

Present: *Committee members:* Ian Banks, Martyn Booth, Susanna Checketts, Ian Goddard (Chair), Dan Hurcomb

Apologies: Carla Goodwin, Richard Hammond, Nicola Kearton, Emma Kenchington, Mike Snoswell

Also attending: Natalie Covill, Helga Douthwaite, Bronte Woodruff

Minutes for meeting of 12th October : approved

Collation of current information - ongoing. Query: did we need historic information? Martyn had Aymestrey Parish records; more was to come from 2006 Management Plan. The Chairman noted that we did not have much information re species on Ballsgate Common.

Communications Martyn would write a piece in Aymestrey Matters, also in apca@aymestrey.org

Re Open Meeting – Dan noted that APCA needed to keep people engaged; possible tie-in with Parish Council Meeting mid-May. A notice re Open Meeting could be put into the March edition of Aymestrey Matters.

Constitution still in draft form, hopefully to be finished within the next two weeks.

Progress

Re lists of species: Martyn hoped to compile lists; 30 types had been recorded on Yatton Hill; Susanna had sent him/Ian Banks a Birdlist for the past c.15 years and a set of 14 photographs; Helga's list was to be passed on to him.

Re bat detector - borrowed from Hereford Wildlife Trust – Martyn & Richard Hammond had gone up on Yatton Hill, but had no results – some seen later near Yatton Marsh Farm. A further scan should take place in spring.

Re contact with Herefordshire Council The Chairman noted that this was still advisable, with APCA brought to their attention.

Re access to emails on website for Martyn; Ian Banks would put this in place.

Re invasive species – Martyn noted that there was Himalayan Balsam on Yatton Marsh Common West; this was best dealt with in May. There was Japanese Knotweed on Yatton Hill (Gatley needed to be approached as it was primarily on their land); this would have to be sprayed multiple times. Ground Elder was widespread; although it was suggested it benefitted some pollinators, it needed to be controlled. Regular cutting of some areas was recommended. Ragwort was not ubiquitous (and also a Cinnabar moth foodplant) – but needed monitoring.

Surveys

A major APCA objective: decent access for public/for monitoring of ecology for all 3 commons.

Yatton Hill; from the Hole to the top was mostly brambles; horses were unable to get through. *Clearing needed.*

Ballsgate: Carla had cleared the track from the top down to Pyon Lane (to Lye road); there were fallen trees further up. *Chainsaw probably necessary* . Trees/thorn bushes were completely overhanging track. *handsaw party needed.* [The circular grass loop had more or less disappeared.]

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Yatton Marsh; it was noted that Yatton Marsh Common East was formerly used for various summer purposes – what now?

Re HWT visit – Martyn had arranged a visit by a HWT representative to look at Yatton Marsh and Yatton Hill Commons and to seek advice. Sarah King was willing to meet APCA and had suggested 4 possible dates: 23rd, 25th, 28th November, 2nd December. Friday 25th November seemed most suitable – he would confirm this to members via email. He also hoped to get a list of funding opportunities. (After Parish Council meeting, Breedon could have funds for local projects, with each employee given a day p.a. for local work – *further investigation needed.*)

Re Yatton Marsh East: three drains were known to exist – *watercourse survey suggested* (possibly by Josh Hurcomb). Gatley could also be consulted.

Access – a *perimeter path was recommended* to allow monitoring and public access to Yatton Marsh Common East (preferably with dogs on leads). It was agreed that a path should be cut, probably in mid-spring if not earlier. It was suggested that APCA look into getting a qualified ecologist for a survey once path was cleared.

Work parties *to be arranged*

Suggested work dates: *to be sorted out*

Date of next meeting: **Wednesday 18th January 2023, 7pm.**