

MINUTES OF THE FRIENDS OF MEADOW PARK COMMITTEE MEETING  
17<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2014 (7.30-8.45 p.m.)(5 pages)

Apologies for absence: Paul, Andrew, Kevin, Andy, Mollie, Marie

Present: Alan, Neil, Ann, Eric, Trevor (minutes).

**Minutes of the FMPC Meeting of 16<sup>th</sup> July 2014** were ratified.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES PLUS DEVELOPMENTS:

**Hay cut etc.** Neil reported that the proposed three-year rotation of headland cutting was not currently being followed – further liaison with ELPC about headland management might be required. It was also not known if ELPC had yet agreed to establish the new “fire-breaks” which would also be regularly cut grass pathways. There had already been a few minor grassland fires in the Park this summer.

Alan said that Richard had agreed to cut summer hay as late as possible. Trevor asked how late – late July, apparently. Docks in grassland could also be cut. Sickles would be best and could be purchased.

ACTION: ALAN

**Play Field.** Neil reported that the plan he had helped to draw up on behalf of FMPC for a proposed reduction in the amount of grass-cutting in Play Field was still under consideration, but it was believed that ELPC was not generally in favour of making such a change at the moment.

**Liaison with schools:** Trevor reported that Mollie had said that there had been no developments because of school holidays. There had been one forest school meeting in MP, judged a success.

**Arboretum (QR codes)** Andrew had reported that he was working on this.

ACTION: ANDREW

**Arboretum (sessile oak)** (Neil) Andy had said a bare root tree could be supplied in November for £66. It could be planted at 33 on the leaflet. The defective tree supplied, not on the leaflet, could remain. The alder and large birch were struggling.

ACTION:

ANDY

**Arboretum (Plinth)** Alan described the difficulties of funding. Construction was underway; colour green.

ACTION: ALAN

**Kingston Brook - Sick dogs** Trevor had discussed the 2007 case informally with the veterinary surgeon involved. There was little to go on. Trevor had constructed a questionnaire which he would use if further cases occurred. This contained “open questions” which needed discussion. A few people regarded illness in a pet as a confidential matter. It was proposed that Trevor inform Lesley of the existence of the questionnaire.

ACTION: TREVOR

**Live Willow House (Alan)** John Roulstone had suggested planting willow in a trench around the present structure in November.

**Moths.** Kevin had organised a moth watch on August 3<sup>rd</sup>. An interesting report had been received from Dr Sheila Wright. (APPENDIX ONE).

**Tool Storage.** Alan reported that tools were now stored at the front of the Parish Shed, a distinct improvement.

**Green flag award.** The award had been won for the third year running. A photograph had appeared in the Loughborough Echo. MP had indeed improved year on year. The railway arch “den” had still not been fenced off. Work promised by TVIDB had not been carried out.

Alan said that approximately £60,000 had been spent by the County Council on the bicycle track. It totally dwarfed expenditure on MP.

**Monthly Amenities Committee Meetings:** (Alan) No need to attend the next meeting.

#### SECRETARY’S REPORT

Trevor pointed out that it would be possible to ratify minutes of a meeting within a few weeks by email and then circulate them via email. A Member had requested this. Neil thought that they could wait until the next meeting. Trevor agreed: some problems “blew over” between Meetings.

Reports for the AGM were requested by 12<sup>th</sup> November.

#### TREASURERS REPORT

##### STATEMENT OF ACCOUNT 3/9/14

##### CREDITS

Membership renewals/new members [Total]	£482
Membership donations [Total]	£63
Arboretum tree Sponsorship [Total]	£330
Grants [Total]	£450.76
Total [Year]	£1441.71

Note: The grant from RBC to cover the cost of the Ragforks has now been received. [£125.76]

##### DEBITS

Previous purchases	£615.62
Purchase of 1 off Sessile Oak [Frosts Plant centre]	£66
Total [Year]	£645.62

Balance in the account as at 3rd September 2014	£796.09
Usable balance for general projects [less Arb. Spon. £330]	£466.09

Notable additions since July have been on the credit side, namely, the grant from RBC for the purchase of the ragforks and two generous amounts from two of our members to the Arboretum fund of £66[£34 also to general funds] to cover the cost of the Sessile Oak and £70 respectively.

Membership now stands at 90

FUNDING APPLICATIONS (Alan).The situation was much improved from a few years ago because of regular funds being made available by ELPC. A grant had been received from East Midlands Airport.

#### ACTIVITIES

August no activity

September 14<sup>th</sup> Cut back branches overhanging paths. Litter collection.

October 11<sup>th</sup> Nest boxes; Dogweed/Scrub cutting Hall Field.

Oak Meadow - ribbon tidy and expand, after autumn grass cut. Neil to request help when necessary.

November 8th -Coppice hazel (Gibson's Field). Prune boundaries of Bateman/Gibson's copse.

Cut willow and plant it around willow structure (probably on a weekday)

December 13<sup>th</sup> Hedge laying/Copse pruning

January 10<sup>th</sup> 2015 Hedge laying/ copse pruning

February 14th Scrub cutting in Hall Field and/or Lagoon Field

Benches and table painted last autumn to be sanded and repainted on an *ad hoc* basis when schools are in session.

Date of next meeting Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2015.

AGM Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2014.

## APPENDIX ONE

**Meadow Park, East Leake**

**Recorders:** Sheila Wright, John Osborne, David Stock, Kevin Gibbons

**Date:** 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2014

**Method:** MV Lights x 2

**Macro Moth Species Recorded (more or less in order of appearance):**

Straw Dot

Common/Lesser Common Rustic species aggregate (agg.)

Flame Shoulder

Brimstone

Common/Dark Marbled Carpet agg.

Dingy Footman 4

Willow Beauty

Small Square-spot

Lesser Broad-bordered Yellow Underwing

Riband Wave

Yellow Shell

Large Yellow Underwing

Dark/Grey Dagger agg.

Smoky Wainscot

Gold Spot

Flounced Rustic

Dunbar

Cloaked Minor

Swallow Prominent

Shuttle-shaped Dart

Dark Arches

Setaceous Hebrew Character

Mouse 1

Single-dotted Wave

Small Phoenix

**White Satin 1** *Nationally Local/Notts Conservation Grade 3*

Double-striped Pug (a very worn individual dissected to confirm identification)

Total – 27 macro moths

**Comments**

A reasonable range of common species, and one, the White Satin, which although widespread and quite common in Notts, has conservation status here on account of it being classed as “Local” at a national level.

However, at a good wildlife site I would have expected to see (on a warm night in early August), both more species, and a higher number of Conservation Status species.

I can think of a couple of reasons why this was not so at Meadow Park:

- 1.) Possibly, because the site is relatively new, insects (including moths) may not yet have had enough time to colonise it - particularly if it is isolated from other wildlife sites by a lack of suitable corridors.
- 2.) More likely, in my opinion, is that the site is cut for hay - which, contrary to popular belief, can be very deleterious for Lepidoptera populations. The reason for this is that a hay crop is normally taken in late June or July - which is much too early in the year from the perspective of moths and other insects. They are attracted in to the site by the nectar in the herbs that are present amongst the grasses, and then this food supply is removed right in the middle of the peak season for these invertebrates. Not only is the nectar supply for the adult insects is removed, but also the food plants upon which they would be about to lay their eggs, and the cover they need to shelter them from predators and inclement weather. The result is that they will either move to better-managed sites elsewhere – if there are any within flying distance, or if not - they will die without having bred. A meadow can be either managed for a hay crop or managed for wildlife - but not both!

The best time to cut a meadow to benefit insects is between mid-September and mid-October - by which time the larvae of most of the moths that are on the wing from May to July will have fed and pupated. Also, most of the meadow herbs will have set seed by this time. By looking after the insects, the insectivorous mammals, birds and herpetofauna are being looked after, too. Lots of insects means plenty of the animals that feed on them (even seed-eating birds feed their growing young on insects for the protein they contain). This in turn brings in predatory birds and mammals – and thus a healthy ecosystem will develop, with living organisms present in good numbers at all levels of the food chain.

Other conservation measures that could perhaps be implemented at this site are leaving some fallen logs around alongside the stream for invertebrates, herpetofauna and mammals to take refuge under, and scattering a few more wildflower seeds (preferably of local provenance) here and there until the meadow is properly established.

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