

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SEFTON COAST WOODLAND
OWNERS GROUP
TUESDAY 16TH JANUARY AT 2.00 P.M.**

**THE NATIONAL TRUST COUNTRYSIDE OFFICE, BLUNDELL AVENUE,
FORMBY**

- 1. Present:** Nick Roche, Mersey Forest Team; Richard Topley, Forestry Commission; Major Bill Hunter, Reserve Forces Training Association, Altcar; Andrew Brockbank, National Trust; Sister Eileen, St Josephs, Fiona Whitfield, Lancashire Wildlife Trust/Red Alert N England; Ian Kippax, Hesketh Golf Club; Alwyn Williams, Mersey Forest Team;
- 2. Apologies:** Sally Orrit – People & Wildlife Officer Red Alert N. England; Rachel Northover, Sefton Coast and Countryside; Cllr Anne Ibbs, Sefton Council; Mike Downey, Natural England; Chris Whittle, Royal Birkdale Golf Club, Bob Wagstaff, St Lukes Church; Chris Barker, Formby Golf Club; Jean Ryan, Formby Ladies Golf Club; Steve Dean, Lark Hill Farm House; Mike Mercer, S&A Golf Club
- 3. Minutes of last meeting:** Accepted as a true record
- 3. Matters arising**

It was noted that no progress had been made with MFRS Fire Plan for Sefton mainly due to industrial action.
- 4. Squirrel Pox Virus**

FW provide an update on the situation relating to the Squirrel Pox Virus outbreak in the Ainsdale area. Training sessions provided for volunteers at Ainsdale and Formby, and tremendous support has been given in monitoring sections of the woodland for diseased squirrels.
- 5. Achievements**

NR urged all submission of outstanding forms. Discussion followed concerning where to include items of work completed in Jan/ Feb 2007 if they related to the previous Forest Year (i.e. 2006 calendar year). It was agreed that items programmed for 2006 (Year 4) and completed in January/ February 2007 may be included in achievements for Year 4. **ACTION ALL**

The importance of reporting variance to the Sefton Coast Woodlands Owners Group was stressed and is a requirement for maintaining the Forestry Commission Felling Licence. **ACTION ALL**
- 6. Forest Plan Review**

NR explained the edits to the main monitoring document and the summary document both of which were circulated. These documents provide an excellent record of the achievements of the Woodland Owners and the engagement of residents and visitors with the Sefton Coast Woodlands.

NR asked for suggestions as to how these achievements can best be reported back to the community. RT suggested that short case studies could be prepared which could link to site events or walks through the forest area.

Most present expressed the view that the full document should be widely available as it illustrated the breadth of work and engagement being undertaken.

Discussion followed about the need for a meeting to plan two strands of work:

- 1) consultation on the results achieved against objectives
- 2) reporting of results and stakeholders comments on the work to date.

This needs to be 'signed off' by the community of interest by late 2007. It was agreed that a meeting will be held of those able to assist in planning the review process for the coming year. NR to co-ordinate the date and venue.

ACTION NR

7. Owner Updates

- St Josephs, small woodland owner but working to enhance the woodlands bordering the care home.
- Altcar, Thinning work completed and some underplanting taking place. BH commented that red squirrel numbers were particularly high this year.
- LWT completing thinning work and planting in area where white poplar has been cleared.

7. AoB

RT announced that FC grants are still open for application including woodland management, planning and assessment grants.

8. Date of Next Meeting, TBC

BH kindly extended an invitation to meet at Altcar on Thursday 17th May 2007, 2:00pm.