

Friends of Hopwas Wood

Issue Number 15

April 2015

Annual General Meeting

The AGM will be held on:

TUESDAY 14th APRIL 2015

The meeting will commence at:

7.30 p.m.

at the

**Coton and Hopwas Social Club, School Lane,
Hopwas.**

The meeting will elect the committee for the coming year and reports will be presented for the past year including an update of current activities affecting the Wood. It is important that there is a good attendance by Members so that views can be aired and the current working of the Friends discussed to ensure that the elected committee has a clear mandate for action.

In accordance with the Constitution, nominations for Members of the Committee should be submitted to the Secretary 72 hours before the meeting and supported by at least two Members and bear the signature of the person nominated indicating their willingness to stand.

If you have any agenda items please contact the Chairman.

Following the business part of the meeting there will be a talk from a member of the Woodland Trust about ancient woodland.

Committee Activities

As you know the Committee's main activity over the year was the monitoring of the Minerals Local Plan following the consultation in the summer. This resulted in the Committee being made aware of Tarmac Lafarge's proposal to include the Wood in the Local Plan we immediately notified our Members and the local press. As a consequence the concern over part of the Wood being lost to quarrying became a national issue. The support it generated in protecting the Wood was overwhelming and resulted in Tarmac Lafarge withdrawing their proposal. It was a great success. Importantly through the process the status of the Wood as ancient woodland was clarified such, that Staffordshire County Council amended their records to show that the whole of the Wood is ancient woodland. In addition we now have direct contact with the Woodland Trust who is campaigning for all ancient woodland to have protection in law. The Committee will continue to keep

a watching brief on the Wood particularly as to what Tarmac Lafarge may want to do in the future.

If you have any issues regarding that part of the Wood owned by Lafarge you can contact their Estates manager Nick Atkins.

Tel: 01902382083. Mobile: 07702635323.

Email: Nick.Atkins@tarmac.co.uk

Minerals Local Plan

Staffordshire County Council published the Minerals Local Plan last summer for consultation followed by a further consultation on the additional site proposals that had been submitted following the publication of the Local Plan. Whilst at the present point in time there is no concern over the inclusion of Hopwas Wood in the Plan this may change in the future and the progress of the Plan will need to be monitored until it is adopted.

The new Plan will set out the vision, objectives and spatial strategy for future mineral related development within Staffordshire over the next 15 years. The final draft Plan for formal consultation is due out in June/July 2015 after which it will be submitted to the Secretary of State for examination. The examination is programmed for March/April 2016 and the County Council hope that the Plan will be adopted in October 2016. So there is a long way to go before the Plan is adopted, hence the need to monitor the progress of the Plan.



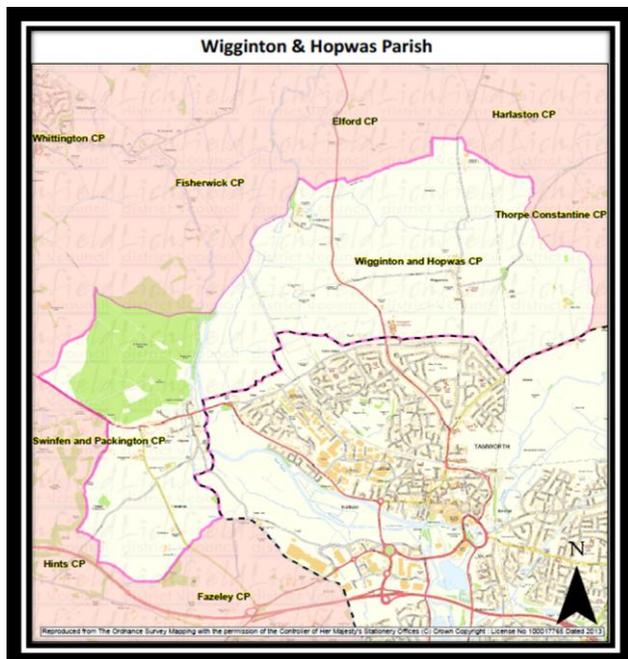
Neighbourhood Plan

In February last year the Wigginton and Hopwas Parish Council applied to Lichfield District Council requesting the Parish of Wigginton and Hopwas be designated a Neighbourhood Area for the purposes of producing a Neighbourhood Plan. Neighbourhood Plans can be used to protect local amenities such as Hopwas Wood, decide where local housing and other development should go and can influence how traffic and recreation

is managed. Following formal designation a steering group was formed and the Friends Chairman is currently a member of the group.

To date work has progressed on the Neighbourhood Plan to a point where a draft has been prepared. This will go out for consultation and will be available to view and comment on at two drop-in sessions on Thursday 26th. March between 19.30-20.30 at Thomas Barnes Primary School, Hopwas and on Saturday 28th. March between 10.30-11.30 at St. Leonard`s School, Wigginton. The Plan will be available to view on the Parish Council`s website. www.wiggintonandhopwas.co.uk . Importantly the Plan includes a policy to protect Hopwas Wood in perpetuity as ancient woodland.

The Plan will be developed further and will be submitted to Lichfield District Council for examination later in the year and if accepted it will be subject of a referendum and if more than 50% vote `Yes` the Plan will be adopted. If you have any queries regarding the Plan please contact the Chairman.



Membership & Subscriptions

The membership currently stands at 122, an increase of 53 since last November primarily because of the issue of the proposal to include the Wood in the Minerals Local Plan. The Committee would like to thank you all for your support.

In line with the Constitution the membership and setting subscriptions for 2015/2016 will be discussed at the AGM.

Web Site

As you are aware our web site with the domain name of friendsofhopwaswood.co.uk has resulted in us gaining new members. The site has a number of pages as follows: Home, About Us, History, News, Newsletters, Photos, Apply for Membership, and

Constitution. The News page is a key part of the site as it provides details of activities as they occur. If you have not looked at the site yet please do and let the Committee know what you think at the AGM.

The Committee are conscious of the fact that not everyone has direct access to a computer but that a number of Members do have e-mail addresses and it would be helpful if information could be sent direct to members via e-mail so if you have an e-mail address please pass it onto the Treasurer Martin Handley (mhandley1@aol.com)



Feedback

It is hoped that this newsletter has been informative and a further newsletter will be published in the summer. The Committee would welcome any comments and views from Members and these can be forwarded to any Committee Member.

Current Committee Members

Chairman: Ray Vanstone (Tel:07773971077 or rayvanstone@btinternet.com)
Vice Chairman: Lorna Bushell
Secretary: Barbara Stubbs
Treasurer: Martin Handley (mhandley1@aol.com)
Tom Jackson
Keith Anderton

