

FRIENDS OF MEADOW PARK

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON 23RD NOVEMBER 2011 AT THE PARISH OFFICE, EAST LEAKE , COMMENCING 7.30 P.M.

Present : Allen Barlow (Chairman), Trevor Jones (Secretary {minutes}), Conrad Oatey (Treasurer) and 23 Members

Apologies for absence: Andrew Sandford, Peter Bloxham, Peter Rapley, Jenny and John Fisher, Neil Hunter, Prunella and Derek Bagshaw, Elaine Padden.

Minutes of Annual General Meeting of 24th November 2010 had been approved by FMP Committee in January and recently circulated to Members. They were approved as a true record.

Matters Arising from the minutes:

Eric Bryson asked if the large stone in Gibson's Field had been raised. Conrad replied that it had not, but that it had acquired a hieroglyphic.

Membership stands at 108.

Chairman's Report- See Appendix A.

Activities Report - See Appendix A(2)

Secretary's Report -See Appendix B

Treasurer's Report - See Appendix C.

Bird Box Report - See Appendix D

Flowers Report - See Appendix E

Election of Officers. Conrad Oatey resigned from the position of Treasurer and Peter Bloxham from the Committee. Both were thanked for their contributions over several years.

Andy Denker was elected Treasurer.

Kevin Gibbons and Lorna Pilbin were elected as Co-opted Members.

The Committee for 2012 will be:

Chairman: Alan Barlow

Secretary: Trevor Jones

Treasurer: Andy Denker

Elected Members: Mollie Jacques, John Adcock, Neil Hunter, Andrew Sandford, Kevin Shaw.

Co-opted Members: Marie Males, Deb Slade, Lorna Pilbin, Kevin Gibbons.

ELPC Representative: Richard Jenks

RBC Representative: Paul Phillips.

Tree Report John Adcock was asked for an impromptu report. He said that thanks to the watering programme mounted during the dry weather the arboretum trees were mostly surviving, but the yew, juniper and sessile oak had died. Notts C C had undertaken to replace them free of charge.

Change to the constitution. Mollie proposed to replace the wording of **Section E, Clause 1** with the following:-

"Individual Membership of the Association shall be open to any person over the age of sixteen years interested in furthering the objects and who has paid the annual subscription laid down from time to time by the Executive Committee. Family Membership shall be open to parent(s) and their children under

the age of sixteen years on payment of the appropriate adult individual membership subscription plus half the adult subscription for each child over the age of ten years”.

This was carried unanimously. Lorna thought that some pupils of Harry Carlton School might be interested in Duke of Edinburgh Awards work. There was a feeling that the school might not be interested, but Conrad pointed out that the awards were made through a school, not by it, and a fresh enquiry could be made. Conrad said that FMP members Accident Insurance cover extended from 16 to 80 years of age (inclusive). There was no upper age limit on the Public Liability insurance. Unaccompanied children under 16 years of age were not allowed to participate in Saturday morning or other activities unless accompanied by a parent.

Open Forum.

Eric Bryson asked if a bat survey had been completed. Conrad said that he was not aware of one, although experts from Leicester had made a limited survey under the railway bridge a few years ago. Kevin Gibbons thought that a survey could be carried out in association with moth trapping.

New picnic seats in Play Field had not been placed near the established litter bins. Alan said that in the case of the Play Field this was to avoid hemlock near the old site, and that a bin could be re-sited. ELPC were discussing who would empty an additional bin, which was available for installation beside the bench in Gibson's Field.

Denis Fox related that he had been asked to design Frank Kirk Way to run near trees at the south edge of Gibsons's Field, and not along the desire line as he had wished.

Eric Bryson asked why the wetland scrape was still included in the Management Plan. Alan replied that it had been considered and fortunately, in view of the weather conditions, rejected for 2011, but it remained a possible project for the future.

John Adcock was of the opinion that no new trees should be planted. Mowing in July was important in the establishment of authentic wild flower species. Green hay was useful in this context. Kevin was of the opinion that some areas could be cut later in the year. Planting of flower seeds in soil squares laboriously cleared of turf had been successful in some cases.

Eric Bryson thought that there was a place for a mycologist on FMPC. Trevor said that the Committee was composed of volunteers. No mycologist had volunteered and no one knew of one resident in our village. Perhaps Eric could study the subject.

Any other business.

Mollie described the Parish Plan, a new version of which was currently in preparation. Vicenta Rose, Secretary of East Leake Community Planning Group, responsible for collecting opinion and evidence for the Plan, described the process. This development covers all areas of the village activity and includes leisure, environment, housing, business, agriculture, crime prevention, young and old people health, wellbeing and so on. These areas were being examined in detail by sub-groups. Lorna Pilbin volunteered to represent FMP over environmental issues

The Management Plan, Meadow Park Map and Rushcliffe Community Awards 2011 Diploma were circulated during the meeting.

Ian Weekley exhibited a map of bird box locations and photographs of birds' eggs.

The formal meeting ended at 8.30 p.m.

Date of next meeting. Wednesday 21st November 2012

APPENDIX A (1) CHAIRMAN'S REPORT (ALAN BARLOW)

In compiling this report I found myself feeling really upbeat about the state of our 'friends group'. Unlike the country as a whole we are solvent. We are staffed by volunteers and, most important of all, we are optimistic about our future. We have demonstrated that we can work in harmony with our Parish Council and get things done. We shared nearly 400 hours of manual work between us over the past year. In addition untold hours of clerical work were completed by various committee members. I would especially like to highlight the enormous amount of work which went into preparing a new management plan for Rushcliffe Borough Council, the owners of Meadow Park.

This year we received an award from Rushcliffe for making an outstanding contribution to our community. We were nominated by East Leake Parish Council. A couple of years ago we applied for a large grant from the Local Improvement Scheme administered by Nottingham County Council. That was successful and many of the changes you see have been facilitated by those funds.

What have we planned for the future? We will continue to nurture our new arboretum. We have just had the driest six month period in the last century and yet a nucleus of members carried something in the region of 1500 gallons of water over a 23 week period. Now that's investing for the future. The return on that investment will gradually mature over our lifetimes. 2012 might be an opportune time to sponsor one of those trees. We will publicise that programme later in the New Year. This year Wildlife Walks were introduced and these will be continued through 2012. These covered birds, trees and flowers. Our enthusiastic lepidopterist may add butterflies next year. Also high on our agenda is the establishment of wildflower meadow. Seed was sown last year but with no rain we know we will revisit that project next year. Our two new picnic benches should be well used. Any day now should see the installation of another large information board. Hedgerow management will be continuing through the winter.

Morale in our team is strong and I think this year, in particular, we have had to pull together-both literally and figuratively. I am delighted to welcome some new members who bring specialised knowledge to our group. We will be making good use of that knowledge as we debate the best way forward. My only disappointment is that the heaviest users of the park, namely dog owners, appear so under represented on our work parties. They obviously enjoy the environment we are helping to create. Why not resolve to offer a couple of hours during the year to see what we get up to?

Finally I wish to thank Trevor, our secretary, Conrad, our treasurer and all the committee for their work this year and for those of you who have contributed to the years programme.

APPENDIX A(2) (ALAN BARLOW)

Friends of Meadow Park

Prescribed (i.e. in the Management Plan) activities undertaken Nov 2010-Oct 2011

- Prepare annual activity plan
- Conduct routine litter picking and general maintenance
- Maintain and monitor Elcid web pages and forum
- Fencing and gate maintenance
- Site information and interpretive boards
- Encourage native species and habitat development
- Conduct wildflower survey
- Remove 5m of shrub on southern bank of Kingston Brook
- Turf removal and seeding with wildflower mix
- Introduce wildflower plugs
- Spread seed rich hay on meadows in selected areas
- Introduce hay rattle (*Rhinanthus minor*) in selected areas

- Continue programme of hedge laying
- Plant local provenance trees and shrubs
- Maintain tree saplings
- Infill and supplement tree planting with native varieties
- Establish woodland plants with plugs
- Coppice rotation
- Plant and maintain arboretum
- Control unwanted plant species in selected areas
- Promotional activities at ELPC AGM and Village Carnival
- Publishing of FMP Calendar
- Ongoing application for funds to support work of FMP
- Develop an up to date Management Plan in conjunction with ELPC and RBC
- Wildlife identification walks. Avian, floral and arboreal
- Explore with ELPC concept of tree sponsorship
- Clarification of child membership ruling
- Clarification of insurance regulations
- Publish regular newsletter and contributions to East Leake Times
- Establish and maintain good working relationship with ELPC and their staff

Prescribed activities not undertaken Nov 2010-Oct 2011

- Preparation of educational leaflets and materials
- Scientific survey of wildlife in Meadow Park
- Pollard willows
- Plant willow wands to north of Kingston Brook
- Develop a proposal to create wetland habitat (debated and deferred)

Non-prescribed activities undertaken Nov 2010-Nov 2011

- Maintenance of shrub border at the Sculpture entrance
- Further application for funding for Trim Track in Play Field (unsuccessful to date)
- Removal of hazardous materials from Kingston Brook (metal work, seats, glass containers inter alia)
- Notification to Police of vehicular usage within the park and evidence of drug misuse

Friends of Meadow Park Activity November 2010-October 2011

Hours of work completed by members. Hours spent on clerical matters not included.

The Arboretum

Watering from 27 April-14 October

13 members participated on a rota basis

Additional hours volunteered

115.5

Other work

Spreading seed rich hay

Pulling Ragwort

Tree maintenance

Shrubbery, plant maintenance

Tree stake repairs

Copse trimming

Removal of American Dogwood

Additional hours volunteered

34.5 hours

Saturday morning work parties

FMP Saturday work sessions	Activity	Number of volunteers
2010		
Nov	Hedge laying. Western side of Bateman Field. 3 follow on work sessions	10
Dec	Hazel coppicing. Gibson's Field.	8
2011		
Jan	Nest box check. Removal of BMX track in Gibson's Field.	12
Feb	Clearance of 5m on south bank Kingston Brook. Coppice and plant willows Gibson's Field	12
March	Removal of turf squares Bateman Field. Pull dock in Oak Meadow. Early season work on shrubbery.	Up to 15
April	Spring clean. Scarify stripped areas. Sow seed. Plant native Bluebells in the green. Clear round newly set hawthorn whips by Bateman Road entrance.	15
May	Clearance of overgrown pathways. Removal of BMX track in Stonebridge field.	8-10
June	Remove thistles, dock and Ragwort in Oak Meadow. Slash Hemlock on north bank of Kingston Brook in Play Field.	9
July	Remove Ragwort in Oak, Little Meadow and especially Stonebridge Field.	6
Aug	Rest Period	
Sept	Clearance 3m wide dog-leg through Hall Field prior to flailing.	10
Oct	Thinning of overgrown copse on southern boundary Oak Meadow.	6
Nov	Hedge laying preparation.	
Dec	Hedge laying.	

Additional hours worked

236 hours

APPENDIX B SECRETARY'S REPORT (TREVOR JONES)

"Keep your eye on the big picture and you won't go far wrong"

Finalisation of the Meadow Park Management Plan, first drafted in 2004, occupied much of my year.

Rushcliffe Borough Council included 49 prescriptions (precise instructions) on what was to be done as part of their Draft Management Plan. A subcommittee of Peter Bloxham, Andy Denker and myself found that 30 applied to Friends of Meadow Park and sorting them out formed the basis of the Activities Plan and Activities Report.

It was known that RBC had been unable to carry out all of its own prescriptions during the years to 2009 when it was responsible for management. Much of Lagoon Field was reverting to scrub. In addition, the recommendation by South Notts Wildlife Trust that all hedges be laid by the end of 2012 had never been adopted and incorporated into their Plan. Unexpected turn-ups included finding that the list of plant species allowed to be introduced included some not native to Notts and the traditional Midland type of grassland ("MG4"-Meadow Foxtail and Great Burnet) we are working towards. Frank Kirk Way, the public right of way named in honour of our benefactor, had been allowed to disappear some years go. We now have an accurate map, thanks to Andrew Sandford.

These few negatives are made against a background of massive positives. Meadow Park is a great success. RBCs Draft Management Plan was a visionary and comprehensive document.

The Plan is long term and there has to be flexibility, but it is felt that each prescription should be adhered to unless there is a defined reason not to. It is accepted that situations arise for which there are no prescriptions.

Prescription 2b ii) "Produce a list of educational projects and circulate to local educational establishments and groups(EPLC, FMP, RBC)" has not been acted on. It could be worth pursuing, even at primary school level, if we are to attract the next generation of Members. Bonding with Nature can occur at a young age.

I should like to thank fellow Committee Members for bearing with me. I have raised the matter of the unfinished Management Plan and the need for an accurate map several times over the past two years! Debbie, the consultant secretary, must be thanked for her guidance and support. Conrad's leaving will be a big loss. Lastly our Chairman, Alan, for judicious impartiality and never failing to get through Committee Meetings inside two hours.

APPENDIX C TREASURER'S REPORT YEAR ENDING 31/10/11 (CONRAD OATEY)

2010/11 proved to be another positive year financially. Membership income rose by about £76 and donations by about £64. Sales were comparable to last year, but fundraising was about £25 lower. Two Rushcliffe Conservation grants were received during the year to fund tools and seeds, totalling £233.12. Overall, income at £1,139.92 was £90 lower than in 2009/10, because fewer grants were requested.

Expenditure at £819.67 was about £100 higher than last year. Savings of nearly £200 were made through not needing to purchase insurance, since volunteers are now covered under the Parish Council's insurance. Project expenditure was around £100 lower than in 2009/10, but cost of sale materials was substantially higher because of the purchase of calendars, many of which were still to be sold at year end. It should be noted that the costs associated with the Arboretum and the new path were met by Notts County Council and do not appear in these accounts.

The surplus for the year of £320.25, added to the opening funds, results in a very healthy balance of £1,644.97 being carried forward to help fund the coming year's activities.

APPENDIX D NEST BOX REPORT (IAN WEEKLEY)

Firstly, thanks to Eric and Ann for the survey, and particularly also to Eric for the repairs and conversions before the start of the nesting season.

We therefore began with 14 tit boxes and 5 open-fronted ones. Ten of the tit boxes were used and it was not obvious why the other 4 were not, since they had been in earlier years. Reassuringly, all 4 of the re-sited boxes were used.

Of the open-fronted ones, the ¼ front had been smashed to pieces, the two ½ fronts were again not used, but both ¾ ones were - though quite possibly by tits rather than anything more exotic.

So of 18 eventually available two-thirds were used. It's not possible to tell how many broods successfully fledged, though there were addled eggs in two and a dead nestling in a third. The eggs of many of these small birds are not particularly distinctive and can vary anyway; one nest of 4 addled eggs had no two exactly alike.

We removed the vandalised box and one of the unsuccessful open fronts, and repaired and re-sited them. We don't therefore see a need for a full working party this year or any major re-sitings other than those we've done.

For those interested, there is a map of the locations and it would be very useful to know what activity you see around them.

APPENDIX E FLOWERS IN 2011 (ANN WEEKLEY)

An interesting year to say the least! On January 1st the subsoil was frozen (you may recall it was rather chilly last December!) and night-time temperatures were 5 degrees below freezing for the first eleven days of the month. Nothing was in bloom, though that old 'toughie' white dead-nettle had a bud that was showing colour. By February however, it, the white dead-nettle, was flowering in many places in the Park and snowdrops were also putting on a good show. By the end of the month the weather was much warmer but it forgot to rain!

By March, 11 species were flowering. Most widespread of these were the lesser celandines, glossy yellow flowers spreading into the rye grass and winning! The following month, April, the flowers (22 species) were very luxuriant, as they were in 2010. In particular, Hall Field had a stunning patch of germander speedwell and another of field forget-me-not. In May the trend continued (38 species) with several species making inroads into the grassy areas – the most spectacular being great burnet, a plant described on the Notts Wildlife Trust website as being rare in the county. Ground ivy, cut-leaved cranesbill and creeping buttercup were all winning the 'grass battle'. Needless to say so were the docks, thistles and nettles, as well as hogweed and hemlock!

The great excitement in May, at least for those of us who are excited by such things, was the discovery, initially in Little Meadow and subsequently in Stonebridge Field, of yellow rattle. Not only a new species but one which is semi-parasitic on grass which it weakens, and so even more species have a chance of competing. Its seeds are notoriously difficult to germinate but we managed that as well!

By June the lack of rain was manifesting itself in a dry stream bed (Sheepwash), and a lot of tired looking, under-sized flowers which had a much shorter than average flowering season. Of the 51 species recorded, only docks, thistles, ragwort, white clover and rosebay willowherb bucked the trend! The same was true in July. The species total was 59 but many, particularly the more 'interesting' ones, were solitary specimens. In August, (40 species), it was a similar story. The most healthy looking plants, chiefly mallow, red and white campion and ox-eye daisy, were in the newly sown patches in the arboretum. There were those of us who thought only docks were growing there!!

Flowers in September (35) and most of October (24) repeated the pattern. Small tired specimens which were difficult to find. So far in November I've seen 12 species. They look a little happier than they did in October.

It is difficult to know which species have been lost or gained, partly because it's impossible to cover every square yard of the Park every month and partly problems with identification.

A friend and I spend one afternoon a month actively looking for flowers, and Ian and I keep an eye open for flowers on our frequent sorties into the Park but I'm sure some escape our attention. I fear we may have lost the orchids in Hall Field. Has anyone seen them? I also thought we had lost the ragged robin which I failed to find in its usual place and assumed the weather was too dry for it but John's piece in the East Leake Times says it is still with us.

As for identification, some species are a nightmare! I quote from my trusty flower book, “ Hawkweeds - an exceptionally variable and difficult group, with some hundreds of micro species” We have some of them but who knows how many? Certainly not me! The white umbellifers aren't much better. But give or take the odd omission or misidentification I have recorded 93 species this year.

IDENTIFIED AND ANNOTATED BY ANN WEEKLEY.

FLOWER NAME	MONTHS IN FLOWER	OTHER NAMES & COMMENTS
agrimony	June, July, August	
alkanet, green	April May	
bindweed, field	July	
bindweed, hedge	July Aug Sept	convolvulus
bittercress, hairy	March	
bittersweet	June July	woody nightshade
black horehound	June July	
bluebell	April May	
bristly ox-tongue	June July Aug Sept Oct	
bryony, white	July	
burnet, great	May June July Aug	spreading well, rare in most of Notts
buttercup, bulbous	April	first buttercup to flower
buttercup, creeping	May June July Aug	spreading well into grass
buttercup, meadow	May June July	
campion, red	April May June July Aug Sept Oct Nov	
campion, white	July Aug Sept	
carrot, wild	Sept Oct	
catsear, smooth	Sept Oct	
celandine, lesser	March April	spreading well from field margins
chervil, rough	August	
chickweed, common	March April May June	
cinquefoil, creeping	July	
cleavers	May June July	goosegrass, stickyweed
clover, red	May June July Aug Sept Oct	
clover, white	May June July Aug Sept Oct	
coltsfoot	March	
comfrey	May	
cow parsley	April May July	kek, gypsy lace
cowslip	March April Oct	spreading well
cranesbill, cut-leaved	May June July	competing well with grass
cranesbill, hedgerow	May June July Aug Sept	spreading well
cranesbill, meadow	June July	spreading well
daisy	March April May June July	
dandelion	March to Dec	
dead-nettle, red	March April	
dead-nettle, white	Feb to Dec	flowers most of the year
dock, broad-leaved	June July Aug Sept Oct Nov	
dock, curled	July, Aug, Sept, Oct, Nov	
feverfew	July	new this year
figwort, water	Sept	new this year
forget-me-not, field	April May June July Aug Nov	
fritillary	April	not sure which type
ground ivy	March April May	spreading well into grass in Gibson
groundsel	May Oct	
hairy tare	June	
hawkbit, lesser	August Sept Oct	
hawkweed	May	possibly leafy hawkweed
hawkweed, orange	June July Aug Sept	fox and cubs
hemlock	May June July Aug Dec	mother die
herb bennet	May June	wood avens
herb robert	May June July Sept	
hogweed	April to Nov	

hop	July	
knapweed	July Aug Sept Oct	
knotgrass	August Sept	
lungwort	March April	
mallow, common	June July Aug Sept Oct Nov	spreading well
mayweed, scentless	June July Aug Sept	
meadowsweet	June July	
mouse-ear, common	April May June	
mustard, garlic	April May June	jack by the hedge
mustard, hedge	May June July Aug Oct Nov	
ox-eye daisy	June July Aug Sept Oct	
pineapple weed	May June July Aug Oct	
plantain, ribwort	May Sept	
prickly lettuce	Aug	
primrose	March	
ragwort	June July Aug Sept Oct Nov	
rattle, yellow or hay	May June July	new and very welcome arrival
scabious, field	June July	
selfheal	June July	
shepherd's purse	May June July	
snowdrop	Feb, March	
sow thistle, smooth	June July Aug Sept Nov	
speedwell, field	Oct	
speedwell, germander	April May June July Aug	
speedwell, thyme-leaved	April	
st.john's wort	June July	
stinging nettle	May June July Aug	
stitchwort	May Oct	
teasel	August Sept	
thistle, creeping	June July Aug Sept	
thistle, spear	August Sept Oct	
thistle, weltd	June July	
trefoil, hop	May June July Sept	
trefoil, bird's foot	June July	tom thumb, eggs and bacon
vetch, common	May	
vetchling, meadow	July	
willowherb, broad-leaved	June July Aug Sept	
willowherb, greater	June July Aug Sept	
willowherb, rosebay	June July Aug Sept	
woundwort,	June	
yarrow	July Aug Sept Oct Dec	