

FRIENDS OF MEADOW PARK COMMITTEE MEETING 18 JULY 2012

Apologies for absence: Paul, Deb

Present: Alan, Mollie, Andrew, Neil, John, Kevin Gibbons, Andy, Marie, Trevor (minutes).

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 16th MAY 2012 had been circulated and were ratified.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES PLUS DEVELOPMENTS:

Green Flag Award (Alan, Mollie) Alan had already reported the achievement, embargoed until yesterday. He and ANDY had removed all litter prior to inspection. The Flag would be flown outside the Parish Office. EL now on the Keep Britain Tidy website. Alan to write to school heads.

ACTION ALAN

Kingston Brook: (Alan, Marie) Alan had still not received a reply to his letter to the head of the South Trent IDB, Newark. A representative was due to meet with Lesley and ALAN in the near future.

ACTION: ALAN

Path renovation (Alan, Trevor). Alan would meet Sean tomorrow at 8.10 to site new bench. Trevor pointed out on the plan where Deb had chosen to site it, and Sean had marked it (whilst Alan was on holiday). Trevor suggested that the bench should face due North. Agreed.

ACTION: ALAN

Neil pointed out that it appeared that building rubble aggregate had been laid as a base, which was not as specified in the May Meeting. The path should be finished towards the end of next week. Trevor mentioned the flooding at the SW corner of Play Field, undermining the path. There was once a ditch on one side of the hedge at the W side of Play field which had filled in. "Hedging and ditching" traditionally went together. The sites of field drains were not known. He pointed out the danger of damage to the path edges by large vehicles.

Trevor reported that Kevin and Sean (Horizon) had strongly advocated use of "Roundup" to prolong the life of the path. John, Neil and Alan all thought that grass should be allowed to grow in from the sides. The stone underneath would support wheel chairs. Trevor said that grass died each year, forming humus which progressed to soil. That was how Nature buried things. The original paths were supposed to be 1.25 m wide. Trevor said that if the paths had been more actively maintained the current path upgrade would have been unnecessary. Others pointed out that more substrate has to be added to the paths because of compaction and sinkage. Andrew said that the paths were poorly constructed in the first place. Agreed Trevor explore use of flame guns to destroy grass.

ACTION: TREVOR .

Arboretum (John) Birch and beech to be replaced. Possibly only £25 each, but probably more if more developed trees were bought – John to investigate and report. Kevin asked if silver birch could be transplanted from the railway line. John said these were probably Silver Birch X Brown Birch hybrids. John also doubted the provenance of one of the birches in the arboretum – he is to check this.

ACTION: JOHN

Alan asked if strimming at the base of arboretum trees was necessary. Neil and John said that it was not.

Walks. Kevin had not yet contacted Mollie re publicity for next year. Trevor had booked the speakers.

ACTION: KEVIN/MOLLIE

Hay (Trevor). To FMPC, the herbage in MP was an ecosystem for which there was a long term plan: to ELPC it presented as grass that needed cutting. Kevin again raised the subject of staggered cutting. Trevor said we were hampered by ELPC not allowing sight of the contract. He could ask to see the original tender document, which couldn't be confidential.

ACTION: TREVOR

He raised the subject of production from MP. 120 big square hay bales were produced in 2009. (Richard had not supplied later figures). These bales retailed at £25-£30 at least earlier this year. At £25 per bale, a crop was worth £3000. This dwarfed FMP income from membership fees. There might be other ways of generating income – e.g. selling plants. John said that there were no plants for sale yet.

–Andrew thought that no farmer/contractor would undertake the work for the same fee unless the crop was included. Neil mentioned hay quality. Trevor knew that much worse quality material was offered to animals.

As ELPC appeared to have signed a new contract with the farmer for a number of years it was agreed there was no point in the FMP trying to continue the discussion further with them at this time. Trevor was asked to make a diary entry to contract the PC just before they need to arrange the next cutting contract if deemed appropriate then.

ACTION: TREVOR

Bales produced this year would have to be counted and the dimensions of a typical bale recorded. Our Treasurer was good with numbers.

ACTION: ANDY

Notice boards (Alan) £600 had been spent on a new green lectern before Richard informed him that he had repaired the green one which he had damaged. Agreed to erect the spare green lectern at the The Burrows entrance. Mollie thought new art work would be needed.

ACTION: ALAN

Field margins/scrub rota (Neil) The work could be done adequately by Steve, in the autumn. Kevin suggested margins should be extended to 5m. Trevor pointed out that three was specified in the Management Plan. It was agreed to ask the farmer to leave at least 3-5 m margins to ensure we get at least 3 m left uncut which was not always the case in the past.

ACTION: ALAN

Neil suggested part of Play Field N of the top path be cut twice a year, not 9x as currently. Agreed. Trevor to inform Lesley of the proposals.

(There was considerable post meeting discussion. The issue was postponed until the September Meeting)

Neil and Kevin proposed part of this area be allocated to wild flowers. However, after discussion, it was felt an area on Oak or Little Meadow might be better. Horizon might clear the turf whilst still on site.

ACTION: ANDY

A wild flower sub-committee of Neil and Kevin was formed to discuss the site, timings, method etc of the new plantings (John?)

Liaison with schools (Lorna) Not present – carried forward. N.B. Alan was writing to head teachers about Green Flag.

Bat and moth survey (Kevin) Waiting for the weather to improve. Bats in next two weeks, moths perhaps not for six weeks.

Organic status (Neil) This referred to food production, which included hay.

Dock control (Trevor) A very high % of docks in Oak Meadow had been eaten by beetles. Good. Lots of brown butterflies/moths seen there last Sat.

Docks should be removed in March, if soil soft, when roots were obvious and little damage would be caused to surrounding vegetation. Restrict to Bateman Field next March. Agreed.

Liaison with British Gypsum (Alan) “Rent a bloke/gal”. Remove ragwort Little Meadow 8.30 Tuesday, 24th July . Agreed not to remove any with cinnabar moths.

ACTION: ALAN + VOLUNTEERS

BMX track (Kevin Shaw) Not present. Proposal to site BMX track + skating facility – Kevin, Neil, Alan against it in Meadow Park if possible alternatives can be found. Andrew said if Rushcliffe insist on a track being in the park we should work with them to find a site which causes minimal damage.

John asked why they could not be built on the Parish Council Playing Fields. Andrew pointed out that BMX tracks are often quite big and have bumps and troughs engineered in them so a flat field was not suitable. Others pointed out the field adjacent to the park was well used anyway. Kevin suggested Oldershaw Trust Land or the Kirk Ley development. These are early days.

ELPC Annual Parish Meeting (Deb) Nothing to report.

Vandalism (Andy) Problems with tree houses and holes dug in paths. Ongoing problem.

Memorials (Andrew) RBC have rules which apply to memorial benches in their parks but it does not cover MP at present. He said we may need to refer to RBC and those rules if people persist and will not accept the previously suggested sponsorship option. Mollie pointed out that the first bench in the park was donated as a memorial.

Conrad's anemones (John) These had been planted.

Sculpture –corrosion? (Trevor) Alan to ask Steve to bore a hole in stone central depression to allow water to escape.

ACTION: ALAN

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Monthly activities plan. Agreed to plan next years, on Trevor's computer, as we progressed. Plan e.g next July this July. People supervising each activity to inform Trevor of changes indicated. Neil suggested review at September Meeting.

Management Plan. Orders from RBC were for ELPC to update the Plan annually. We could inform Lesley of any changes before our AGM.

TREASURER'S REPORT

£7990.69 in bank. Includes RBC £112 for wild flower seed and £40 from a Jubilee street party (Potters Lane vicinity). £860 would remain after paths upgrade bill settled.

Alan reminded early application needed for next RBC seed grant. Marie asked Alan to also write to her requesting money for plant seeds.

Neil suggested increasing membership fee to £3. Agreed (for AGM).

ACTIVITIES

June - Manor Farm Meadow entrance border, docks, repair vandalised tree.

July – trim overhanging branches around several paths. Neil said that "damage" caused to arch path (FKW) last year was now invisible.

August – no activity

September (8th) – Cutting back Dogwood in Hall Field

ANDY i/c

October (13th) – Cutting back hawthorn etc SW Lagoon Field and Hall Field

NEIL i/c

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Mollie circulated sample Wild Flower Notelets (new series). Photos from MP members. John confirmed that species name should begin with a small letter (as apposed to Genus with a capital). Leaflets + envelopes to retail at £2 for 10.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING 12TH September 2012.