

FRIENDS OF MEADOW PARK

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON THE 13th NOVEMBER 2019 AT THE PARISH OFFICE, EAST LEAKE.

Present: Kevin Shaw (Chairman), Kevin Gibbons (Secretary) plus 6 Committee Members and 6 other Members. Total 14.

1. Apologies for absence: Eric, Trevor, Andy, Brenda, Suzanne, John.

2. Minutes of Annual General Meeting of 14th November 2018 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.

Butterflies Moths and Bee Worlds - see item 10.

Forest School - see item 11.

Open Forum - see item 12.

Any Other Business - see item 13.

Date Of Next AGM - see item 14.

3. Chairman's Report (Kevin Shaw)

Good evening Ladies and Gentlemen, thank you for coming along this evening.

I hope that you will all be able to join us for a drink after the formalities, once again kindly provided by ELPC.

I am sat here as your chairman, but must confess that I feel very much a fraud, because I have done very little over the past 12 months.

This meeting does, however, give me the opportunity to thank, on your behalf, those people who do go the extra mile.

Three I must mention by name are KEV, ANDY, and BRENDA.

Kev, as you all know, is our superb Secretary who not only produces very detailed minutes after each meeting, he holds my hand at the meetings.

Andy is our Treasurer who keeps tight control of our finances and produces very detailed reports so we all know exactly how we stand.

Both these guys are also very hands on when anything needs doing in the Park.

Anyone who has been involved in the production of a newsletter will know what a chore it can be, but Brenda does it month after month, as well as producing other publicity material for us.

The last two that I wish to mention by name are both former Chairmen ANN and ALAN. Ann continues to do much of what she did as chairman, carrying out wild flower surveys and helping at the Forest School. Alan showed outstanding negotiating skills in persuading Notts. County Council to agree to part fund the refurbishment of the paths, something we were originally told would not qualify.

All of the committee, however, deserve a big thank you from us all because many of them undertake tasks on a regular basis that often go unseen and unheralded. Thank you one and all.

Finally a big thank you to the small but very enthusiastic group of volunteers who turn out every month to undertake essential maintenance in the park.

So, that completes my report, thank you for listening to me.

4. Secretary's Report (Kevin Gibbons)

Membership is slightly up this year, from 186 last year to 190 this year, but this is still a very good level of membership.

Although we didn't do the Carnival this year, we were represented at the "meet your village" event, which helps build our exposure and added 12 new memberships.

It is great that we have a new Chairman (Thanks Kevin, great to have you as Chairman)

Everyone on the committee has more than done their bit, here are just a few (by no means all), of the things that spring to mind:

- Improving, fixing and maintaining the Forest School area
- Working with the Forest School Children
- Keeping Hall Field under control
- Maintaining bird and bat boxes
- Planting bulbs and wild flowers
- Hedge laying
- Building our profile through publicity, new banners and information in the plinths
- Introducing high vis Meadow high vis vests
- New fencing along Bateman Road
- Lots of general conservation work
- New paths!

Finally I would personally 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.

Meadow Park Strollers

The Meadow Park Strollers Thursday afternoon walks in the park have proved very popular again this year. There have been as many as 20 people joining the walks to enjoy some gentle exercise and see the changing seasons in the park. The walk is now a recognised Health Walk as part of the Rushcliffe Move and Mingle programme.

They now have four leaders and are at the park every Thursday at 1.30 pm, meeting at the Millstone for their 30 minute stroll. They follow their walks with a trip to Chefs Café for cups of tea and a chat, and warmly welcome any new walkers.

The repairs to the paths have made their walks all the more enjoyable recently, even during the wet weather.

On 30th November they will be at the park walking the Santa Fun Run.

So a great use of the park by this walking group.

5. Treasurer's Report (Andy Denker)

FRIENDS OF MEADOW PARK - TREASURERS REPORT

YEAR ENDING 31/10/2019

2018/19 was another exceptional year for FMP financially.

The account for 2018/19 started with a balance carried forward of £2085.82, which was made up of £1573.79 in general funds and £512.03 in Arboretum sponsorship.

Membership subscriptions have again remained constant over the last year, with the usual new member/non renewal balance..Membership now stands at 190. There was a very generous grant of £400 from British Gypsum which covered the purchase of wild flower plug plants and bulbs along with the refurbishment of the display lecterns. Membership subscriptions to the year end were £743 along with donations of £913 [Mel's collection boxes and the East Leake Dog show organisers again providing welcome funds along with £299 for a new bench], both amounts going to general funds. There was also very generous donations totalling £280 to the Arboretum sponsorship fund. However the major news for 2019 was due to the hard work put in by Alan Barlow who obtained a grant from the Notts County Council Local improvement scheme. This funding is split between NCC and ELPC and is for a total of £28608 [£14308 each]. This has been used to improve the accessibility within the park. At the time of this report £10728 [75%] has been transferred from NCC to the FMP account and thus the payment will be in the 2019/2020 accounts.

Overall income for the year was a total of £12672 which along with the opening balance of £2085.82 gave a total of £14757.82 at the year end.

Expenditure for the year was £1501.36. the major items being £305 for nest boxes/wild flower seeds and plants, £311 plug plants/wild flower bulbs. £301 from the Arboretum account for new trees and associated equipment.

With the income for the year being £14757.82 and the expenditure being £1501.36 the overall balance at the of the account as at 31/10/2019 is £13256.46

This is allocated as:

General Funds: £2037.56

Arboretum Fund: £490.90

Path Accessibility Fund: £10728

The above totals will be carried forward to the 2019/2020 financial year

Andy Denker

Treasurer Friends of Meadow Park

31/10/19

Please note:

1] Outstanding payments to be made from the above in 2019/2020: General funds - Fencing/Sleepers £512.30, Weed control mat £54.99, Broxap bench £299. Path Accessibility fund: £28608

2] the figures above are taken from the unexamined accounts.

3] The accounts have been forwarded to Neil Lambert [East Leake Parish Clerk] for independent examination - 5/11/2019

6. Election Of Committee

John Roulstone stood down as a committee member. At this moment in time therefore we have a vacancy to fill

The remaining 2018/19 committee members were all re-elected.

The Committee for 2019/2020 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, 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. New/replacement trees were added - Beech, Wild Cherry and Silver Birch plus another Alder. With the hot weather again being evident this year, all trees have been watered over the period and have survived. The Larch, although its needles have regrown this year, is still not happy and will be monitored. There is also a major concern with the Sweet Chestnut which is possibly suffering with a virus. All the other trees are doing well, some growing faster than others. The Juniper is still not big enough to transplant to its position and will be planted when ready.

WORK PARTY

A very large thankyou to all those who took part over the year, we have a very hard working dedicated team of regular volunteers on the workdays.

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 wild flower plug plants, sowing of wild flower seeds, removing Ragwort, Brownie and Butterfly walks and the regular litter picking.

Total hours worked - 275.25

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 planting, hedge laying , Arboretum tree inspections, fencing, aggregate bund, tree planting watering trees, wild flower count, nest boxes, bulb planting

Total hours worked- 347.5

OVERALL TOTAL - 622.75 HRS

AED 4/11/19

8. Flower Report (Gwen Mountain)

I took over the flower census at the end of January. Hence this report covers the period February to November 2019. The census involves walking the length and breadth of Meadow Park once a month, usually taking about 2 hours, recording the wild flowers in bloom.

A total of 82 different flowers were recorded. Unfortunately, the orchids flowered during my holiday period and then were cut when the hay was harvested before my return so I was unable to record any orchids in bloom. The highlight of the period of this report was to see the profusion of cowslips which have spread to most areas of Meadow Park.

Other points to note are that white nettle again flowered during each month of the report. Red clover is still in flower in November and field scabious re-flowered in October.

My aim for the coming 12 months is to record not only the first months when flowers bloom but also each successive month of blooming to record longevity of each species.

9. Publicity Report (Brenda Lewis)

The usual output publicising our work and keeping members up to date was undertaken. This is:

- Two newsletters (one in January and one in August)
- An article in the East Leake Times every month
- Posters (of information and interest) placed in the notice board plinths in the park on a regular basis. Information posters in the Parish Office notice board to advertise FoMP and give important dates such as working party mornings.
- Regular updates on what is going on in the park to our members by a monthly email
- Our pages on the village website are up to date with relevant changes made to the various forms that can be downloaded.
- The box of information on FoMP in the library has been updated

In March this year we bought two banners 6ft x 2ft and two banners 3ft x 1ft from Mick Hart who lives in East Leake. These can be used for events such as 'Meet Your Village' and be quite eye-catching.

Recently we have been approached by East Leake Village News to write an article each month for them. The first article has been sent off and in due course we will see what happens to it.

All our publicity leaflets etc are up to date with the changes to our membership re household membership and the regulations re contact details.

Facebook

Mel Roper looks after our Facebook pages and does a splendid job.

10. Butterflies. Moths and Bee Worlds (Kevin Gibbons)

Butterfly monitoring in the park was very limited this year and was adversely impacted by the early mowing of Meadow Park, due to a miscommunication with the mowing contractor.

Following on from last year when the park was mown early (9th of July) the park was mown this year on the 10th of July. Unfortunately this is the time when the main grassland species (Meadow Brown, Ringlet, Small and Large Skippers etc) are laying their eggs, or have just started their life cycle as small caterpillars. The situation was further compounded by the fact that the arboretum was also mown, cutting down all of the nectar rich flowers (many of which had not yet produced seed)...swathes of purple flowering knapweed, Greater Burnet, Birds Foot Trefoil, Bedstraw etc. all disappeared overnight. This also obviously adversely impacted on many other insects such as beetles, grasshoppers, spiders, bees etc, and also the food chain above them.

It is hoped that going forwards we can move towards a later grass cut (start of August at the earliest), and keep some areas uncut on a rotational basis. This will involve the Chairman and myself working more closely with the mowing contractor to co-ordinate cutting.

Overall however, there was a total of 21 species of butterflies recorded in the park, albeit in low numbers, with the highlight being the sighting of 2 Painted Lady butterflies in the park on the 28th of June (this is a migratory butterfly that is generally uncommon in the UK year on year, although this year was an exception).

The bee world this year did pretty well (picture bellow) and was well used by various species of bees.



It is clear (from a national perspective) that we face an upcoming crisis for Butterflies, other insects and wildlife generally. The latest findings in the United Kingdom show that since rigorous scientific monitoring began in the 1970s there has been a 13% decline in average abundance across wildlife studied and that the declines continue unabated. Butterflies and moths have been particularly hard hit with numbers of butterflies down by 17% and moths down by 25%, so it is important that going forwards we must do whatever we can in our own little area to help protect and hopefully grow the number of species in our park.

11. Forest School (Ann)

For anyone who is wondering who or what Forest School is, I will explain. Forest School is a programme of outdoor activities which are aimed at encouraging children to enjoy being outdoors while at the same time respecting the natural environment. There are creative activities such as making bird feeders, making ink from oak galls, planting saplings and building shelters from sticks; there are sessions where they learn the names of trees, of birds and of creatures in the brook; and of course there are fun activities - scrambling under the cargo net and walking the tightrope.

Lantern Lane School use Meadow Park for their Forest School programme. The children are Year 3 pupils (7-8 year olds). During the last 12 months I've been asked to do various activities. September was tree ID time, followed by bird recognition in late February and identifying creatures they fished out of Kingston Brook in July. The latter two activities were particularly successful as I had experts with me Eric (Bryson) for the birds and Ian (Morrissey) for the brook. The sessions would have been a lot poorer without them. I'm very grateful to them both.

The 'base' for the Forest School activities is in the wooded area in Gibson Field. There is a log circle where the children (and staff!) eat their sandwiches, protected on particularly wet days by tarpaulins attached to six tall poles. For the provision of both, log circle and poles, we owe a huge debt of gratitude to Andy (Denker) and Conrad (Oatey). They not only provided the logs but had to do the fixing, not once but twice. The first log circle logs were stolen so they wired the second lot together and into the ground as well. History repeated itself with the poles. They had been worked loose and piled up but fortunately we saw them before they were collected and hid until they could be re-interred.

To sum up, it's been a very successful year and the vast majority of the children are very enthusiastic. An enthusiasm we hope they will retain as they get older. I see them from time to time in the village and often, to their parents' bemusement, and indeed amusement, tell me about something they've seen in the Park. I'm usually introduced as 'That's Ann. We know her!'

12. Open Forum (All)

Willows - Neil

The willows have been pollarded by the middle bridge, but we are not sure who did this.....perhaps the Trent Valley Drainage Board?

Next Steps - Kevin Shaw to find out who has done this, as there are 2 further up that also need to be done.

Paths - Andrew

Andrew has had feedback from a park user who has asked if the hollows are to be filled in. It was discussed that we will probably need more chippings for repairs going forwards. We agreed that as it is a rural path, we can expect grass encroachment, and as the park is essentially floodplain we have to expect problems with the paths staying usable and to a good standard. Alan added that the contractor had built up the paths that were sunken and added a couple of land drains free of charge. The recent flooding has been unfortunate in terms of timing as the new path topping may not have settled properly, but at least we do have some material in the holding bunker for repairs.

Next Steps - Alan to speak to the contractor to see what we can do to maintain the paths, we also need to find out if we can find someone to deliver us some Breedon gravel and see if the Parish Council team could roll it (firm it down).

Kingston Brook and Pumping Station - Ian and Alan

Ian informed us that during the flooding that water is coming into the park by Heron bridge (which is its lowest point). There is probably little point in raising the bank there, as it will only break somewhere else. There was also further discussion about the flow going in and out of the pumping station and the situation with the storm flaps getting stuck due to the amount of water in the brook.

Following on from Alan taking samples of water from the Playing field following the pumping station overflowing, Rushcliffe found high levels of ammonia in the samples. Alan was told that it was pointless testing this for coliform bacteria, as this would be present (as indicated by the high levels of ammonia). We are also now aware that discharges from the pumping station are permitted during storm conditions, and these are “frequent”. Mixed water (clear from roofs and brown from toilets etc) is pumped at 58 litres per second to the sewerage farm, over and above that it goes into Kingston brook. In terms of the pumping station, nothing is likely to change soon, despite there being a “stagegate 1” investigation by Severn Trent looking at the issues, as this is purely exploratory.

In the meantime we do need to warn people when there are sewerage discharges that affect the park (Ann Price of the Environmental Health Dept at Rushcliffe BC is looking into this).

The storm tanks in the centre of the village hold 308 cubic metres of untreated waste water, they discharge into Kingston Brook when they overflow at 2 metres of depth.

Mel mentioned that there appears to be no water in the lagoon, even when the park floods, it would be useful to understand the reason for this.

We also generally feel that we need to raise the profile of pollution in the village to try and get something eventually done about the situation.

We should do some sort of “write up” about this. We could perhaps talk to the chairman of the Allotment Committee as he works for Severn Trent. We need to be careful with our wording and get our facts correct and keep emotions out of it.

Next Steps- Alan to do a small report on the subject.

13. Any Other Business?

None

14. Date of next AGM

Wednesday November 11th 2020

