant School the day it opened in September 1953. We were the first children to go all the way through the school to age 11.

During that time, as soon I was old enough to walk to school I walked across part of the Moor as a short cut from Thanet Road.

Before the flats at the end of Kingsway West were built there was only a track connecting Thanet Road to Kingsway West and at a certain time of the year the whole track was covered by baby toads or frogs. There were a lot of ponds around then.

Back at school, as I moved in to the Junior School, I spent the final two years in classes on the first floor overlooking the Moor. Beautiful views to day dream and not pay attention to the teacher.....

In those days' life was very much slower, roads were safe with not much traffic. We played out and were allowed to roam free and happily.

There were quite a few children, we all went on adventures together. Just one place we were not allowed to go to was the brick ponds. That didn't matter because when we were quite young one of the children's father was a nature boy and took us on walks around the brick ponds. It was just enchanting, water with reeds growing and water glistening and the paths were edged with pretty and fragrant dog roses and hawthorn blossom. Later some children would collect the hips to be made into rosehip syrup.

Back to the Moor, there was always something to see as we crossed it to the haunted house, which no longer exists, but it was just off the Moor near Holly Bank entrance.

My aunt lived on Holly Bank and we always went to see the pigs who were penned between the tunnel and the Cold Storage building which used to be at the North lane entrance.

To go back to school days, where the seat is situated near the garages on Ascot way, there has been something tipped which has raised the land quite a lot, therefore burying a carved stone I liked to stand on, on my way home from school. I'd love to find that again....

Hob Moor will always have special memories for me and apart from Our Lady's School and new housing, plus Lidl supermarket (previously the Swimming Baths), it is still there and still beautiful to me.

VACANCY :- EVENTS CO-ORDINATOR:

The volunteer position has arisen for a person willing to organise/contact our Events Leaders for booking purposes for our Calendar. Leaders/speakers information will be passed to you. This is a position for action only twice a year to organise our calendar for the Newsletter publication in April and September. Please consider if you could take on this role, contact us for more information via the Website www.fohm.org.uk or phone 07761085091.

EVENTS FEEDBACK:

WEST BANK SUMMER FAIR REPORT:

It was a hot day, without the usual wind, which makes for difficulty keeping things on our Stand from blowing away. We sold our Photo Cards to a total of £53, we signed up seven new members and sold two of Hob Moor's Ariel View as there was intrigue to find one's house on it.

DAWN CHORUS:

On the 22nd September 2018 ten of us met (including one child) for our first Autumn dawn chorus walk. At 6am it was quite dark and we wondered if we were too early and keen. However, the darkness soon disappeared and it became a very pleasant morning. The birds woke up, the Autumn is different than the Spring time for birds, they don't sing for a mate and the territory is sorted out.

We walked from Little Hob Moor through Mayfield and to the Railway Pond a new area for some people. The heron at the railway Pond entertained us while looking for its breakfast. Bullfinch, Goldfinch, Robins, Jackdaws, Gulls were seen.

Barry bishop once again was full of interesting information and knowledge.

BIRD WALK:

6am on April 29th seven people joined Barry Bishop from the RSPB for a bird walk. We met on Little Hob Moor, went through the tunnel into the woodland but had to re-trace our steps as the boundary beck water was too high to cross. Instead, we walked on to the main Moor and the recently arrived cows in North Lane pasture were surprised to see so many humans watching them!

It was a very quiet morning for birds but Barry pointed out the following: Bull finch, Chiffchaff, Dunnock, Blue tit, Crow (with an egg in its beak) Herring gull, Robin, Great tit, Wren, Black cap, Grey lagged goose, Songthrush, Mallards & Moorhen.

We finished the walk by walking over Little Hob Moor to the Railway Pond and thanked Barry for his additional amusing anecdotes.

The Bird Walk held last September was an early morning event for the chorus of all the bird species that enjoy the hedges and habitat areas of the Moor. A good number of members and the public joined Barry Bishop from the RSPB to spot and hear this chorus heralding the new day. Two more Bird Walks are booked for this year.

NATURE WALK:

On the evening of the 18th May sixteen adults and two children met by the tunnel on Little Hob Moor and made their way over to the copse where Ian Tomlinson gave a brief account of work being done there. Malcolm Cresser of Mayfield Community Trust then explained about the management of the trees on the meadow area. Steve Hart then lead the group over to the Railway Pond where we watched a seagull looking for fish. Steve then informed the group about the improving work done by the volunteers especially the fishing pegs. A very informative evening enjoyed by all.

BUTTERFLY WALK 28.07.2018 WITH TONY FAIRBURN:

The hot weather broke the previous day with heavy rain, lightning and thunder. So, the butterfly day was cool, sunny, windy & showery not what we wanted. Three people turned up for the walk. Two from the committee.

Tony brought along nets and an ID chart for us.

We saw eleven species of butterfly and a few moths. We started on Little Hob Moor, walked around the Mayfield Community Trust area and finished on the triangle.

Not the best of days for butterfly hunting but well worth doing.

BAT WALK 25.08.2018:

On a clear night fourteen people (including two children) gathered on Little Hob Moor for a night of bat detection. There was no wind and it wasn't cold, in fact, just right for this event. Once again Clair Merrifield led us on this walk and talk and gave us plenty of information about bats.

We all had bat detectors which were going constantly with activity. The two children found this a really interesting evening. The bat we saw and heard was the Pipistrelles, there are three species of this bat but, it would only be the common one we heard and saw in the dim light.

After spending a short time on Little Hob Moor, we then went through the tunnel on to the main Moor staying near the hedgerow.

LITTER COLLECTING:

On 10th November the event was attended by one person who was able to collect a number of spent fireworks. However, we have a lot of volunteer litter collectors that go at their convenience to the Moor and it has been really noticeable how clear of litter the area is. Thanks again to our army of litter collectors.

CHRISTMAS FOR DOG WALKERS:

Held at the Cross Keys, one person was able to attend. We will hold this event this coming year and hope more will be able to enjoy the time together.

CHRISTMAS DRINKS FOR MEMBERS:

Also held at the Cross Keys. A social gathering of eight, pulling up chairs together to talk all things Hob Moor, where it was really good to get fresh ideas for the future.

EVENTS:

DAWN CHORUS: Sunday 28th April 6am, meet at the Yellow Railings by the railway subway. Led by Barry Bishop from RSPB. Bring binoculars.

THISTLE CONTROL EVENT: End of April and monthly thereafter on parts of Hob Moor and North Lane Pasture. Details to follow via email to all members. Please come and help.

CLIFTON BACKIES: Sunday 12th May 2pm FOHM visit and guide us around Clifton Backies. Parking near the entrance, more parking at Aldi. Meet at main entrance to the Backies on Woodlands Chase.

GUIDED TOUR OF HOB MOOR: Sunday 19th May 2pm Friends of Clifton Backies visit Hob Moor. Meet at Hob Moor Drive entrance. Our visitors will be directed to park in the Hob Moor Drive area.

WEST BANK PARK SUMMER FAIR: Sunday 30th June 1-4pm. Our main event of the year, where volunteers are needed to help set up our stand and display or attend the stand for an hour with others. Please contact us if you can help on the day. Please visit us on the day, even if you aren't able to help, it is a lovely opportunity to meet and have a chat with members and listen to any ideas you have for the Friends.

BALSAM BASHING: Saturday 6th July 10am, meet at the Yellow Railings by the railway subway. Bring sturdy shoes or wellies and garden gloves for a good pulling session of this invasive weed that spreads once the seedheads pop. It doesn't take long to make quite an impact on the area that's covered with this plant.

BUTTERFLY WALK: Sunday 4th August 2pm, led by Anthony Fairburn. Meet at the Yellow Railings by the railway subway. This ever popular family event continues to grow in numbers. The excitement of the Butterfly nets and magnifying little boxes never ceases to amaze us at the beauty of these special little creatures.

HISTORY WALK: Monday 19th August at 7pm, meeting at the Tadcaster Road access to Little Hob Moor, with Elizabeth Smith. Come along and listen to Elizabeth, member of Friends of Hob Moor and Dringhouses Local History Society, tell us about the history of Hob Moor.

BAT WALK: Saturday 31st August 8.30pm, back by popular demand. Lead by Clair Merrifield. Bat detector boxes will be available to borrow for this event. Meet at the Yellow Railings by the railway subway.

DAWN CHORUS: Sunday 8th September 6am with Barry Bishop RSPB, meet at the Yellow Railings by the railway subway. This will be our second event of this kind this year, due to popular demand and continued interest. Bring your binoculars.

BIRD WALK: Saturday September 22nd 6am Lead by Barry Bishop. Meet at the Yellow Railings entrance to Rail underpass.

Thanks yet again to all our volunteer **Litter Collectors**, you do a great job.

We always welcome new members. To join please visit our website www.fohm.org.uk.

Contact Friends of Hob Moor

Follow us on Twitter www.twitter.com/HobMoorFriends

Find us on Facebook www.facebook.com/FriendsOfHobMoor/?fref=ts

Visit our website www.fohm.org.uk/contacts

Stephanie Luxton, Chair of Friends of Hob Moor 07761 085091 or 01904 593788

Useful contacts

To report damage etc. urgently on Hob Moor (24 hrs) contact CYC: 01904 625751

To report motor cyclists on Hob Moor contact North Yorkshire Police: 101

To report dog problems:

- If a dog bites a person, call the police and report the incident (101 for a non-emergency, 999 for an emergency)
- If a dog bites another dog, or any issues with people being harassed or intimidated by dogs, contact CYC: 01904 551551

For removal of fly-tipped debris, litter, graffiti etc. contact CYC: 01904 551551

Members updates: If you would like to be kept informed of news and events around Hob Moor we do have an email list. If you haven't been receiving these and would prefer a PDF copy of this newsletter as well as regular reminders of events then send your email address to the Friends of Hob Moor Membership Secretary at candic13@yahoo.co.uk