

AGENDA ITEM 9

Getting to Know Bernwood

To: Buckinghamshire Historic Environment Forum

Date: 22nd September 2004

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A. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1 To advise the Forum of progress with the Getting to Know Bernwood Project.

B. PROPOSED ACTION

- 2 **The Committee is invited to:**

NOTE progress with the Getting to Know Bernwood Project

C. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 3 Funding is provided by the Heritage Lottery Fund with match funding from the County Council. The total budget is £53,576. The project will run until the end of August 2005

D. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 4 Getting to Know Bernwood is one strand within the wider Bernwood Project currently being promoted by the County Council. It aims to improve public awareness of their local historic environment, with a particular emphasis on the heritage of the Royal Forest, and to provide opportunities for active participation. Rebecca Wilcox, formerly Community Archaeologist for Boston Borough Council, was appointed to the post of Community Archaeologist in May 2004.
- 5 A consultation questionnaire was sent to 134 groups with an interest in the Bernwood area. Meetings have been held with National Trust officers, Brill Parish Council, the National Trust custodian of Claydon House, the tenant of Boarstall Tower, the chairman of Otmoor Archaeological and Historical Society, the head teacher of Brill Primary School and Oakley parish council to discuss involvement in the project. The project was launched at a public event held for National Archaeology Days on Saturday 17 July organised in partnership with the National Trust. Almost 100 people went on tours around the coaching inn, took a heritage trail around Aylesbury, made pottery or looked at aerial photographs. Research has been undertaken for two display boards, at Grange Farm Quanton and Notley Abbey. Popular archaeological activities for families were taken to the County Show. A programme of events

was organised for Heritage Open Days (10th-13th September) with accompanying leaflet on the 19 sites which were open to the public for free. The following events are in preparation for autumn 2005 (provisional):

- Talk to Aylesbury Vale Area Local Committee
- Assembly at Brill Primary School to launch a finds research project
- Talk on project at County Museum
- Stall at Bucks Local History Fair (9th October)
- Guided walk of Chetwode

Further site-based archaeological activities and an educational resource are at an earlier stage of development.

A consultative steering group meeting is to be held at which there will be an opportunity for partners to comment on the project's proposed programme.

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