

## FRIENDS OF MEADOW PARK

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON THE 8<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2017 AT THE PARISH OFFICE, EAST LEAKE.

Present: Ann Weekley (Chairman), Kevin Gibbons (Secretary), Andy Denker (Treasurer) plus 8 Committee Members and 7 other Members. Total 18.

1. **Apologies for absence:** Eric Bryson, Mollie Jacques, Derek and Prunella Bagshaw, Cath Rainey, Jacki Allen
2. **Minutes of Annual General Meeting of 16th November 2016** were ratified by those attending the Meeting.

Matters Arising: None.

Chairman's Report- see item 3.  
Secretary's Report -see item 4.  
Treasurer's Report - see item 5.  
Election of Committee - see item 6.  
Arboretum and Work Parties Report - see item 7.  
Flower Report - see item 8.  
Bird Report - see item 9.  
Bee Worlds - see item 10.  
Butterflies and Moths - see item 11.  
Kingston Brook - see item 12.  
Open Forum - see item 13.  
Any Other Business - see item 14.  
Date Of Next AGM - see item 15.

### 3. Chairman's Report (Ann Weekly)

Many thanks to everyone for turning out tonight. I'll attempt to briefly summarize what we've been up to this year.

After much discussion and many minor adjustments we now have in place a Management Plan and a Mowing Schedule for Meadow Park. The Management plan was approved earlier this year and runs until 2021. The Mowing Schedule has also been simplified and incorporates a 3-year rotation for mowing the designated headlands and field margins. It's been a long process!

I have been asked several times recently as to who is in charge of what in the Park, so as it is a little confusing, the position is as follows.

Meadow Park is owned by Rushcliffe Borough Council. East Leake Parish Council manage it

on their behalf except for the emptying of the dog waste and litter bins. That is the responsibility of Rushcliffe Borough Council. Trent Valley Internal Drainage Board manage Kingston Brook and Kingfisher Way is maintained by Notts CC !

The Friends of Meadow Park was set up to develop and enhance both the recreational and wildlife potential of the Park but we can only suggest and advise. The final say is with Rushcliffe or the Parish Council. I have to say that all my dealings with both of them have always been very amicable and our input has been appreciated.

Now let's move on to what we've done and what has gone on in the Park and our wish to involve the younger generation.

Lantern Lane Forest School children continue to be very enthusiastic users of the Park. They have a 2 to 3 hour session every week which begins with eating lunch sitting on the logs of the log circle in the woodland near the Bateman road entrance. As the earlier circle logs were stolen, the current circle of logs are not only heavier but have also been wired together to deter theft. We have Andy, Conrad (Oatey) and the Leics. Wildlife Trust to thank for the new improved version!

I was asked to do two sessions of tree identification with the Forest School a few weeks ago. It was good fun. How much they'll remember, who knows, but they were very enthusiastic!

Kevin has also taken the Brownies round on two occasions and was rewarded with similar enthusiasm.

The Beavers raised money for us by making Christmas tree decorations and selling them at Christmas Lights switch-on. They raised the magnificent sum of £50.

We had a stall at the Meet Your Village event, which was held in the Village Hall in April. Kev did a sterling job signing up new members and a lot of interest was shown in our display. We also had a very successful day at the Carnival in June. I was in hospital at the time but I gather it was a great success, especially the creatures from the brook for which we have to thank Ian Morrissey.

Working parties have tackled numerous tasks but I shall leave Andy to report on those and on the extra hours worked in addition to the Saturday morning sessions.

This year we decided to invest in some blue spray and use it to highlight dog poo left uncollected by irresponsible dog owners. It has been shown elsewhere to reduce the incidence of fouling. Hilary, our volunteer dog warden, who can't be with us this evening and Mel each have a can. We thank them both for their efforts and we would also like to thank the responsible dog owners who pick up not only after their own dogs but the deposits from others as well.

.....and now some more thank-yous.

To Brenda who has continued her good work in the publicity department - producing the twice yearly newsletters, the monthly posters for the notice boards, the monthly reports for the EL Times and of course the working party reminders. I continue to be amazed at how she finds the time but I'm very grateful.

To Mel who has kept us in the 'digital eye' with her regular postings on our Facebook page and I am assured that the website which has been updated is now functioning well. If you have any questions about it, I'm hoping Brenda will be able to answer them. I'm afraid I'm worse than useless.

To Andy who manages the finances and makes sure we can afford any projects on which we embark. He is also invaluable in organising work parties and making sure we have the right tools for the jobs.

To Kevin who became our new secretary last year and has done an excellent job. His enthusiasm for recruiting new members is surpassed.

And to all the Committee members for their support over the last 12 months and for their practical help in many aspects of what we do, from producing labels for the arboretum trees, to giving technical advice on numerous matters and very importantly persuading organisations to give us grants.

Anyway, thank you all very much for your efforts and on a personal note heartfelt thank-yous to the people who give me moral support when things are getting me down.

#### 4. Secretary's Report (Kevin Gibbons)

Membership is up again this year, up from 149 last year to a new record of 202, largely due to recruitment drives at the Carnival and "meet your village" events.

It is clear that by the active work by a key group of members at the monthly work parties that we continue to maintain the park and move it forwards. ....areas tidied, hedges laid, benches installed and flowers and trees planted.

More importantly this year has seen increasing engagement with the younger generation, particularly with regards to the Forest School activities and Brownie walks, I feel that it is increasingly important that we continue, to ramp up our activities in this area, in order to transition into the future, in a world where environmental issues are becoming increasingly recognised within schools.

We must also ensure that we continue to utilize social media and other forms of new technological touchpoints to publicize Meadow Park to the ever growing population of East Leake, with the hope of garnering not only new members but also additional skills and expertise to our friends group.

Finally I would like to thank everyone on the committee for their hard work and continued contributions with regards to moving the park forwards.

I think we are doing ok.....here are a few comments from Facebook, from the work we did installing the benches on 30<sup>th</sup> Oct

Thank you for such great community service. I didn't even know you guys existed or had collection tins, I'll look out in future. X

Thank you Friends of Meadow Park. We are so lucky to have this on our doorstep

Thank you - one is placed so we could watch the sunset.

Looks lovely - thank you for all your hard work.

Thank you Friends of Meadow Park for maintaining such a beautiful village asset.

So I think we must be doing things pretty well...

## 5. Treasurer's Report (Andy Denker)

### FRIENDS OF MEADOW PARK – TREASURERS REPORT

#### YEAR ENDING 31/10/2017

2016/17 was another exceptional year for FMP financially.

The account for 2016/17 started with a balance carried forward of £1275.68, which was made up of £681.68 in general funds and £594 in Arboretum Sponsorship.

Membership subscriptions have remained constant over the last year, with a steady increase in new members, which now stands at 202. There was a very generous donation of £150 from British Gypsum and an increase in the Arboretum Sponsorship Fund of £325. Membership subscriptions to the year end were £762 along with donations of £603.95 [incl £104 via Mel Roper for new bench and £49 from collection boxes], both amounts going to general funds.

A grant of £205 was received from RBC via Mr Ron Hetherington, which covered the cost of the leafleting of the village.

Overall income for the year was a total of £2031.95 which along with the opening balance of £1275.68 gave a total of **£3307.63** at the year end.

Expenditure for the year was **£1395.84**, the major items being £206 for two new trees and equipment in the Arboretum, £219.98 for hedging plants for Bateman Road and Lagoon Field borders, £200 for removing turf in the new willow area and £283 for the purchase of various equipment for the tool store.

With the income for the year being **£3307.63** and the expenditure being **£1395.84** the overall balance of the account as at 31/10/2017 was **£1911.79**

This is allocated as:

**General Funds: £1404.79[incl £104 for new bench]**

**Arboretum Fund: £507**

The above totals will be carried forward to the 2017/2018 financial year

At the time of writing the above report there is one major expenditure to be paid, namely the purchase of two benches and associated fixtures for Play Field for a total of £908[ note: this total will be provided by grants from East Midlands Airport Community Fund £700 and East Leake Neighbourhood Watch £100, along with the £104 collection]. This item will be in the 2017/2018 accounts.

Andy Denker

Treasurer Friends of Meadow Park

31/10/17

Please Note:

The figures above are taken from the unaudited accounts.

The accounts have been forwarded to Neil Lambert [ East Leake Parish Clerk] for auditing –  
3/11/2017.

Andy also expressed his thanks to Lesley Bancroft who had been of great help for the last 5 years, and also thanked the new clerk, he also thanked Alan Barlow for his work in raising funds, as well as the members and the Village community.

## 6. Election Of Committee

Gwen Mountain asked to become a member of the committee, and this was proposed by Ann and seconded by Andy. So welcome Gwen!

The 2016/17 committee members were all re-elected by general consent.

The Committee for 2017/2018 will be:

Chairperson: Ann Weekley.

Secretary: Kevin Gibbons.

Treasurer: Andy Denker.

Publicity: Brenda Lewis.

Elected and co-opted members: Neil Hunter, Andrew Sandford, Eric Bryson, Alan Barlow, Trevor Jones, Ian Morrissey, John Roulstone, Mel Roper, Brenda Lewis, Gwen Mountain.

ELPC Representative: Marie Males

RBC Representative: Paul Phillips.

## 7. Arboretum and Work Parties Report (Andy Denker)

### ARBORETUM:

Inspections were carried out in January, April and August with another due in November. Two new trees were planted - the Alder and Downy /Brown Birch, with the inspection in June highlighting the continued hot weather which affected them - the Alder has smaller leaves than normal but looks in good health, the Downy Birch had a lot of leaves scorched, both trees have been watered over the period and hopefully will survive. All the other trees are doing well, some growing faster than others. Various labels and new posts have been fitted along with general maintenance.

Over the coming year all posts as required will be replaced, this will enable the labels to be situated at a suitable level for visitors, the November inspection will give numbers of posts and new labels as necessary.

### WORK PARTY

A very large thankyou to all those who took part

The Scheduled Activity days covered every month throughout the year except August. They generally followed the management plan with the flexibility to move along various projects.

Activities included: cutting back of Dogwood, Path/border clearance, Hedge laying, Planting of shrubs in Bateman and Lagoon Field, Removing Ragwort, Brownie and Butterfly walks and the annual litter pick of the brooks

Total hours worked - 253

The Unscheduled Activity days are carried out throughout the year and covered extra work required as necessary.

Liaise and assist in Forest School, wild flower planting, hedge laying ,planting and watering Bateman/Lagoon field, Arboretum tree inspections, update of tool store, extra Brownie walk, bat boxes, bench fitting

Total hours worked- 177.25

OVERALL TOTAL - 430.25 HRS

AED 31/10/17

## 8. Flower Report (Ann Weekly)

2017 has, like 2016 last year, had some unusual weather. Last year it was an unseasonably cold wet May and a record breaking hot September. This year was almost the reverse. There was some very hot weather in late May and June and September was largely wet and cold.

Flowers, however, are remarkable survivors. Last year's total was 92 species and this year's total is...92! It is not the same 92 species though. Flowers come and flowers go, sometimes for a season or two, sometimes permanently.

Our most exciting newcomer this year is a second variety of orchid - the southern marsh orchid. We are in the small area of England where the distribution of southern and northern marsh orchids overlaps but ours is definitely the southern variety. Have a good look at it next year as it may hybridise with the established common spotted orchids, which is why orchid ID can be a bit tricky!

Another striking new comer was viper's bugloss. We hope it will reappear next year but we've had some exciting newcomers in previous years such as crimson clover and wild clary which have been 'one season wonders'. The seeds of these flowers have been part of the Bee World mixes, planted by us but the new orchid arrived without our assistance! That won't necessarily assure its survival, as meadow saxifrage and devil's bit scabious arrived unaided but for one season.

This year, the total number of species I have recorded since I began in 2006 reached 150. The most we've had in any one year was 106 in 2015, followed by 101 in 2012. What is important however is not the number alone, that is almost certainly inaccurate. What is important is that the number of flowers, as apposed to the number of species, increases. That is what visitors to Meadow Park enjoy and I have had many people over the last couple of years say have lovely it looks.

## 9. Bird Report (Ann Weekly)

The mild winter of 2016-17 produced disappointing numbers of winter finches in the park during the first few months of the year. Winter thrushes were also low on numbers, with Fieldfares in particular noticeably absent. This quiet winter period soon gave way to a far more eventful spring of birding - warblers thrived, with Chiffchaff, Willow Warbler, Whitethroat and Blackcap all breeding in the park and being especially abundant in Hall Field. Lesser Whitethroats, a generally scarce bird in the park, were seen on numerous occasions during the spring and early summer, and 2017 certainly witnessed an increase in these birds, though whether they are now a regular in the breeding season or there were just many individual migrating through remains to be seen.

Previously scarce residents within the park boundaries that saw an increase in sightings during 2017 included Coal Tit, Great Spotted Woodpecker and of course the fantastic Little Egrets that have colonised Kingston Brook.

Alongside new residents came an apparent decline for some important birds in the park - reports of river-nesting birds such as Kingfishers, Mallard and Moorhens became worryingly sparse, perhaps due to disturbance in the river from dogs. Although these birds are still present, it appears that unfortunately they are no longer choosing to nest within the park.

Overall, however, 2017 has been a very successful birding year, albeit lacking some of 2016's rarer sightings such as Woodcock, Sedge Warbler and Peregrine, and with such cold weather early on in this winter season perhaps the first few months of 2018 promise to be even better.

And finally, what would a 2017 bird report be without a mention of the East Leake Bee-eaters - this wonderful event just goes to show that with good management truly anything can turn up!

## **10. Bee Worlds (Kevin Gibbons)**

We didn't create a new Bee World in 2017 due to other priorities.

Bee world 1 (created in 2013), is still going strong. It is now pretty much only bedstraw and birds foot trefoil, but is still popular with bees and butterflies every year.

Bee world 2 didn't perform too well this year, but still has plenty of wild flowers present, including ox-eye daisy, knapweed, red campion, bedstraw and buttercup. This bee world should have a good flowering year in 2018 (weather permitting).

Bee world 3, has been somewhat overtaken by grasses, but still has some birds foot trefoil, clover and knapweed in there. It just needs a bit of attention over the winter, to remove some of the grass and replace with a few wild flower plants.

The Oak Meadow strip is still looking great and full of wild flowers and attracts a great deal of bees, butterflies and other insects each year. Watch out for a good show of cowslips in there, and in Little Meadow in the spring.

Finally, we intend to plant a small bee world area in spring 2018 in the triangular area above the old willow structure.

## **11. Butterflies and Moths (Kevin Gibbons)**

Firstly, many thanks to Brian Johnson for gathering the data that was used for this report. Brian does regular transect walks around the park to ensure that data is comparable year on year.

In terms of weather, conditions have been similar to last year, quite changeable with very few long spells of sunshine, not ideal for butterfly populations.

However, populations are quite stable and we continue to record 21 species each year.

The Common Blue had a slightly better year, with the highest count being 15 (up 11 on last year, but still not back to the heady heights of 42 in 2015).

The early spring butterfly, Orange Tip also fared well with a top count of 21 (up 15 on last year). This would suggest that the field margins are holding up well, as its main larval foodplant is garlic mustard, and this can be found under hedgerows and in the margins.

Brimstone numbers are holding up well, and it was great to see that Brimstone eggs and caterpillars were found on all 6 of the alder buckthorn saplings that we planted in 2016. Some of the caterpillars would undoubtedly be predated, but who knows....we might see a surge of Brimstone butterflies in 2018.

The grassland butterflies fared well, with the Meadow Brown, and Gatekeeper showing slight increases in numbers, although the count for the Small Skipper was down to 138 (down by 142), but this was down from a very large count last year.

It was pleasing to see the Hay cut was later this year (11<sup>th</sup> of August), which should help butterfly numbers next year (weather permitting).

Finally, we had a good turnout at the Meadow Park butterfly walk on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> of July, with 19 people having a very pleasant walk around the park, seeing good numbers of butterflies, the highlight being a veritable swarm of butterflies and bees on a large patch of creeping thistle in Gibson's field.

	<b>Butterfly Name</b>	<b>Highest Count 2015</b>	<b>Highest Count 2016</b>	<b>Highest Count 2017</b>
1	Brimstone	3	7	5
2	Comma	8	2	7
3	Peacock	23	7	4
4	Red Admiral	4	1	2
5	Small Tortoiseshell	48	30	11
6	Painted Lady	1	0	2
7	Speckled Wood	9	4	11
8	Green-veined White	8	11	6
9	Holly Blue	3	2	1
10	Orange Tip	7	6	21
11	Large White	13	5	5
12	Small White	20	21	19
13	Small Copper	11	1	3
14	Brown Argus	18	3	5
15	Common Blue	42	4	15
16	Large Skipper	12	15	9
17	Meadow Brown	203	171	191
18	Essex Skipper	8	22	15
19	Ringlet	78	63	50
20	Small Skipper	189	280	138
21	Gatekeeper	34	9	43

The columns show the highest count recorded for a single transect throughout the butterfly season (April to September)

## 12. Kingston Brook (Ian Morrissey)

A new initiative at East Leake Carnival gave people an opportunity to see a range of invertebrates in the book. Obviously June is not the perfect time to do this, but it is clear that the general picture is that the brook is in serious decline and will not recover without intervention. In terms of the physical habitat of the brook it is even hard to see which way it is flowing in many areas, as historical IDB (Internal Drainage Board) scrapes have created low lake like areas in some places as well as a higher area by the railway crossing. These historical issues have therefore created problems culminating in the decline of invertebrates.

Ian plans to do a survey properly in the spring and autumn of next year. It is clear no one thing alone will help, so we will need to have a restoration strategy, identifying ideally what we would like to do. We will clearly need the Rushcliffe council on board, but we feel we can improve some marginal areas.

Ian has spoken to the IDB to understand their thinking, as well as funding opportunities and strategies. Visiting the pumping stations is very interesting, as it is clear that there are no real capacity issues, but we can still get discharges. The biggest issue is blockages to the local system by fats etc. Severn Trent are putting in new filter systems, which is good news for water courses.

#### Other general comments made in the meeting about the book

Conrad expressed concern that tankers were brought in to empty holding tanks, which suggests that there may be problems that we are not aware of, however there is no clear evidence that they are doing something that they shouldn't be.

Alan is to arrange another visit to the West Leake works next year.

The general consensus is that fish appear to be generally absent in the brook.

Due to the gravel quarry work, the flow of water through the Sheep wash Brook has reduced, which also therefore has an impact on the flow through Kingston Brook. The reduced flow of water, is one of the major problems. Extraction of water from the smaller brooks due to farming is also a potential reason for reduced flow.

Any new survey undertaken will be compared against the previous surveys.

### 13. Open Forum (All)

Brenda is in the process of producing more notelets. We were all asked to vote for our 6 favourite photographs (from the photo competition) from a board of photos that Brenda had brought in. Other groups in the village will also be asked to vote.

**Next Step: Brenda will then use the most popular photos to produce the notelets.**

Kevin raised the issue of the paths (which are eroding and holding water in some areas). There is a budget available for environmental improvements, and this may be the best way to progress this. We do however need to ensure that we use the right sort of material for the paths.

**Next Step: Ann /Kevin to raise this issue with the Parish Clerk / Parish Office and Mel to pick it up with the Amenities Committee.**

Kevin mentioned that a local resident wanted to start a casual walking group in the park. The general consensus was that this would be ok, but FOMP would not be responsible for organising it, but we may help to promote it.

It was mentioned, that some creature appears to be eating some of the Dogwood, it is thought this could be Muntjac Deer!

**13. Any Other Business?**

None

**14. Date of next AGM**

Wednesday November 14<sup>th</sup> 2018