

FRIENDS OF MEADOW PARK

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON 28th NOVEMBER 2012 AT THE PARISH OFFICE, EAST LEAKE , COMMENCING 7.00 P.M.

Present : Alan Barlow (Chairman), Trevor Jones (Secretary {minutes}), Andy Denker (Treasurer) and 15 Members

Apologies for absence: Paul Phillips, Stuart Smith, Neil Hunter, Margaret and Tony Perry, Ian Weekley, Marie Males.

Minutes of Annual General Meeting of 23rd November 2011 had been approved by FMP Committee in January and recently circulated to Members. They were approved as a true record.

Matters Arising from these minutes: Alan mentioned that the large stone in Gibson's Field had still not been raised, so it was still not known what lay underneath.

Chairman's Report- See Appendix A (1).

Activities Report - See Appendix A(2)

Secretary's Report -See Appendix B

Committee Attendance – See Appendix C

Treasurer's Report - See Appendix D

Flowers Report - See Appendix E. Ann Weekley requested that someone else takes over flower recording.

Hay bales harvested – see Appendix F

Arboretum report (John Adcock) The aim was to have at least one example of native British trees and some common naturalised species in MP. 27 not already present were planted in the arboretum in 2010. Three died during the dry summer of 2011, although 2 deaths were not due to drought. Yew, juniper, sessile oak and silver beech were replaced. A beech died the following spring and was replaced last Friday. Frosts, the suppliers, suggest that beech should be planted in the early spring. The strawberry tree, native to Ireland, has not been planted, nor one or two trees regarded as shrubs. All trees had been labelled, with only one label lost. Trees are not part of school biology curricula.

Alan said that 3 black poplars north of Kingston Brook had been destroyed by the IDB and replaced by Neil. The IDB are also prepared to replace them. Alan had heard that Queen Victoria had tried to rid her kingdom of black poplar because it produced depressing black pollen. Denis observed that there was a large alder tree near MP main entrance.

Lepidoptera Report –(Kevin Gibbons) It had been a poor summer for Lepidoptera but a good total of 17 species of butterflies were recorded. Meadow Brown was the most common. It was hoped that the increased flower diversity in the wild flower strip at the north of Oak Meadow would increase the diversity of species next summer. He had applied for seeds from "Seeds for Bees". A butterfly area of appropriate plants was being prepared. He coordinated with Notts Biodiversity Group work on the adjacent Great Central Railway.

Bird Box Report (Eric Bryson) The nest box survey had not been carried out because of the flooding. Nest box 4 had been found in the Brook. Probably not deliberate vandalism: it might have been used as a foothold by someone climbing a tree.

Kingston Brook survey Alan had accompanied Ian Morrissey when sampling in September, a repeat of May 2002. Invertebrates were collected by kick sampling and identified. Water analysis was by hand held auto-analyser. 18 taxa were recorded at the richest sampling site (not disturbed by the IDB!), compared with 19 in 2012. This low number and the taxa identified indicated comparatively poor water quality. There was no improvement since 2001, whilst nationally similar waterways had improved.

A brook should be allowed to meander and create mini burns of fast flowing water*. Flood control work was carried out by the IDB early in the year. Their objective was to create a trapezoid cross section. Ian said that a deep central channel would help. Driving stakes with wicker attached into the stream bed was also advised. Only the IDB can approve this.

East Leake sewage tanks overflow after very heavy rain. Sewage pollution of Sheepwash Brook at the centre of the village had been accepted for years.

John Adcock suggested that some pollution was from farms. Trevor said that even wild fauna polluted water. It used to be easy to find salmonella in surface waters. Many species were not pathogenic. No action was likely to be taken unless there was some major outbreak of water related disease.

(*Kingston Brook did meander within MP once. It was straightened before 1797. Trevor)

Paths came up in discussion following the Meeting. Almost a kilometre of paths were upgraded in July, allowing access by wheelchair users to much of MP. Gaps remain after funds were exhausted. A further £1390 is needed.

One of the reasons that upgrading became necessary was grass ingress from the sides of paths. The contractors recommend twice yearly application of Roundup (containing glyphosphate) as routine management. FOP is committed against the use of herbicides in Meadow Park. Some alternative strategy is being sought, so far without success.

Election of Officers. Kevin Shaw and John Adcock resigned from the Committee. Both were thanked for their contributions over many years.

Kevin Gibbons (proposed by Eric Bryson, seconded by John Adcock) and Lorna Pilbin (proposed by Ann Weekley, seconded by Andrew Sandford) were elected as Members.

Alan Barlow wished to step down as Chairman, but there were no contenders for the position.

Andrew Sandford thought that the position involved too much work for someone in full time employment. Andy Denker declined the post. Alan agreed to stay on.

The Committee for 2013 will be:

Chairman: Alan Barlow

Secretary: Trevor Jones

Treasurer: Andy Denker

Elected Members: Mollie Jacques, Neil Hunter, Andrew Sandford, Lorna Pilbin, Kevin Gibbons.

Co-opted Members: Marie Males, Deb Slade.

ELPC Representative: Richard Jenks

RBC Representative: Paul Phillips.

Open Forum.

Eric Bryson asked if hemlock had been cut this year. Ann replied that some had been cut. Alan said that RBC were relaxed as to policy on this poisonous plant.

Andrew reported that a tree was partially blocking Kingston Brook half way between Kestrel and Heron bridges.

He also asked if Beavers and Brownies could be involved in MP. Ann Weekly replied that she had involved the Brownies and many were fascinated with flowers. The exercise would be repeated every two years as new faces appeared. She had a connection with Brookside School and would pursue the matter. Kevin Gibbons would do the same.

Eric Bryson asked if FMP had been involved in producing dog poo posters exhibited around the village. Deb thought that it was a Parish Council exercise. FMP ones had been displayed in Meadow Park, but they were soon vandalised.

Norman Dowdy reported that the plastic wrapped silage bales recently prepared were caught in the flood and asked if the farmer would remove them. Mollie said that the contract included removal of cut grass

John Adcock gave a history of hay rattle in MP. Seed were scattered in Little Meadow last year, and more seed was sown this year for complete cover. The squares in the arboretum had been treated this year. £190 had been spent. Kevin G asked if seed could be harvested. Trevor asked if there were any snags to spreading this parasitic plant. Andrew pointed out that a farmer feeding hay rattle infested hay to his animals would result in spreading its seeds onto his/her grassland in their dung. Kevin G suggested that the summer hay cut should take place later in the year.

Tim Slade asked if more use could be made of help offered by British Gypsum. Alan said that they did not work at weekends but had been most helpful in mid-week work on ragwort.

Date of next meeting. Wednesday 20th November 2013.

Alan thought that 7.00 p.m. would be OK. Trevor observed that there were fewer Members present than last year, when the meeting commenced at 7.30.

The formal meeting ended at 8.12 p.m.

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

Recent heavy rains put Meadow Park under water for the first time since the mid 1970's. I hope the new wildflower ribbon has survived and that the path network also withstands the inevitable water logging. Fortunately flood levels are subsiding and perhaps our worst fears may be premature.

We have enjoyed another excellent year. We received a Community Award from Rushcliffe in November 2011 and this was followed by a Green Flag Award in July. Only last week the Friends group were runners-up for the Environmentalist of the Year Award from Nottinghamshire Green Guardians. This is administered by Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust. We were judged by Professor David Bellamy and one of our hosts was Bill Oddie.

2012 saw us finalising the Local Improvement Scheme grant of £20,000 from Nottinghamshire County Council. This led to the arboretum, new seating and information plinths. In April, Matt Youdale from Arch Communications, made a most generous donation that we converted into more weatherproof paths during July. Other sources of funding have come from the Rushcliffe Community Support Scheme and Rushcliffe Nature Conservation. Several kind individuals have given us money in remembrance of their loved ones who enjoyed using the park. We continue to explore new sources.

About a dozen of us constitute the physical team meeting once a month for activities such as hedge laying but others are involved in preparing newsletters and running the educational programme of wildlife walks in early summer. Bird boxes have to be monitored and repaired and this year we also did a survey of Kingston Brook looking at invertebrate populations. Many of you are the unsung heroes who quietly pick up other folks litter and assist us through your membership fees. We continue to have a supportive relationship with, both, the parish council and the owners, Rushcliffe Borough Council. In the summer we were involved with the Village Community Plan and feedback showed Meadow Park to be the people's choice for 'favourite place in the village'.

Our population is over 7,000 and another 400 houses are on the drawing board. So, we have a heavy responsibility to look after and develop Meadow Park. Simon King, President of the Wildlife Trusts, alerts us to the idea that if an area looks well managed the feeling is that there is no need for us to get involved. That is a risk for us in Meadow Park. In 2012 a small number of volunteers put in over

400 hours of physical work. This is similar to 2011 but without new recruits to our ranks we will struggle.

Everything I have said so far has been pretty positive. Disappointments for me continue to be dog and paper refuse and our complete failure at being able to establish any relationship with our local schools. These children are the guardians of the future and their comments to the Village Plan show they really care. Is the curriculum really so overcrowded that the 'open-air classrooms' of yesteryear are redundant? I believe this is a key area that our Friends Group needs to look at and develop.

May I thank the secretary, treasurer and committee for their work and can I also thank you all for your interest and support through this past year?

APPENDIX A (2) (ALAN BARLOW)

Volunteer Activities 2011/2012

FMP Work Sessions	Activity	Numbers	Hours
December 10	Hedge laying in Little Meadow.	7	20
January 14	Little Meadow. Hedge-laying. Remove damaged cherry and ash trees near lagoon.	12	30
January 27	Brook clearing...4 bags.	5	10
February 11	Hazel coppicing, bramble cut back, bonfire. Gibson's Field.	12	30
March 10	Removal of logs from brook bank. Construct hibernacula. Prepare area adjacent to new hedge for 'hedgerow mix' seeds and sow.	19	38
March 18	Further sowing in Little Meadow and Bateman Field.	2	4
March 23	Flail cutting Lagoon and Hall field.	2	8
March 27	Remove logs from brook. Construct hibernacula.	4	9
March 30	Transport wood chips to mulch arboretum. Turf hibernacula. Path repair with chippings.	4	8
April 11	Remove dead trees from arboretum.	5	5
April 14	Litter pick-up. Brook clean-up. Dock removal from wildflower squares. Dispersal of wood chippings onto muddy paths.	14	30
April 18	Replace trees.	6	14
May 12	Mulch rearranged around stems of new trees in arboretum. Dog rose cut back in Gibson's Field. Further brook clean up. Conducted wildflower survey.	8	20
May 22	Remove cow parsley from seeded area in Little Meadow.	1	2
May 27	Plant wood anemones. Weed seeded squares.	4	4
June 2	Label arboretum.	2	2
June 9	Removal of sturdy tree house in ash tree. Prune shrubbery at park entrance. Cut back overhead growth affecting paths.	10	22
June 24	Remove dock and cow parsley from squares.	3	3
June 28	Remove damaged trees Lagoon Field and cut back Dogwood.	1	1
July 14	Further path clearance in Gibson's and Bateman Fields.	6	12
July 24	Ragwort removal Stonebridge Field.	5	10
July 27	Ragwort pull Stonebridge and Little Meadow.	3	6
July 29	Replace Silver birch and yew in arboretum.	3	4
July 30	Ragwort pull in Stonebridge/Little Meadow with Brit. Gyp. Re-stake larch and remove ties.	6	15
July 1-31	Supervision of new path works.	1	17
August 3	Preparation of ground in Bateman for bird's foot trefoil.	1	3
August 27	Scrub clearance near new hedge-Little Meadow.	1	2

September 9	Ditto and tidying in arboretum.	2	4
September 15	American dogwood cut back in Hall Field.	12	30
October 13	Coppicing of willow sallows in Lagoon Field.	8	20
October 21	Sow Hay rattle in Little Meadow and around 'squares'.	2	2
November 4	Wildflower ribbon in Oak Meadow rake and sow. Remove turf from area.	3	5
November 10	Preparation of hedge in Little Meadow for laying in December.	11	27

Over 400 hours have been logged. Unlogged hours include preparation for Green Flag assessment, path upgrading and liaison with contractors with regard to the 'wildflower ribbon' in Oak Meadow. Meetings have been held with South Trent Internal Drainage Board. Kick-sampling of brook. Educational walks. Clerical support.

APPENDIX B SECRETARY'S REPORT (TREVOR JONES)

Membership stands at 121. There have been 5 full committee meetings over the past year, all well attended, plus various sub - committee meetings.

There was a time when a meeting finished at 9.30 p.m. and a line was drawn under it. Some problems used to sort themselves out in the 2 months between meetings, or be overtaken by events. Now we aim to email the first draft minutes on the morning following the meeting. Members who could not attend are kept updated. We are virtually in session 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Not continuous session, of course, but emails can arrive at any time. There is something about an email which demands a prompt response and Friends of Meadow Park progresses rapidly. There is more work. There is also the snag of two Committee Members not being on the internet

Members will have received the 11 page 2011 AGM Minutes and reports. I sometimes wonder when compiling minutes how many people actually read them. Detailed minutes definitely paid dividends this year because a non-member, Matt Youdale, Arch Communications, donated £5000 with no strings attached in response to an item in the minutes of a meeting published on our website. The donation was used to upgrade Meadow Park paths for wheel chair use. Organisations can be partly judged on their minutes when applying for grants.

I should like to thank all the committee for working together. Members have differing view points on a variety of issues but we are mature enough not to fall out. Alan has always led from the front. He has a genius for divining sources of funding. Debbie Slade is to be thanked for organising this function.

APPENDIX C - COMMITTEE MEETINGS ATTENDANCE

Meetings	Attended
5	Alan (Chair), Andy (Treasurer), Trevor (Secretary), Neil, Kevin G.
4	Deb.
3	Andrew, Lorna.
2	Kevin S, Mollie, Marie.
0	Richard (ELPC rep), Paul (RBC rep).

APPENDIX D - TREASURER'S REPORT YEAR ENDING 31/10/12 (ANDY DENKER)

2011/12 Proved to be an exceptional year for FMP financially. Membership income rose by £38 but it was the very generous donation of £5000 from a local benefactor – Arch Communications, plus two further amounts which raised the total donations to £5140. Sales were slightly down on last year and due to not taking part in the carnival there was no income from fundraising. Grants were received from NCC [remainder from path/arboretum], RBC [wildflower seeds] and RBC Community Fund [wild flower seeds] totalling £1012.40. Overall income was a grand total of £6857.40
Expenditure at £7710.48 was high this year because of the main projects carried out - the path renewal and new bench at Bateman Road entrance: £7150.

Although expenditure this year was in excess of receipts [-£853] the opening balance of £1644.97 allowed a total of £791.89 to be carried forward for 2012/13.

There are two outstanding projects ongoing which require payment but there are enough funds available to cater for these and we also have another RBC grant in the pipeline.

APPENDIX E FLOWERS IN 2012 (ANN WEEKLEY)

A largely very cold and grey January and February meant very few flowers bloomed in the first two months – only white dead-nettle, dandelion, snowdrop and common field speedwell.

The following exceptionally warm and sunny March produced a magnificent display of cowslips and lesser celandines. Both species are spreading 'enthusiastically' in several locations and competing very successfully with the grass.

Snow returned briefly at the beginning of April, as did the water in Sheepwash Brook! The bed had been dry for almost a year. Below average temperatures and above average rainfall was the pattern for April and the following three months.

Most species enjoyed the conditions. The flowers this year, in June and July, were healthy and numerous, none more so than the very welcome yellow rattle, an almost essential constituent of a flourishing flower meadow. The flowers this year were a complete contrast to the few struggling, drought affected, plants of 2011, although the number of species recorded was very similar. The seeded areas in the arboretum were particularly successful and much admired by old (many of *us!*) and young (the Brownies) alike.

Early August was sunnier and warmer than in recent years and most of the flowers appeared to have set seed before the mid-August mowing. The first week in September was also warm and sunny. Ox-eye daisies were flowering again in the arboretum area, a mere fortnight after the mowing.

The mowing in mid August meant most of the flowers in September, and indeed October, were found at the field margins, in Hall Field and in Lagoon Field.

So far in November, which began with cold, unsettled weather, 14 species are in flower plus both dog rose and bramble. November ended in floods.

As well as recording this year's flowers month by month, I thought it would be interesting to go back through my records and count the total number of species seen since I began 'serious!' records in 2006. Amazingly 124 species have been recorded in flower (I have printed off a few copies for anyone interested). This year the total so far, which is unlikely to increase, is 101, the first time an annual count has been over 100. This reflects a steady increase from 83 in 2006, to 86 in 2009, to 93 last year, a very encouraging trend.

I am not able to commit to monthly recordings next year but would like to think someone else will!

APPENDIX F SUMMER HAY CUT - BALES HARVESTED.(RICHARD JENKS)

2009 120 large square bales

2010 No figures supplied

2011 90 large square bales (Dry summer)

2012 125 large square bales (6.6 ftx3 ftx3 ft). Also 75 round wrapped silage bales (4 ftx4 ft)in November.