

FRIENDS OF MEADOW PARK

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON THE 14th NOVEMBER 2018 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.
- 2. Minutes of Annual General Meeting of 8th November 2017** 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.

Publicity 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 up tonight. I'll try to keep it brief.

The main task we have achieved (eventually!) this year has been the updating of our Constitution. This was no easy task. We, Trevor, Andy and Gwen (before she regrettably had to resign from the Committee) and I met several times and I'd like to thank them all. Gwen's knowledge and clear thinking and Andy's endless patience when he had to type in yet more alterations were invaluable. In addition, the GDPR, the General Data Protection Regulation which applies from May this year has resulted in a lot of extra work. Thank you Brenda and Andy.

Now for the 'fun' bits! We had enjoyable and valuable sessions at the Meet Your Village event in April and at East Leake Carnival in June.

A lot of interest was shown in our display in the Village Hall which resulted in quite a few new members. Kev, as usual at these events, was brilliant at persuading people to join.

At the Carnival in June we had John demonstrating his willow working skills and Ian showing how many creatures were still to be found in Kingston Brook even though water-levels were extremely low due to the drought. The children, as always, were fascinated but many parents were equally enthralled. This all took place under Andrew's gazebo - a very welcome area of shade.

Forest School, aka the Year 3 pupils from Lantern Lane, goes from strength to strength. Apart from the regular Monday half-day sessions, we've had two full-day sessions. The first in June, was on a particularly hot day, when the shade of the trees and the cool water of Kingston Brook provided welcome relief especially to the adults. The second session was last month when activities ranged from negotiating an obstacle course, to making a Stone Age axe, to weaving small animal enclosures from willow.

Because pupil numbers are significantly higher than last year, the log circle, where the children sit to eat their lunch, has had to be extended. I have been asked to pass on the heartfelt thanks of the Forest School staff, to Andy and Conrad for all their hard work in doing this. They not only source all the logs required, but fix them with 'vandal-deterring' devices! In addition, the recently installed log tables are the 'icing on the cake'! Very many thanks to you both.

Meadow Park as you all know is an extremely popular dog walking area. Most dog walkers are very responsible at cleaning up after their dogs, some even cleaning up after others. Anne and Mel are still spraying offending deposits blue. Thank you both for your efforts. The park is also used by a regular walking group on Thursdays and is to be used later this month for a Fun Run as part of the Christmas Lights Switch-On festivities.

Brenda has again done a brilliant job on the Publicity front. The display boards have attracted a lot of appreciative attention, the newsletters keep everyone informed, and of course the monthly Working Party reminders do just that! Many thanks Brenda, and thanks also to Mel and others for our Facebook presence. Andy has been his usual extremely efficient self as Treasurer and Kev has continued doing an excellent job as secretary. They are also particularly good at calming me down when I'm getting unnecessarily het up about something.

Finally, as it's high time I stopped, I'd like to thank all the committee for their support and the sharing of their expertise not only during this year but throughout the last 3 years of being Chairman. I've learnt a lot in those years, not least about myself. So thank you all, I couldn't have done it without your support.

4. Secretary's Report (Kevin Gibbons)

Membership is slightly down this year, from 202 last year to 186 this year, but this is still a very good level of membership, largely due to recruitment drives at the Carnival and "meet your village" events.

Another great year with regards to positive work down the park in particular installation and painting of benches, maintenance of the Forest School area and general conservation work. It was particularly heartening to see some great turnouts for the work parties.

Young people do seem to be increasingly engaged by the park, mainly due to the Forest school activities. I've taken a couple of comments from local schoolchildren in the September issue of "East Leake Local News"

-The best thing about East Leake is Meadow Park and that its super friendly, There are fields to walk your dogs and people say "hi" when you pass them. You can ride your bike or scooter and pick blackberries which my brother Hector loves (Oscar-year 5)

- The park is my favourite place because it is the perfect area to run around. Also if you go round to the Meadows, it's an awesome location with many cycling trails and places to walk your dog. (Lara -year 6).

It made me think about what we all do to make the park look and feel a nice place...so what do we do?...We pick litter, we sow seeds, we plant flowers, we plant trees and bushes, we water the flowers the bushes and plants, we cut back the overgrowth, we trim and clear paths, we put in benches, we paint benches, we put information about the park in the information boards, we lay hedges, we help nature thrive, we do organised walks, and we help the Forest School. In short we all do loads of stuff to help make the park a lovely place to be in, and I think we all should be very proud of that.

I'd also like to use this opportunity to give praise to Ann, our outgoing chairman who has done a wonderful job across the board, but in particular with the Forest school which is a really important part of the parks future. I will really miss her as chairman, and I'm sure we all thank her immensely for all the hard work she has put into being Chairman, but I'm glad that she is not going far and will still be a vital part of the committee. Thank you Ann.

Finally I would like to thank everyone on the committee for their hard work and continued contributions with regards to moving the park forwards, here's looking forward to another great year.

5. Treasurer's Report (Andy Denker)

FRIENDS OF MEADOW PARK – TREASURERS REPORT

YEAR ENDING 31/10/2018

2017/18 was another exceptional year for FMP financially.

The account for 2017/18 started with a balance carried forward of £1911.79, which was made up of £1404.79 in general funds and £507 in Arboretum Sponsorship.

Membership subscriptions have remained constant over the last year, with a steady increase in new members, however to counter this, renewals have reduced. Membership now stands at 186. There was a very generous grant of £700 from East Midlands Airport Community Fund to greatly assist in the purchase of two benches for Playfield along with £100 from East Leake Neighbourhood watch and £104 from Mel's collection. Membership subscriptions to the year end were £859 along with donations of £451.50 [including £204.50 from Mel's collection boxes and a wonderful donation from the East Leake Dog show organisers of £105], both amounts going to general funds.

Overall income for the year was a total of £2072.50 which along with the opening balance of £1911.79 gave a total of **£3984.29** at the year end.

Expenditure for the year was **£1898.47**. The major items being £876 for the two new benches for Playfield, £186.89 for shrubs/wildflower seeds for the Forest School Area/ new willow bed and fencing for Little Meadow, £219.98 for the purchase of a new trolley and wheelbarrow and £273 for the purchase of new membership forms.

With the income for the year being **£3984.29** and the expenditure being **£1898.47** the overall balance of the account as at 31/10/2018 is **£2085.82**

This is allocated as:

General Funds: £1573.79

Arboretum Fund: £512.03

The above totals will be carried forward to the 2018/2019 financial year.

Andy Denker

Treasurer Friends of Meadow Park

30/10/18

Please Note:

The figures above are taken from the unexamined accounts.

The accounts have been forwarded to Neil Lambert [East Leake Parish Clerk] for Independent Examination – 30/10/18.

6. Election Of Committee

Ann Weekley stood down as chairperson. Kevin Shaw was proposed as the new chairperson by Mel Roper and seconded by Brenda Lewis and hence duly elected. Welcome Kevin!

Suzanne Halfacre asked to become a member of the committee, and this was proposed by Brenda Lewis and seconded by Kevin Gibbons, so also welcome Sue!

The 2017/18 committee members were all re-elected.

The Committee for 2018/2019 will be:

Chairperson: Kevin Shaw.

Secretary: Kevin Gibbons.

Treasurer: Andy Denker.

Publicity: Brenda Lewis.

Elected and co-opted members: Ann Weekley, Neil Hunter, Andrew Sandford, Eric Bryson, Alan Barlow, Trevor Jones, Ian Morrissey, John Roulstone, Brenda Lewis, Suzanne Halfacre.

ELPC Representative: Mel Roper.

RBC Representative: Paul Phillips.

7. Arboretum and Work Parties Report (Andy Denker)

ARBORETUM:

Inspections were carried out in January, April, August and October. Unfortunately the two new trees which were planted - the Alder and Downy /Brown Birch have again suffered in the hot weather this year, both trees have been watered over the period. This has enabled the Downy Birch to survive but the Alder has died. Also the Juniper has now died and the Larch has lost its needles early but hopefully has survived. Both the Alder and the Juniper will be replaced along with the addition of a second Beech tree and the Larch will be monitored. All the other trees are doing well, some growing faster than others. It was decided that the replacement of the posts and labels will not be carried out.

WORK PARTY

A very large thankyou to all those who took part over the year.

The Scheduled Activity days covered every month throughout the year except April which was cancelled due to flooding and 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 the Forest School area, Beeworld No 4, Removing Ragwort, Brownie and Butterfly walks and the annual litter pick of the brooks

Total hours worked - 274.25

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/scrub planting, hedge laying , Arboretum tree inspections, update of tool store, bench fitting, watering trees, attending carnival

Total hours worked- 328.75

OVERALL TOTAL - 603 HRS

AED 11/11/17

8. Flower Report (Ann Weekly)

You don't need me to tell you that 2018 has been an unusual year meteorologically speaking.

From late February to early March we were in the grip of the so-called Beast from the East. Temperatures fell to 20 degrees below zero and Kingston Brook froze over and was covered in snow.

By July, temperatures had reached 30 degrees above.

That's a temperature range of 90 degrees in 'old money' (degrees Fahrenheit that is). Add to that months with virtually no rain, and an early mowing of the meadows, in an attempt to minimise the risk of fire, and it's a wonder there were any flowers at all!

Flowers are however great survivors and I've recorded 86 species so far this year. There will definitely have been more than this. One pair of eyes will inevitably miss quite a few! I was amazed how rapidly some species regrew after the mowing, despite ongoing drought conditions.

We had an interesting newcomer this year, pepper saxifrage. Unlike the meadow saxifrage which appeared for one year only in 2012, pepper saxifrage is not a member of the saxifrage family but is a member of the carrot family and is hopefully made of sterner stuff! However these brief appearances are not unusual. Fortunately the southern marsh orchid, which appeared for the first time last year, is still with us and in increased numbers this year.

I have this year's list (86 species to date) and the list of species seen since 2006 (152 to date) if anyone is interested.

In my view however, the most important feature of the flowers in Meadow Park is that most species are spreading and the sight of meadowland, rich in flowers, is giving a lot of pleasure to a lot of Park users, not to mention many insects! New species and rare species have their place, but much pleasure is derived from fields of buttercups, daisies and, yes, even dandelions!

9. Publicity Report (Brenda Lewis)

All the usual events and notifications have been undertaken in the past year to continue to raise the profile of Friends of Meadow Park. The meet your village event in April was successful and brought in new members, the Carnival in June gave us an opportunity to demonstrate some willow weaving and encourage children to take a closer look at the 'mini beasts' in the brook.

The village website has been under cyber-attack this year and as a consequence has been out of action intermittently. The problem seems to have been resolved and all seems to be going well now. Kevin Gibbons and Mel Roper continue to update our Facebook pages with comments and photographs.

Our A5 publicity leaflet has been updated and reprinted and we have 2,000 copies to hand out when needed at events etc. We had hoped to print a set of notelets featuring the park, but this has been put on hold. The stark reality is that that park is not very photogenic so we need to re-think what to do here.

We are indebted to Mike Elliot who writes articles about Meadow Park for the local press on a regular basis. He is invaluable as a reporter for villages in the area.

10. Bee Worlds (Kevin Gibbons)

We decided to create a new bee world (4) at Bateman road entrance to provide a visual display of wild flowers. This was dug and sown during our February and March working parties.

Unfortunately April proved to be very wet, resulting in the flooding of this bee world just after the seeds had germinated. I decided to “bale out” the bee world a few times, the most amusing time being when the brook was flooding in behind me at the same time ...a sort of King Canute moment! I think next year we need to choose a location less liable to flooding!



Thereafter followed our wonderful summer....and the bee world had to be watered!!! However a good proportion of the plants survived. ...and we did finally get some sort of result....



All other bee worlds, and the oak meadow strip continue to be flower rich and should provide another rich supply of nectar for bees and other insects next year.

11. Butterflies and Moths (Kevin Gibbons)

It has been an interesting year for butterflies in the park this year....not without its challenges!

April was a very wet month resulting in some flooding in the park, however from May onwards we experienced a run of warm and sunny weather with the final outcome being England's joint hottest summer on record. A local Lepidopterist (20 miles away) recorded 73 days of sunny and hot weather (above 23 degrees centigrade) between the 1st of April and 31st of August 2018, compared to 37 days in 2016 and 29 days in 2015.

This however did not help our grassland species numbers, as the hot weather impacted adversely on many of the caterpillar food plants (mainly the grasses). Butterfly numbers were also reduced due to the early hay cut on the 9th of July (necessitated by fire concerns as the grasses dried out in the hot weather).

Even before the hay cut, the meadow butterflies were significantly lower this year, highest count numbers were: - Meadow Brown 160 (2017), 41 (2018); Ringlet 50 (2017), 22(2018); Small Skipper 138 (2017), 10 (2018); Large Skipper 9 (2017), 3 (2018), Essex Skipper 15 (2017), 1 (2018); and Gatekeeper 43 (2017), 5 (2018).

Other butterflies that struggled this year were the Peacock, Small Tortishell, Red Admiral and Comma.

On a more positive note, the Small and Large White butterflies had a good year, with the Small White having a high count of 33 (versus 12 last year) and Large White with a high count of 6, versus 3 last year.

Speckled Wood and Holly Blue numbers also held up well against last year with highest counts being 9 and 4 respectively.

Going forwards it is clear that butterflies (as well as moths, bees and other insects) are going to need all the help they can get, and with this in mind it is suggested that we should leave some key flower rich areas (such as the arboretum) uncut in some years to allow species to complete their life cycles and to overwinter.

12. Kingston Brook (Conrad Oatey)

Responsibility for Kingston Brook is with the Trent Valley Drainage Board, who have a large area to look after, going up as far as Doncaster. The Parish Council and Ann (chairman of the Friends of Meadow Park) have recently had a couple of meetings with them to discuss future maintenance plans for the brook. The purposes of this work will be to remove blockages in the stream such as willows and reeds (work is planned to be done this winter). The most visible work will be on the willows, as it is likely that most of these will be pollarded (to avoid them splitting and falling into the brook). As part of this work, some vegetation on the south side may have to be cut back in order to get access into the brook. The understanding is that this work will be done sensitively.

Thanks were conveyed to Paul Phillips with regards to his involvement in getting Streetwise to maintain the stretch of Sheepwash Brook (between the road and the metal sculpture at the entrance to the park), which has found to be unregistered land.

The other ideas for the brook re-modelling are still under consideration, and may (or may not) come back to us for consideration at a later stage.

13. Open Forum (All)

Paul Phillips kindly took the opportunity (on behalf of Rushcliffe Borough Council) to thank the Committee and all Friends Of Meadow Park for their help and hard work with regards to the park.

Alan asked the new Chairman (Kevin Shaw) if there was anything he wanted to drive forwards in the coming year. Kevin stated that it was too early to say, but did state that he believed that Meadow Park is essentially a leisure facility to be used for the benefit of people in the village.

Michael Webb-Ingall asked if there could be a laminated map of the park created. Brenda explained that there is a map of the park on the new membership application forms.

14. Any Other Business?

None

15. Date of next AGM

Wednesday November 13th 2019

