

Newsletter July 2020

FRIENDS OF BRIDE'S MOUND



C/O Glastonbury Opportunities, Unit 7 Abbey Mews, BA6 9DY. Email:
friendsofbridesnew@yahoo.co.uk

Dear Friends,

We hope you are all well and safe during these challenging times. Despite the lockdown due to the pandemic here in the UK, we have continued to work to make Bride's Mound, and the surrounding fields owned by the Friends, even more special than ever, and we hope you enjoy this news of what has been happening.

Forest Garden Project update



You may remember the news that we are at the early stages of planning a Permaculture Forest Garden project on an area of just under one acre of the Friend's Land.

In addition to the wonderful news about the generous donation we have received towards this project (as described in the AGM minutes below) we are also delighted to share with you that we are currently being advised by expert Martin Crawford of the Agroforestry

Research Trust, and as a result we are drawing up a draft layout for the tree canopy layout of the garden. On Martin's advice we have done a soil test and survey of the site.

We are also planning what we need to put in place to be in a position to plant the first, tree canopy, layer of the garden, including insurance, deer fencing, water supply, community liaison, funding applications etc etc.

Friendships

If you haven't already done so this year, we warmly invite you to renew your membership of Friends of Bride's Mound now (if you don't already pay your contribution with a standing order).

To renew your membership via Paypal, or to download a membership form to renew by post, please visit our website here: <https://www.friendsofbridesmound.com/friends.html>

If you set up a new standing order can you please e-mail us (friendsofbridesnew@yahoo.co.uk) so that we know your details and can send you newsletters.

Friends AGM

Owing to the pandemic lockdown we had to cancel our AGM in March. However, our constitution requires that we hold an AGM within 15 months of the previous one, and as we only need two directors to make a quorum, Serena and Miranda met on June 4th to hold the AGM, doing the required signing of previous minutes and electing the committee for the next year. We thought you would be interested to see the reports so we include them in full below:

Friends of Brides Mound Ltd AGM Minutes



CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT:

It has been a relatively quiet year, with no new archaeology or other major projects. We participated in the Beckery Village Open Day with a display in Bridie's Yard, and Joanne and Serena both led walk and talks up onto our fields and the chapel site. We also had a display at the Chamber of Commerce Tourism Day in the Town Hall in March. The walk from Chalice Well/White Spring to Brides Mound, and celebration on the Chapel Field at Imbolc, was the best attended yet and was a real delight

to participate in. Joanne's partner once again took some fantastic photos which you can see on our Facebook page. Many thanks indeed to him; this is the third year he has done this for us. After a year's break, we had a great team of stewards working at Glastonbury Festival who raised over a thousand pounds, which meant that once again we were able to make a lump sum payment on our loan from Triodos. Sadly, this year with lockdown there is no Festival, but we already have a full team booked and in all likelihood they will all still be keen to do it when the festival (hopefully) happens next year. This is our major annual fundraiser and has helped enormously in paying off the loan, so a big thank you to all the stewards. Thanks also to Lynda who joined the committee and has been looking after the books for us, as well as regularly going down to Brides Mound with leaflets for any visitors there. She also made a beautiful wooden sign for our gate. Many thanks also to Joanne, our Friendship secretary, who is starting our next project, which is to create a Forest Garden in the little horseshoe of land on the ridge next to the pond and bench. We have received a very generous donation which will help with the set up costs. And of course big thanks to Zeyla who is still our fantastically competent treasurer even though she has sadly moved away. To her joy she has moved nearer to her daughters, both of whom have just had babies. And we have recently been joined by Alison Scobie who is a very experienced project manager and proficient with IT, which will be very useful in the coming years. So the team is continuing from strength to strength, and I am very grateful indeed for all the love and care they put in to keeping the Friends flourishing.

FRIENDSHIP REPORT

The Friends of Bride's Mound members are invited to renew their membership each year at Imbolc, beginning February. In practice members renew, or join for the first time, throughout the year. If a new member joins late on in the year I count their membership from the following Imbolc as it seems a bit unfair to ask for a second subscription just a couple of months after their first payment. Two new people joined from late September on so are not included in these figures, but were added to the 2020 records and told that their current membership will run until Imbolc 2021.

The 2019 Friends:

Members who paid by cash, cheque or PayPal:	22 friends
Annually or monthly paying members:	13 friends
'Life memberships' taken from Jaine Raine's original membership records: one person also counted in the members in the first category so not double counted in the total:	4 friends
Total (please note double counted member!)	38 friends

TREASURER'S REPORT

The Company accounts for 2018 – 2019 were done by Zeyla, sent to Gitti, our accountant, and presented for approval at a prior committee meeting for approval and signing by Serena. Our major sources of income were similar to previous years, including stewarding money of £1,150 for Glastonbury festival shown under fundraising.

Sources of Income:	£
Subscriptions	1,257
Donations	220
Land Subsidy	2,277
Grazing fees	1,232
Fundraising	1,428
Other income	29

Which makes a total income of £6,443. Our regular expenses were just under £1,500, and are well covered by the subscriptions, land subsidy and grazing fees. There were no exceptional costs during the year, so we paid a lump sum of £3,000 off the Triodos loan, which now stands at £17,740, and kept sufficient funds to cover various projects on the horizon. We also recently paid £750 for various essential tree and hedge work, and have engaged a consultant to advise on Joanne's forthcoming Forest Garden project.

LAND MANAGEMENT REPORT

A lot of tree pruning, hedge cutting and pollarding was completed this year. Some large branches pruned from a willow that were obscuring the view from the bench to the chapel mound, pruned off; hedge cut on the boundary between our land and the mound, also to improve the view from the bench by the pond; the willow beside the gate at the end of the mound, the well stone end of our land, needed a lot of pruning back

from the gate and has allowed light in so that the very old thorn tree can put out new growth, after it was pruned a few years back; and the large pollards in the middle of the land pollarded. They were becoming damaged by the weight of their branches because they had been pollarded in the past.

The field maple and alder that were planted last winter had to be watered every other day, to get them through the unusually hot, dry spring and may need to be watered through the summer. Trying to save the cherry on the avenue that was planted to replace a rowan a couple of years back. But there might just be something wrong with that spot. Three of the willows, that we planted some years ago, on the boundary with Mr Parsons' land, have suddenly died. I think the water table may have dropped too much. The rhyne between the first and second fields has been unusually low too which is surprising after the wet winter but I know the Brue Drainage Board have done a lot of work at Langport that may have affected the water levels here. There is also a large willow that has fallen into the first field and will need cutting back. We have been burning off all the piles of hedge trimmings, pruning and pollarding ourselves to keep the costs down.

The plan for a forest garden is still under discussion. We may lose approximately £115.00 a year in income by taking the proposed area out of the Grass and Basic payment incomes. (based on 0.78 acres (3170 sq metres) of our 24.44 acres, with Basic payment currently at £2,281.91 and Grass at £1,232.00). I suspect the acreage will end up being a bit more and loss of income a bit more but it looks manageable as long as farmers are still happy to rent the grass keep.

We were all ready to go ahead with the gate at our entrance (after sending letters out to interested parties asking them to contact us if they had any objections and receiving no replies, one verbal go ahead from Mr. Parsons' daughter). Then Covid 19 hit and Pete had to isolate with his wife who is expecting twins so are waiting for his response on how long that may be. Have had "no parking" signs up and so far no permanent trouble with parking. I have moved someone on twice and the farmer has had no problem with access. We got through all winter and spring with no campers on our land and then a couple of women arrived with a tent two weeks ago. There is much more of a problem at the bottom of the mound in the orchard, but they are treating the land with respect.

ELECTION OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Miranda and Serena voted in the committee members en block:

Miranda Bruce as Chairperson;

Serena Roney-Dougal as Secretary;

Joanne Mudhar as Membership Secretary;

Zeyla Alarcon as Treasurer;

Lynda Boden as Bookkeeper and Fundraiser;

Jaine Raine as Committee Member.

Alison Scobie was co-opted as a Committee Member.

Serena will ask Jane Marshall, Liz Leyshon and Jon Cousins if they are willing to continue as co-opted members.

APPOINTMENT OF THE ACCOUNTANT

It was agreed that Gitti is excellent and we agreed to retain her as our accountant.