

Notes of Meeting at Beacon Hill Wood 2nd August 2017

In the course of updating the Beacon Hill Wood Management Plan for 2017 – 2022, Woodland Trust manager Joe Middleton consulted Historic England on the maintenance of the scheduled historic features in the wood, e.g. the Bronze Age barrows. He was advised of the desirability of preventing the regeneration of trees which could damage the archaeological features below ground. To discuss the possibility of using local volunteers, to clear this regrowth, members of the Beacon Hill Society were invited to a site visit in the wood on Wednesday 2nd August.

Joe met Society members plus two from Oakhill & Ashwick Local History Group and Parish Council. The party visited all ten barrows recorded in the archaeological reports [some very obvious, a couple rather questionable] and sites of other historic features such as the Parish boundary stone and wartime preparations. In the course of the walk the proposed clearing of areas of the beech plantation trees, to promote an increase in biodiversity, was also discussed.

It was agreed the most desirable activity should be the removal of saplings and young trees from the barrows; this could also be extended to the clearance of bramble and bracken to enhance their appearance. It was noted that on the largest central barrow a couple of oak and birch saplings had appeared and it was suggested that these could be removed and potted-up by Society members ready for planting in the proposed cleared areas. It was noticed the Parish boundary stone is being obscured by regrowth and some clearing was considered desirable.

The proposed works are best carried out in the winter and willing volunteers will be much appreciated. A date for the volunteer work day will be suggested by The Society at our next meeting on 9th August, 7.00pm at the Earth Science Centre, Stoke St Michael.