MINUTES OF THE FRIENDS OF MEADOW PARK COMMITTEE MEETING
4th March 2020

1) APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Andrew, Kevin, Sue, Paul.
Present: Andy, Eric, Ann, Kev, Ian, Mel, Brenda, Alan, Neil, Trevor.

2) MINUTES OF THE FMPC MEETING OF JAN 2020 WERE RATIFIED.

3) MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES PLUS DEVELOPMENTS:

Arboretum: (Andy) Inspection carried out on 2/3/20, the buds on all trees are showing signs of life, which is good news considering the amount of water in the park. Only time will tell if any permanent damage has been done. Snowdrops, Daffodils and Snakeshead Fritillaries have been planted, look out for these in the next month or two. We also discussed planting of new trees, and agreed that this shouldn't be in the current Meadowland, but could be done along the side recently cleared adjacent to Bateman Road. Trevor asked what trees produce the most oxygen, and whether grassland or trees was better for trapping carbon and producing oxygen **(Information on this is shown at the bottom of these minutes).**

Forest School update: (Ann / Andy) – A further supply of den building material was supplied by the Feb work party. The school has been temporarily suspended over the last few weeks due to the flooding and possible problems due to sewage (Rushcliffe has advised that the area shouldn't be used for at least 3 weeks because of this). The log circle has been moved by the flood water and will need re aligning.

Grass cutting: (Kev)
NEXT STEPS – The Chairman (Kevin) to tell Richard that we are ok with the grass being cut as agreed in early August, and also to tell Richard that we do not want the Arboretum cutting.

Bird box update: (Eric) - Half of the boxes put up don't have guards, this is to be resolved after the bird nesting season or early next year.
NEXT STEPS – Eric and Andy will sort out putting up any additional boxes.

Publicity / Competitions / Website / Facebook update: (Brenda) – Brenda to send out her next e-mail with information about the next working party, and what to see in the park on Thursday.
It was mentioned that it may be useful to send occasional information to Rushcliffe about what we are doing in the park, Brenda now sends it to Conrad who passes it on to Rushcliffe.

Meadow Park clothing: (Mel) – Mel asked who would want a polo shirt and sizes, she will contact Kevin to get his requirements and will progress when she can.

Butterfly Bank: (Kev) – Kev explained how the bank is to be developed in the top corner of Playfield. The plan is to dig the turf in front of the bank and put down a semi permeable membrane and then put limestone chippings on top. It was stated that any further projects like this should really go through the Amenities Committee
NEXT STEPS – Kevin to send pictures of the bank to Conrad.

Gotham Nature Reserve: (Brenda / Kev) – Brenda has linked up with Martin Nunn of the Gotham group, as we have promised to publicise each other's activities. We will build up our relationship and links in small steps and see what comes of it.

STWA and Kingston Brook: (Alan) – The samples taken during flooding by Alan showed the presence of pollution. This resulted in Anne Price discussing this with Glen Yeomans (Rushcliffe Council) who visited the pumping station. Alan asked if we should put up signage in the village warning the residents about pollution at times of flooding, but had little initial response to this. Alan also asked them what could stop this happening, to be told that separating the pipes between sewage and run off is the only answer but this would cost millions of pounds. However, putting in a new 10 inch pipe to the sewage farm from the pumping station would also help.

The Environment Agency do have the license to apply fines to get STW to do something.

Neil mentioned that Kingston Brook does not show as flooded on flood maps for some reason.

Alan had a follow up meeting with the Trent Valley Drainage Board last week and continues to push forward for some sort of signage (working in conjunction with Neil Lambert). Having been passed around via Rushcliffe Borough Council, Notts County Council Floodteam, and even the Highways Agency, Alan finally got some action by phoning Andy Brown (Rushcliffe Councillor) who immediately got onto Kay Cutts (the CEO of the County Council), who held an emergency meeting and asked those involved to provide appropriate wording for signage at times of flooding and sewage egress. The Environment Agency and Severn Trent have been now told to provide the appropriate signage to warn of pollution when it floods.

There is a 2004 agreement about discharging into the brook, which states that Severn Trent have to remove sanitary items etc. that hang in the bushes and trees after flooding.

We do have some concern that the "old" part of the brook (behind Eric's land) may be dug out and straightened (and in turn ruined). The amount of rain this winter created a flash flood that has never happened before.

Alan has taken pictures and put these on facebook and there are also some great aerial pictures of East Leake (on the community page).

Trent Valley Drainage Board are also still talking about the possibility of digging a new brook to alleviate the problem!!...but we know that this will not work.

One of the only real actions that could be taken is to change the storm tank (build the walls higher).

The flooding issue was due to be raised with our MP (Ruth Edwards), at a meeting at our village hall, but this was unfortunately cancelled due to the coronavirus outbreak.
NEXT STEPS – Alan to keep us updated with any progress.

All Terrain Brush Cutter: (Kev) – We have been offered the use of an all-terrain brush cutter by Rushcliffe (via Paul Phillips). We discussed if we should take this offer up, and agreed that we would use it for either Hall field or along the northern edge of the park
NEXT STEPS – Kev to ask Paul if we could have the cutter for a day in the autumn.

Evening Post – Do 1 Thing: (Kev) – We discussed whether to do an article for the Evening Post, but it was generally agreed that we didn't need to contribute to this. However, we agreed to carry this forward to our next meeting, as we may decide to use this forum to raise our flooding issues if nothing gets resolved.

Petrol strimmers: (Kev/Andy) – We have been offered a strimmer by one of our members who lives on Burton Walk. It needs a bit of a clean up, and will be passed onto the Parish Council. Ian Fernside also has a strimmer that he has offered us, this to be passed to Andy and then onto the Parish council. We can use these in the park as Alan and Eric are trained to use them.

NEXT STEPS – Kev to ask Ian if he also has any protective gear to go with his strimmer and if so, pass this and the strimmer on to Andy.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Fish Tanks (Anne): We have 2 fish tanks left over from the last carnival we attended. Eric is going to have 1.
NEXT STEPS – Ian to see if the other one can be utilised.

Carnival (Andy): We discussed if we would do the carnival this year and agreed that we would. Ian, Alan and Kev agreed to be involved.
NEXT STEPS – Andy to book a space.
– Kev to check with Andrew that he could lend us his gazebo again.
(Note – this event is now unlikely to happen due to the Pandemic).

Bird Boxes (Eric): Eric has noticed that in the new estate next to the Playing Fields that there are some bat boxes in the trees, maybe put up by developers?

Willow (Mel): Mel asked if we should cut some more off the willows? We agreed to cut some (not too thick) on our next work party, these could be used around the willow structure.

FRIENDS OF MEADOW PARK
TREASURERS REPORT – STATEMENT OF ACCOUNT 4/3/20

Many thanks to the membership for their continued support of FMP, the renewal of membership stands at 75% at present.

The balance in the account at the 1st of November 2019 was	£13256.46
This is split between: General Funds	£2037.56
Arboretum Sponsorship	£490.90
Path Accessibility Fund	£10728

The remainder of the grant from NCC - £3576 and ELPC - £14304 has been received, which has allowed the payment to be completed.

SUMMARY OF ACCOUNT

CREDIT

Initial Balance in Bank	£13256.46
Membership Subscriptions [to date]	£489
Donations	£90
Grants – NCC and ELPC	£17880
TOTAL	£31722.46

DEBIT

Wine/Food for AGM	£42.60
ELPC – photocopying	£16.60
Heavy duty weed control matting	£55
3x bags of postcrete for bench	£23.67
TOTAL	£29631.64

Balance as at 15/1/20 : Total		£2090.82
	General Funds	£1599.92
	Arboretum Sponsorship	£490.90

Outstanding items that require payment are as follows: (None).

Andy Denker [Treasurer] FMP 3/3/20

NEXT STEPS – Kev asked if we could purchase some semi permeable membrane for the new butterfly bank, Ian said that he might be able to get some cocoa fibre matting. Kev to tell Ian the size of matting required.

NEXT STEPS – Brenda said she would do another chase up on subs if she knows who to target.

5) FUNDING APPLICATIONS – (Alan) We do not have any requirements for funding at the moment, but Leon Flowerdew has offered us 2 free loads of chipping that we could use for paths etc. in the park, or in the Forest School circle.
NEXT STEPS – Anne to check with Lisa that it is ok to do this.

6) ACTIVITIES UPDATE: (Andy)
The Activity days in February covered:

Scheduled:
Coppicing of hazel in Bateman road copse, planting of trees along Frank Kirk way[supplied by RBC], cut back of Blackthorn adj to adult fitness. Litter pick
Total hours worked to date – 111.5

Unscheduled Activity days in January/February/March covered:
Additional work on drainage in corner of Playfield, assist in chipping of Russian vine and spread onto path - Bateman Rd.
Spread chippings from sycamore[churchyard] onto Bateman Rd path. Arboretum and general Park inspection.
Total hours worked to date – 30.75
Overall Total – 142.25 AED 2/3/20

7) NEXT ACTIVITY DAYS
Activity days are on the second Saturday of each month (weather permitting). Currently cancelled due to Pandemic.

8) NEXT MEETING DATES (2020)

- Sept 2nd (tbc)

Grassland or trees as Carbon sinks (Source UC Davis article)

Looking ahead, our model simulations show that grasslands store more carbon than forests because they are impacted less by droughts and wildfires," said lead author Pawlok Dass, a postdoctoral scholar in Professor Benjamin Houlton's lab at UC Davis. "This doesn't even include the potential benefits of good land management to help boost soil health and increase carbon stocks in rangelands."

Carbon up in smoke

Unlike forests, grasslands sequester most of their carbon underground, while forests store it mostly in woody biomass and leaves. When wildfires cause trees to go up in flames, the burned carbon they formerly stored is released back to the atmosphere. When fire burns grasslands, however, the carbon fixed underground tends to stay in the roots and soil, making them more adaptive to climate change.

“In a stable climate, trees store more carbon than grasslands,” said co-author Houlton, director of the John Muir Institute of the Environment at UC Davis. “But in a vulnerable, warming, drought-likely future, we could lose some of the most productive carbon sinks on the planet.