FRIENDS OF MEADOW PARK

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON THE 1stth NOVEMBER 2023 AT THE PARISH OFFICE, EAST LEAKE.

Present: Kevin Gibbons (Chairman and Secretary), Andy Denker (Treasurer) plus 10 Committee members and 2 other members. Total = 14.

1. **Apologies for absence:** Neil, Ian.

2. **Minutes of Annual General Meeting of 9th November 2022 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.

Forest School, Arboretum and Work Parties Report – see item 7.

Flower Report – see item 8.

Publicity Report (including Meadow Park Strollers) – see item 9.

Butterflies Moths and Bee Worlds – see item 10.

Open Forum – see item 11.

Any Other Business – see item 12.

Date Of Next AGM – see item 13.

3. **Chairman's Report 2023 (Kevin Gibbons)**

It seems to have been a very busy year!

The 5 yearly Meadow Park Management Plan was reviewed with Rushcliffe Borough Council and East Leake Parish Council and brought up to date. The main changes were to the grass cutting regimes. Following the tender process, we now have a new farmer doing the yearly hay cut, and

this worked very well this year. We are also now leaving either the Arboretum or Stonebridge Field uncut on alternate years in order to allow invertebrates, amphibians and small mammals to survive undisturbed through a full year. It enables insects and other invertebrates to fully complete their life cycles, and also enables the grassland plants and flowers to complete their life cycles and produce seed, which provides a food source for winter birds and small mammals. This should create a great biodiversity boost to the park going forwards. We also made progress in the following areas :

- Ensuring that firebreaks are cut regularly in both of these fields by the East Leake Parish Groundsmen.
- Using the Streetwise team to cut the Arboretum for the first time this year.
- Utilising the Green Climber for a full day to tackle the heavy and encroaching scrub in selected areas.
- Mowing narrower paths in Gibson's Field.

In conjunction with Rushcliffe Borough Council we have also (this year) replaced the old Meadow Park signage at the entrance points to the park (which were worn out or missing) with new updated signs.

We made progress this year with regards to hedge laying thanks to Andy and Conrad's expertise in this area

We have also re-worked the butterfly bank, adding in additional limestone chippings, and this should be very successful in increasing our butterfly populations.

I must make special mention of the stalwart work of Andy Denker, not only as Treasurer, but for all the organisation he does with work parties and Forest School, as well as co-ordinating the path repairs in conjunction with the Parish Council and Contractors. It's a lot of time and hard work he puts in, so thank you Andy!

Next Year

We will undoubtedly do some more wildflower planting, hedge cutting and copse management (thinning out) in the new year, and we also have some "control your dogs" signs to put up. I am also looking forward to the wildflower leaflets that Diana and Mary are working on, following the wonderful butterfly leaflet they produced this year.

Next year is not going be without its challenges as we deal with the new pumping station development, but I am convinced that with the enthusiasm and expertise on our Committee we can use this to our advantage to hopefully get some added biodiversity benefits into the park.

My personal thanks go to all the members of the Committee and to all of our other members, as we look forward to a busy but fruitful year doing our bit for the environment, and the people of the village.

Thank you.

4. **Secretary's Report 2023 (Kevin Gibbons)**

It has been a very busy year administratively this year, and I had a quick look at Meadow Park related e-mails that have come through my inbox, (both as Chairman and Secretary) and just looking at the last 6 months there were 282….I knew we had been busy!

Membership is up this year, from 241 to 274, a very good level of membership.

Myself and Brenda set up a stall at the Village Carnival again this year and chatted to a lot of people and gained a few more new members. Brenda set up the photographic display boards and I had some Brimstone caterpillars and chrysalis on display to show people. It is always useful and worthwhile to do this as it generates interest in the great work that we all do for the park.

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

FRIENDS OF MEADOW PARK – TREASURERS REPORT

YEAR ENDING 31/10/2023

2022/2023 was another very good year for FMP financially.
The account for 2022/23 started with a balance carried forward of £3750.76, which was made up of £3347.61 in general funds and £403.15 in Arboretum Sponsorship.
Membership subscriptions have increased slightly over the last year, with the usual new member/non renewal balance. There were two notable donations during the year, one from Lantern Lane Primary School of £100 to assist in the cost of the remodelled Forest School area, an exceptional donation came from our local major company British Gypsum whose Community and Charitable Support Fund awarded FOMP £2000 to assist in the path repairs in the park.
Membership subscriptions to the year end were £720 along with donations of £443, both amounts going to general funds. There were also donations totalling £45 for the Arboretum sponsorship fund.
Overall income for the year was a total of £3343.00 which along with the opening balance of £3750.76 gave a total of **£7093.76** at the year end.
Expenditure for the year was **£2380.80** This came from general funds, - £2348.80, items ranging from wild flower bulbs, security for depot, Hedge flail, replacement EGO equipment, 'log circle' replacement, publicity- £32 from the Arboretum account, compost, tree ties.
Bank charges for this year were £82.56.
With the income for the year being **£7093.76** and the expenditure being **£2380.80** the overall balance of the account as at 31/10/2023 is **£4712.96**
This is allocated as:
General Funds: £2296.81
Arboretum Fund: £416.15
British Gypsum Donation – Path Repair Only - £2000
The above totals will be carried forward to the 2023/2024 financial year.
Andy Denker
Treasurer Friends of Meadow Park
31/10/23
Please Note:
1]Outstanding payments to be made from the above in 2023/2024: General funds – Naturescape bulbs £217.19, B&Q rope [willow structure repair]£2.81, Hook and Eye[Bateman Rd gate]£8.75, purchase of 'Tree Popper' £385.20
2]The figures above are taken from the unexamined accounts.
3]The accounts will be forwarded to Mrs Susan Lewis for Independent Examination.

6. **Election Of Committee**

i) The existing Committee members were all re-elected (including Neil and Ian who weren't present at the meeting, but wished to be re-elected).

- Proposed by Kev, seconded by Andy.

ii) Election of new Committee members
No new committee members were elected.

iii) Election of Chairman
Kevin Gibbons was re-elected as Chairman

- Proposed by Mary, seconded by Mel.

iv) Election of Treasurer
Andy Denker was re-elected as Treasurer.

- Proposed by Alan, seconded by Mel.

iv) Election of Secretary
Kevin Gibbons was re-elected as Secretary.

- Proposed by Diana, seconded by Trevor.

The Committee therefore for 2023/2024 will be:

Chairman and Secretary: Kevin Gibbons.
Treasurer: Andy Denker.
Publicity: Brenda Lewis.
Elected and co-opted members: Alan Barlow, Neil Hunter, Andrew Sandford, Trevor Jones, Ian Morrissey, Carol Barker, Conrad Oatey, Diana Jones, Mary Mays.

ELPC Representative: Mel Roper.
RBC Representative: Paul Phillips.

7. Forest School, Arboretum and Work Party Report (Andy Denker)

FOREST SCHOOL

Over the last year the Forest School has been operating their regular sessions on Monday during term time. They have also had several all day in the Park sessions.

FOMP have assisted where necessary in providing materials for example den building/willow weaving and keeping the area safe.

The Silver Birch planted by Year 6 adjacent to the area is showing signs of healthy growth

The major changes to the area over the last year is the replacement of the ‘log circle’ with an updated design which has proved popular with the Forest School and other residents of the village and the addition of some new seats which have been left unfixed.

The costs of the new items have been assisted by Lantern Lane School with a wonderful donation of £100 and the sale of some of the seats to the local Scout group which raised £35.

ARBORETUM:

Regular inspections have been carried out over the last year and maintenance carried out where required. The Sweet Chestnut, Downy Birch and Sweet Plum which had previously died have been replaced. The three new trees, kindly donated by Shirley Fox in memory of her husband Dennis Fox - a Downy Birch, Sweet Chestnut and Wild Pear have been planted but in different positions.

All these trees along with the new Juniper are doing well

The new Alder which was placed in a different area to give it more chance of survival has unfortunately died. The new area near the Sheepwash Brook was perceived to be continuously damp but obviously not enough for the tree.

All remaining trees are doing well.

WORK PARTY

An extra major thank you is required to all those members who took part over the year, we have a very hard working dedicated team of regular volunteers on the workdays and also individuals/pairs/small groups who work on unscheduled activities.

As can be seen from the total figure below this is an increase from last year of 110 hours

The Scheduled Activity days covered every month throughout the year. 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, Coppicing, planting of wild flower plug plants, sowing of wild flower seeds, removing Ragwort, Himalayan Balsam and the regular litter picking.

Total hours worked – 359.5

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, coppicing, cutting back of path overgrowth, path repairs, Arboretum tree inspections, tree planting + watering trees, wild flower count, butterfly count, nest boxes, bulb planting, liaising with the hay cut, Green Climber, Arboretum cut and collect, and path repair contractors. sculpture border, limestone bank.

Total hours worked- 436

OVERALL TOTAL – 795.5 HRS **AED 1/11/23**

8. Flower Report (Gwen Mountain)

In total 120 different types of wild flowers have been seen in Meadow Park from January to October 2023. The weather for this period can generally be categorised as mild and wet, resulting in the hay meadows not being able to be cut until September (as July and August were so wet and did not allow the grass etc to dry out). However it was amazing to see how quickly some plants were already flowering again by late September to early October.

Whilst the number of flowers recorded is slightly down on last year it is likely that some species may have been missed. Therefore I am always grateful to receive comments asking me if I have

spotted such and such a plant in flower in a certain area. The more pairs of eyes the merrier! Since 2006 when records of plant numbers started to be kept a total of 156 species have been recorded.

There were a couple of newcomers this year, hesperis or sweet rocket, in the playing field hedge. Whilst this is not a native species it has been growing in the wild in the UK since the early nineteenth century. It attracts bees, butterflies and other beneficial insects. Its spread will be closely monitored to ensure it does not negatively impact on other species. We also recorded dark mullein, a UK wildflower (which is also cultivated in gardens). This plant likes dry open areas, and was recorded in the newly established limestone butterfly bank at the top of Playfield.

We also have a couple of plants which are locally scarce and indicative of old meadows, that gave a good showing this year. The first of these is dropwort, which is closely related to meadowsweet. The crushed leaves and roots of this plant have the scent of the oil of wintergreen (methyl salicylate). The other is pepper saxifrage, which was also recorded for the first time since 2018.

It is delightful to see how many species are spreading throughout Meadow Park and how the meadow areas with their flowers is being enjoyed by people, butterflies, bees and other insects.

October 2023

9. Publicity Report (Brenda Lewis)

The usual round of reports and articles were written for the free papers, East Leake Times and East Leake Local News and we all appreciate their support. The village website is kept up to date on a regular basis and the notice boards are changed each month. The Facebook pages are kept up to date my Mel Roper and Kevin Gibbons.

In March a fold out butterfly identification chart was made by Mary Mays and Diana Jones. This is aimed at our younger visitors to encourage them to visit the park for observations of wild life. Thistlebank printed the copies. The leaflet has been very popular, with copies available in the usual places in the village (Parish Office, Mel's greengrocery and the library) and taken into the three primary schools. The schools also put the leaflet on their websites so that parents could download copies as required. Thistlebank printed the copies.

In May we updated our banners to include our new web address. Thistlebank printed the banners. In June we had a stall at the village Carnival, got a few more members and raised our profile in the village.

We are always grateful to Mike Elliott who sends information to the larger, paid for newspapers, on a regular basis and definitely gives us a wider audience.

Meadow Park Strollers report (Anne Rippon)

The Meadow Park Strollers celebrated their 5th anniversary this year. Strolls around the park continue to take place every Thursday. 30 people are part of our group and most weeks there are usually about 10 of us enjoying our 30 minute stroll around the park. We have also added an alternative extension walk for those who would like to do a brisker walk and walk a bit further. This takes us under the railway bridge and along the footpaths when it is not too muddy. Still

back in time for tea at the Three Horseshoes though! This alternative walk is available when we have spare leaders!

The walk is part of the Rushcliffe Move and Mingle Wellbeing Walks programme. British Gypsum have recently generously made a contribution of £200 to enable us to meet our leader training and insurance costs which has been very helpful and means we are able to keep activities free of charge. There have been a number of new walkers this year and we always welcome anyone who would like to come along and join us and give it a try. Volunteers to join our leader's rota are most welcome – training is given and there is no weekly commitment. More information from Anne on 07913 328 971.

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

There were 21 species of butterflies recorded in the park this year mainly thanks to Brian Johnson who made 24 transect visits into the park to do this. It would be great to increase the number of species, and to this end I am planting dog violet plants in suitable areas as well as planning to improve the butterfly bank and re-work the bee worlds. In terms of moths, we saw the day flying chimney sweep moths and six spot burnet moths in reasonable numbers.

This year we topped the existing butterfly bank (in the north west corner of Playield), with large limestone chippings, which should suppress the growth of grass, thistle and nettles, and allow the key butterfly plants to thrive. It was very pleasing to see a new wildflower species to the park flowering in the edge of the bee world this year (Dark Mullein).

Amazingly the bee worlds and wild flower squares in the Arboretum which date back to 2012 still have a large proportion of the original wildflowers seeded in them. However the bee worlds near the Bateman Road entrance were recently badly flooded, so they will benefit from some re-seeding this year.

11. Open Forum (All)

Thankyou to the FOMP – Paul

Paul thanked the Friends Of Meadow Park for all the hard work they do, and said that he was pleased to see how the park was developing.

Spraying dog excrement – Anne Rippon

Anne stated that they still spayed any dog excrement blue to highlight the issue of a small minority of dog owners not picking it up and disposing of it. We all agreed that the vast majority of dog owners are very responsible, and some even pick up after other dogs. However it was decided that on balance that spraying the dog excrement was still a good idea to help highlight the issue.

Next Steps – Anne to let us know which biodegradable paint they use and we will purchase some for them using FOMP funds.

New trees -Andrew

Andrew asked why there hasn't been any new tree planting. Kev explained that we discussed the tree planting scheme for Playfield in our July meeting and for various reasons decided not to proceed with this, and there is limited scope elsewhere in the park as we desire to protect the existing grassland areas. Trevor mentioned that we do want to retain the aura of a South Notts meadow. However, it was felt generally that we do have scope for planting a few more trees in certain areas:-

- Andrew suggested that there could be some scope for a few more trees near one of our picnic benches
- We discussed the idea of putting some trees by a section of grass that could be designated as a "picnic area", but Conrad and others felt that this wouldn't work.
- Kev mentioned that the area in Stonebridge Field adjacent to Gotham road could still be considered for a few trees.
- Anne mentioned the idea of a community orchard. Kevin mentioned a similar orchard that has been established in Sutton Bonington. It was also mentioned that there is an existing small orchard area planted on Mulberry Way. Paul stated that it might be good to put another small orchard in another part of the village which could be very good for wildlife if it was managed well. It was also mentioned that there are some green areas on the Trees estate that could be utilised for this.

Next Steps – Kev to put these ideas for further discussion on the FOMP agenda for January 2024

13. Any Other Business?

None

14.Date of next AGM

Wednesday November 6th 2024