

MINUTES OF THE FRIENDS OF MEADOW PARK COMMITTEE MEETING 11th SEPTEMBER 2013 (7.30-9.15 p.m.)

Apologies for absence: Paul, Lorna, Mollie, Deb.

Present: Alan, Neil, Andrew, Andy, Trevor (minutes).

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 10th July 2013 were ratified.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES PLUS DEVELOPMENTS:

Hay/silage: Neil produced plans for grass cutting procedure, compiled with Kevin, to be presented to ELPC Amenities Committee meeting on Tuesday 17th September. He could not attend the meeting and it was hoped that Kevin could do so. Trevor wondered if all FMPC members should see the report: it was decided that it would be circulated following approval by ELPC. ACTION: KEVIN

Alan reported that a resident of Bateman Road was worried about the fire hazard presented by uncut grass in the arboretum. The grass along the path on its S boundary was not being cut. Regular cutting would produce a fire break. ELPC to be informed of this. ACTION: ALAN

Andrew was worried about the fire hazard posed to property by the scrub at the N boundary of Play Field. Again, there was a path marked which was not being cut. It was agreed that Neil produce a map of areas needing attention, to be forwarded to ELPC. ACTION: NEIL

Alan had not received a figure for number of hay bales harvested this year. ACTION: RICHARD

Wild flowers: Neil reported that 9/27 species sown at the top of Oak Meadow had not appeared, although they could still do so. There was amazing associated insect life. The Friends of the Earth site had also performed well. He thought that more yellow rattle was needed for Oak Meadow. It cost about £200/kilo. RBC would not be able to fund purchase. Trevor suggested that seed could be harvested in future years.

Monthly Amenities Committee Meetings: Alan said that these need only be attended if FMPC had a contribution to make.

Kingston Brook Survey: Alan said that this had been completed in September 2012. It was agreed that Trevor write a semi-formal letter to Ian Morrissey on the matter. ACTION: TREVOR

Railway Bridge Occupation: Alan reported that there did not appear to be much activity in the area. A meeting with police was scheduled.

Notice Boards: Richard had promised the repaired board to Alan some months ago, but it had still not appeared. Malcolm Lane, manufactures, had agreed to visit and fit new glass. ACTION: RICHARD

Andrew reported that polycarbonate coverings had been scratched and should be replaced. Alan thought that this could be done from ELPC maintenance fund. Trevor thought that replacement did not solve the problem of vandalism and toughened glass could be of value. ACTION: ALAN

Liaison with schools: (Mollie) No recent activity. A pdf of the August Newsletter had been sent to the Academy and primary schools. Alan thought that the appearance of more flowers could attract children.

Green Flag: (Alan) There had been useful feedback . Ken Whittaker (Green Flag) had suggested a Nature Trail. Alan feared vandalism of notices etc. Andrew volunteered to look into QR codes for the 26 trees in the arboretum.

ACTION: ANDREW

Arboretum. Sponsorship at £10 per tree had been agreed. Applicants could state the species . Neil said that birch had a shorter life span than some other species. Trevor asked if the application was renewable.

Neil suggested that the new beech tree be planted near the the Bateman Road gate. Because of deaths of previous trees, he wondered if a quality tree should be purchased. It was likely to be more expensive than from Frosts. He had fenced off a Cornish Elm which had succumbed to Dutch Elm Disease, to protect the new suckers. The dead elm would remain *in situ* for educational purposes. Mollie should be informed of the time put in. ACTION: NEIL

Arboretum leaflet (Mollie)

Quotation from Adlards of Ruddington: £96 for 100 copies, £197 for 500, £235 for 1000. Mollie suggested we look for funding of £500.

The Woodland Trust does not give cash grants . An application for a donation of tree(s) might well be successful. Paul Phillips has given information about various other possible sources.(www.fundingdragon.org.uk).

Progress awaits the final decision on the siting of the new beech, when minor amendment to the leaflet will be needed.

Guided Walks de-brief

28 attended the bird walk, 7 the tree walk and 15 the wildflower/butterfly walk (NB this clashed with the Wimbledon Ladies Final, which took out at least 3 potential attendees)

Publicity included parish notice boards, park notice boards, village website, a number of posters in e.g. both primary schools (in addition, Lantern Lane parents were texted), Health Centre and Post Office, and flyers were left in various food outlets. Trevor thought that the exceptional turnout for the bird walk was the result of duplication of publicity by Mollie and himself. Massive widespread publicity might produce an increased turnout, which could have disadvantages.

Feedback from the public was mostly positive. The large turnout for the bird walk presented difficulty in communication and there were less birds around than in previous years, though considerable bird song.

Geology of Meadow Park David Bridge had produced a substantial booklet in response to little more than a chance remark from Trevor. Distribution was restricted because David had not included acknowledgements to the illustrations. Copies could probably be supplied to individuals on request. Trevor to write letter of thanks.

ACTION: TREVOR

Generic bins. Alan said that new bins would all be the same colour and dog droppings could be deposited in any.

SECRETARY'S REPORT_(Trevor)

Communications. Yet again the question of circulation of all correspondence to all FMPC Members arose.

Members unlikely to contribute could still find a topic interesting. It should not be discussed in committee unless all had been briefed. Alan described a system of selective distribution of information pioneered by Loughborough University. Andrew pointed out that deliberations within a subcommittee did not need to go to all, although its final report should. Trevor thought that the chairperson at least should be privy to all major correspondence. The title of documents was important, so that recipients could decide if it was relevant to them. Alan suggested attachments which could be opened. Trevor thought that we were a small committee and nothing elaborate was required.

AGM Wednesday 20th November. We need to start compiling reports.

TREASURER'S REPORT. (Andy)

Balance: £103.45. No outstanding bills. No funds on the horizon. Andrew would find out the cost of 30 QR code plaques. Trevor wondered if British Gypsum might be interested in sponsoring the latter.

ACTION: NEIL / ANDREW

FUNDING APPLICATIONS (Alan) Nothing to report.

ACTIVITIES

(Litter gathering and attention to new presenting problems is included in every ACTIVITY)

July - Trim hanging branches. Litter.

August – no activity, apart from individual ragwort pulling.

September 14th – Control and removal of American Dogwood in Hall Field.

Neil

October 12th–Management of wild flower strips + bird boxes and scrub control.

November 9th – Scrub cutting and clearance in Hall Field .

December 14th- Hedge laying Hall Field or other location (to be confirmed) and/or scrub control.

January 11th 2014.- Hedge laying? And/or scrub cutting in Hall Field (including bonfire)).

February 8th 2014 - Scrub cutting/coppicing Lagoon Field and/or “Electric Avenue” in Gibson’s Field.

March 8th 2014 – Further dogwood control and removal from various locations e.g. Bateman Field spinneys.

FMPC needs to consult with Conrad on hedge laying. There is a suggestion that hedges are now too old for laying. Coppicing of at least some is an option. Neil offered to do an extra day a month using a chainsaw to help with any scrub and tree cutting that might be required. In return, he would like some of the larger logs for firewood. He will provide copies of his liability insurance and chainsaw competence to Lesley at the Parish Office

He intends to tackle some of the large bushes in Hall Field, around the edges and patches in the SW half, plus many of the diseased elms in the hedge along the E side of Play Field, some of which could pose a danger to Park users if left standing much longer.

ACTON:NEIL

ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

Neil asked if there was any activity planned re osiers next year. Many planted earlier in the year had died, perhaps as a result of drought, possibly rabbits. Alan said that the expert planned to visit again.

Neil remarked that Play Field was not used for competitive games as planned but mainly for dog walking. Grass cutting 9x a year cost money and reduced plant species variety. It was thought that grass should be allowed to grow, but policy was an ELPC matter.

The flasher was a police problem. FMPC might have to pay attention to covered wooded pathways.

Andrew was interested in aerial photos. Some cost £30. Trevor wondered if there was a free source if it could be found. What is now Defra have some, but perhaps they are not available to the public. Local authorities.

Date of Next Meeting: AGM Wednesday 20th November 2013.

Wednesday January 15th 2014.

Neil asked if a meeting was not needed before January. Trevor suggested an email discussion involving all FMPC Members if necessary.