MINUTES OF THE FRIENDS OF MEADOW PARK COMMITTEE MEETING

8th May 2024

1) APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Paul, Andrew, Carol.
Present: Andy, Kev, Neil, Alan, Ian, Conrad, Mary, Brenda, Mel, Diana, Trevor.

2) MINUTES OF THE FMPC MEETING OF MARCH 2024 WERE RATIFIED

3) MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES PLUS DEVELOPMENTS

i) Updates on Arboretum and Forest School (Andy)

ARBORETUM:

All trees are doing well despite the wet weather. We will be carrying out a small amount of remedial work on the next work party 11/5/24. Neil mentioned that the 3 fence posts protecting the Elms had been removed (this was because they were rotten, and that they should be replaced before the hay cut.
NEXT STEPS – Andy to action this at an upcoming work party.

FOREST SCHOOL:

We now have two local Schools operating in the Forest School area, Lantern Lane Primary has now been joined by Brookside Primary. Lantern Lane will continue on Monday, usually in the afternoon with various full days in the park, with Brookside on Tuesday now for full day sessions. Both groups are liaising with each other re activity days.
FOMP are also liaising with both groups re any safety concerns/materials required.

ii) Severn Trent latest (Alan)

Alan stated that there had not been a lot of change since our last meeting. It is still uncertain as to what Severn Trent will do regarding the new pumping station or pipework. It does however look likely that the old pumping station will still be used , but with double speed pumps.

Mel stated that the Parish Council had not received an update from Severn Trent at their recent meeting either.

Alan also updated the Committee with regards to Catherine Alan's notification about the Severn Trent issues at the Sewage Farm extension on West Leake Road, and that Paul Phillips and Tom Petit had been updated on this.

It does however appear the Severn Trent are legally allowed to do their development however they require it, but we all agreed that we should keep a watching brief on any impact to Meadow Park, and take before and after photos of our key areas.
NEXT STEPS – Kev to take some photos of the field areas as they are currently.
- Kev / RBC/ Parish Council to ensure that Severn Trent provide a Bio Diversity Net Gain report for their work, and we should channel this towards improvements to Kingston Brook.

iii) Tree bark stripping

Mel updated us with regards to what she saw. There were around 10 individuals stripping the trees with pieces of wood (not knives). Mel asked them to stop and explained that this would kill the trees. They did however carry on, so Mel's husband also had a strong talk to them and they did finally move off.

We did report the issue to the Police, but we have had no response. However, Mel stated that if we saw it happening again we should report it to the Police (Ringing 101), as the more we report, the more likely we will get a response.

We discussed if we should put up any signs or a surveillance camera, but it was felt that this could be counter-productive.

Apparently last weekend there were a lot of people drinking, and they left a lot of rubbish, so it is clearly an area we need to watch, but we should avoid any serious confrontation, but definitely report any anti-social behaviour to the Police.

NEXT STEPS – It is felt that some of the damaged trees could still survive, but we should monitor them with a view to felling any that are clearly dead in 12 to 18 months or so. When we do this, we should approach RBC to get this done, and we could hopefully use any chippings created for our paths.

iv) Carnival (22nd of June)- Kev

Myself, Ian, Diana and Mary have all volunteered to be involved in this (depending on availability).

NEXT STEPS – Brenda to pass all banners, photos, and membership forms to Kev prior to the event.

- Kev to speak to Sue Lewis to see if we can use one of the large Village Hall / Carnival tables, and also see if we can borrow one of the folding notice boards.

- Diana to ask Debbie Slade if we can borrow her Gazebo again.

v) Path update (Andy)

Andy handed out a field map with the next 3 paths proposed to be repaired (which Sue Lewis is currently requesting quotes for):

Path 1 is the diagonal path through Little Meadow.

Path 2 is the path adjacent to the north side of Kingston Brook in Little Meadow.

Path 3 is the path adjacent to the south side of Kingston Brook in Oak Meadow.

Obviously we will need to monitor what work Severn Trent are going to do in the park before we proceed, and we might be able to get them to provide funding or manual labour to help with this. Work on path 3 is probably the main path that could be affected by the ST work.

We also discussed that given the potential ST work coming up that we could put the path from the Burrows to the lagoon that gets very muddy as a potential path to repair (call this path 4).

vi) Any Other Business

Metal picnic tables

Alan proposed that we should re-paint the brown picnic tables. These would need sanding down first (Conrad has a Sander to do this).

NEXT STEPS – Alan, Andy and Conrad to co-ordinate this.

Willow Structure

It was felt that this requires a "haircut".

NEXT STEPS – Andy to include this in a work party.

Wild flower leaflet 2

We had some debate about the Musk Mallow photo, but agreed to include the Himalayan Balsam to make people aware that this is an invasive species.

NEXT STEPS – Mary and Neil to liaise on the identification of the Musk Mallow.

Mill Stone park entrance sculpture

Ian Mentioned that some of the tiling / designs done by local children needed repairing and he had done some "gorilla grouting". We also discussed that as part of any clean up to the sculpture, we could also protect it with Resin.

NEXT STEPS – It was felt that this area might benefit from attention to help maintain it. Kev to speak to Sue Lewis to see where this responsibility lies.

Parish Council grass path cutting

Neil expressed concern that there seemed to be some unnecessary paths cut, particularly in Gibson's Field near to the picnic table. Kev spoke to Steve about paths last year, and Steve does cut the paths narrower now, so we agreed to keep a watching brief on this for now.

Trees in the south west corner of Gibson's Field

Neil was concerned that there are a few trees in this area that were impinging on the grassland and these should perhaps be moved. We agreed to review this later in the year.

Hall Field path

We talked about the Hall Field Path, and how wide we should cut it. We agreed to discuss this once we know what date we can have the Green Climber this year.

4) TREASURER'S REPORT (Andy)

ACCOUNTS:

We are still in a very healthy state with balance in the Bank as at May 6th:
£2147.86 – Total Balance
£1706.71 – General Funds
£441.15 – Arboretum
Bank charges to date:£41.69
We have an addition of membership renewals/new members/donations of £1207
Items purchased and paid for:
Purchase of two stage ladder: £200
Purchase of second tree popper: £350.40
Purchase of trees for Stonebridge from Coles: £290
Purchase of two holly trees for Stonebridge: £35.98
Outstanding debits: Cost of hedge flail £220 [estimate]
Purchase of spare parts for pole donated pole chain saw: £57.95

AED 6/5/24

NEXT STEPS – Kev to contact Helen Burton again to chase up the invoice for the hedge cutting last year.
- Further things for spend are a few small bags of limestone chippings to top off the Limestone bank, and some wire to put across the gap after the fencing is repaired in Gibson's field.

5) ACTIVITIES UPDATE (Andy)

A major thank you again to all our regular Volunteers.

Scheduled:

March work party again continued the work in Stonebridge copse, finishing the clearance and completing the dead hedges. The remaining primroses and foxgloves were also added to the areas. The bee world at Bateman rd gate was extended, prior to seed sowing. The remaining nest boxes were fitted in various areas of the park, with the added removal of a bike from Kingston Brook.
April: Of the 14 trees purchased for the Stonebridge border project, 13 were planted [See sketch], the last one – Plum Czar – was supplied bare root, so it will be planted in the Autumn.
The remaining wild flower seeds were sown in the Stonebridge copses and along the border.

Hours worked to date:178

Unscheduled

Unscheduled activity has covered the following: Wild flower surveys, inspect for flood damage + tidy up of any damage. walk around with Brookside Primary Forest School teacher, plus continued liaison with both groups incl tidy up forest school area. Work on sculpture border. Fit half of nest boxes. Trim back various laid hedges, brush cut various areas. Litter picks. Wild flower planting, fit bird notices in Hall Field, tree felling on North border.
Hours worked to date: 160

Total Hours to date: 338

Activities Planned:

Work Party May 11th

This will consist of: Remedial work in the Arboretum, Fence repairs [Bateman rd boundary] plus addition of gate stay. Fit donated bat box to tree adj to Bateman rd gate. Light prune and strengthening of willow structure. Add further gravel to various seats after flood damage.

Next Meeting Date - Weds 10thth of July 2024, 7.30pm.