

Aymestrey Commons

Notes of public meeting held on 5 July 2022 at Aymestrey Parish Hall

Chair – Ian Goddard

Present Susanna Checketts, Katriona (?sorry), Carla Goodwin, Alan Goodwin, Garry Hicks, Hazel Bows, Martyn Booth, Denise Booth, Helen Hamilton, Dan Hurcomb, Mike Snoswell.

Apologies Nicola Kearton, Helga Douthwaite, James Douthwaite

Chairman's opening remarks

The aim of this public meeting is to put in place a committee of a Commons Association for three commons – Yatton Hill, Yatton Marsh and Ballsgate.

The aim of forming such an association is to manage the three commons positively for the benefit of commoners who may wish to exercise their rights, of residents and visitors to Aymestrey Parish, all of whom have rights of access to the commons, and of the indigenous flora and fauna which might thrive again in this unique habitat.

The result of the meeting on 17 May was a clear majority in favour of forming a commons association and even those who did not vote in favour did not vote against.

The first step is to put together a committee to take it forward. The four people who have guided the process so far were a group set up by the Parish Council. That group will have no further function once a new committee is formed.

I would suggest that the stakeholders are:

The owners

The commoners

The public, naturally focusing on the local community

The Parish Council (as representatives of the local community)

Naturalists, whether the interest is flora or wildlife.

Volunteers to form committee

From volunteers in the room and from questionnaires completed on 17 May, the following people form the first committee of the Aymestrey Commons Association:

Ian Banks

Martyn Booth

Susanna Checketts

Ian Goddard

Carla Goodwin

Helen Hamilton

Dan Hurcomb

Emma Kenchington

Nicola Kearton

Mike Snoswell

Ian Goddard was asked to chair until the next meeting; no other roles assigned.

And volunteers willing to assist:

Natalie Coull
Helga Douthwaite
James Douthwaite
David Dunn
Steph Dunn
Ian Gardner
Garry Hicks
Terry Middleton
Bronte Woodruff
Peter Wright

Decisions

After discussion, the following first steps were agreed:

To commence informal survey work, spotting and recording flora and fauna. This will start immediately since delay will lose information from this year. Martyn Booth is the lead, Ian Banks to help set up a site/email/social media page to which sightings can be reported and photos uploaded. Sightings from each common are welcomed, but need to be specific as to time and place.

The paths at Ballsgate common are impassable. Carla Goodwin agreed that she would flatten the growth over the existing paths with an ATV quad bike in order to open them up to allow access for surveying.

Yatton Hill Common was one of 12 Herefordshire commons included in the Community Commons Project, a partnership between Herefordshire Nature Trust, English Nature and Herefordshire Council. Ian Goddard will circulate to committee members the 2006 management plan which was then drawn up.

First meeting of ACA Committee will be at 7pm on 1st August at the Parish Hall.

Ian Goddard