

NOTES OF A MEETING ON PORTMOAK MOSS

HELD IN THE PORTMOAK VILLAGE HALL - 15th May 1995

The meeting was chaired by Bob Spilsted and Karen McDonnell and was attended by members of the public.

CURRENT POSITION

Jill Aitken of Woodland Trust gave a report on the current situation. The main points are summarised as follows :-

- Forest Enterprise has accepted Woodland Trust as a potential purchaser who will be given an opportunity to buy before the wood is offered for public sale.
- The price quoted by the District Valuer is £75,000 and Woodland Trust have indicated that we should aim to raise £80,000 so that there is a management fund available at the start.
- Woodland Trust would aim to raise 75% of the purchase price and the community would need to raise the remaining 25%.
- There is a deadline quoted by Forest Enterprise of September 1995 but it is considered that this could be extended if we are near to the target.
- It was suggested that the money could be raised through pledges. This is a process whereby money is pledged, but not redeemed (called in) until the target is attainable.
- £8,000 had already been pledged to Woodland Trust.

There followed discussion on the points raised by Jill. Although there was general concern that the price was so high, the consensus view was to go ahead and try to raise the funds.

OPTIONS

Bob Spilsted gave a brief presentation on his view of the options available. In summary these were :-

- (1) Purchase the wood at the price asked by Forest Enterprise.
- (2) Obtain an independent valuation and, if less than (1), make an offer based on this.
- (3) Obtain an Access Agreement in perpetuity, via the District Council.
- (4) Object to the sale on the basis that the property was bought with public funds and should be retained in public ownership.

A further option was proposed as follows :-

- (5) Object to the sale on the basis of flora or fauna being of special interest.