MINUTES OF THE FRIENDS OF MEADOW PARK COMMITTEE MEETING

19th March 2025

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

2) MINUTES OF THE FMPC MEETING OF JAN 2025 WERE RATIFIED

3) MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES PLUS DEVELOPMENTS

i) Remembering Trevor

Trevor sadly passed away on the 18th of February this year, he was 85. Alan and I attended the funeral and passed on our condolences to Trevor's wife, son, and daughter. I have written a few words in a card that I will pass to Trevor's wife, son, and daughter.

At the funeral, I learnt a few things about Trevor that I had never fully realised before. He was clearly an extremely academic and well qualified person, and as a practising vet he also became involved in a lot of side projects and wrote over 150 specialist papers on top of his normal work. As a Veterinary Investigation Officer for the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, he received an M.B.E for his work in the year 2000. This all explained his enquiring mind and all of the questions he raised in committee, and I know he challenged us all to think deeply on subjects. He was indeed the genuine gentleman and a scholar.

Alan added that the funeral was a very nice humanist ceremony, short and sweet. Robin gave an excellent eulogy, and reminded us of who Trevor was. Alan mentioned that he had spoken recently to Ann Weekly, who sends her best wishes to everyone. Whilst talking to Ann, Alan mentioned that we had talked to Trevor's family about some sort of way to remember Trevor down the park. Ann mentioned that we need to remember that we don't want a part of the park to become a memorial garden, and therefore sponsoring a tree is the best way to go on this.

Brenda mentioned that there is "In memoriam" board in the friendship garden in the centre of East Leake, and Mel mentioned that ELPC looks after this.

We also discussed whether the FOMP could have a board in the parish meeting room detailing FOMP former chairpersons and secretaries, but in the end we agreed that this was a non starter.

ii) Updates on Arboretum and Forest School (Andy)

ARBORETUM:

- The trees have been inspected over the last few days to check for any obvious damage and all are ok and developing buds.
- The Stonebridge border trees are also doing well. Unfortunately the planting of the replacement tree by the Lantern Lane children was cancelled due to poor soil conditions. As this tree has now produced flowers this planting will not now be completed until autumn

FOREST SCHOOL:

- The Lantern Lane School are still enjoying themselves and are very appreciative of their new' carpet' in the log circle. Brookside will be starting in the area after Easter.
- Lantern Lane have advised that they require some more den material which will be provided week beginning 17/3.

- The Lantern Lane School 'Acts of Kindness day' was on the 14th of February. As stated above the tree was not planted but approx 20 foxgloves were planted in the Stonebridge copses area.
- Diana mentioned that Brookside School would like a wildlife talk, and Kev has volunteered to do this.
NEXT STEPS – Diana to send Kev the contact at the school. Update – Kev has spoken to the teacher (Rebecca), and will try and arrange a date to do the talk once the Forest School starts back on April 22nd.

iii) Meet the Village update (Kev)

- This was attended by myself, Diana and Brenda. We signed up 3 subscriptions totalling £15. The event was fairly poorly attended. However Diana did speak to a lady (Christina) who has a background in publicity and teaching and expressed some interest in helping with Brenda's publicity role.

iv) Publicity role (Brenda)

- Brenda has now met with Christina and her brother (Jon) who is a computer expert. Brenda printed off various things to show them, including East Leake Times, Facebook, and the village website, which Christina was ok with. One part of Brenda's job however (membership) would need to go to someone else, as due to people changing their e-mails etc, this job has become busier, and we really need a new role of "membership secretary" to cover this off. Andy kindly volunteered for this job, but it was felt that Andy should not be over burdened with more work.

NEXT STEPS - We all need to consider how to cover off the membership role going forwards.
- Brenda stated that when she is no longer the Publicity Officer she would like to compile an archive for Meadow Park, to consider what changes we have encountered over the years (such as climate change etc).

v) New projects in the park – update (Kev)

- Kev talked to Paul about the aquatic scrape idea. Paul felt that south of the brook would be a better idea, maybe along the original course of the brook as this area is wetter. However we felt that on balance, considering the proposed Severn Trent work that we should re-visit this idea next year at the earliest.
- With regards to the bramble clearance done next the house at the Burrows, Paul informed me that this was done for RBC by Streetwise following various complaints by the house owner about the Brambles ruining their fence, Paul apologised to us for forgetting to mention it.

vi) Mill Stone Maintenance (Kev)

- Kev confirmed that we still plan to do this, and Andy will include this in a work party.

vii) Hedgerow maintenance (flailing) and paths.(Kev / Andy)

- Andy stated that he is still waiting to hear from the contractors with regards to the paths. ELPC do have a contractor lined up, and it will happen.
- The hedgerow flailing went well, with good progress clearing bramble and scrub along the Nixon Walk path, and cutting back Blackthorn in Stonebridge field, plus some clearing along the west side of Little Meadow.

viii) Any Other Business

Meadow Park Membership Leaflets (Alan)

- As Mary is currently on holiday, Alan is helping to progress this. We discussed the different sorts of sizes that we could make the leaflet, and agreed that to make it work we could even use a gatefold design, but we would need to consider costs and how we could fund it.
- One of the main considerations is to have a more prominent and easy to view park map. We agreed to make the field names more prominent / bolder and get rid of the suffixes such as F1/ F2 etc.
- Carol mentioned that blue colour on green is not good from an accessibility viewpoint.
- We felt that we probably don't need the path (Frank Kirk way) which is the official right of way marked in red.

- We also discussed whether the path the other side of the tunnel is a permissive path or proper footpath, but felt that this doesn't really matter in terms of our park.
- We agreed to take the altitude measurement off the map.
- We discussed whether to keep the "key" information on or off the map, and agreed on balance to keep them on.

NEXT STEPS – Andrew to send out the latest map to everyone to ensure we all have the latest version.
- Alan and Mary to re-work the leaflet based on the discussions above, and to send out their latest version for sign off at our May meeting.
- Brenda to check with the printers (Thistlebank) with regards to print costs for different sized leaflets, including a gatefold version. Depending on costs we will need to look at funding options.

Pollution seen coming out of an outlet pipe into Kingston Brook (Neil)

- Neil and Andy have both seen pollution residue coming out of the outlet pipe between Kingfisher and Heron bridge. We think that this is coming from the housing estate on the north side of the brook. The residue could be coming from something put into the drains or incorrectly plumbed pipes in some of the houses.

NEXT STEPS – Everyone to make a point of monitoring this outlet when they are walking in the park.

Display/ Notice boards (Brenda)

- Brenda questioned whether we should buy our own display board as we can't always manage to borrow one from ELPC. We thought this was a good idea, but felt it is still likely that we can borrow one of the Church Schoolroom boards if the ELPC one is unavailable (as we did for "Meet Your Village"). Also we aren't sure where we could store a display board. We decided to not purchase one at the moment and see how things go.

New land for FOMP (Kev)

- We talked about the fact that Kev was contacted by a consultant who was potentially offering us some land off Station Road, but it felt like this might be used by developers to use it as some sort of justification to build on land near to Station Road. We are not aware at the moment that any such development is going to happen at the moment.

Kingston Brook Pollution (Andrew)

- Andrew mentioned a sewage map which shows details of sewage discharges by location called "This Stinks". It is produced by the Rivers Trust, and is disturbing reading. We all agreed that we need to stay on Severn Trent's case, as we really don't know what they are doing!

Easter Activity in the park (Kev)

- We were contacted on our Facebook page by Amy who works at East Leake Preschool Playgroup, and wondered if they would be able to put up some pages around Meadow park for the children to read a story as they walk around over Easter. We discussed this and agreed that as long as it was cleared away after Easter that it would be fine, but felt we should check with ELPC before giving the go ahead.

NEXT STEPS – Update, - Kev has contacted Sue, and she is ok with this as long as the pages are taken down after Easter. Kev has contacted Amy to confirm this, and she has thanked us.

Signs for birds nesting in Hall Field (Alan)

- Alan mentioned that we should put the signs up now.

NEXT STEPS- Alan to put up the signs asap.

Free bird box and bat box (Kev)

- Kev was given a free bird and bat box by a friend. Mel also asked if the existing ones are being used. Andy also said that he is looking for a suitable tree to put a tawny owl box.

NEXT STEPS- Kev to pass the boxes on to Andy, and we can then find a place to put them up asap.
- Monitor the existing boxes in the park for nesting activity (All).

- **Kev to speak to his wildlife contacts for advice about the tawny owl box.**

4) TREASURER'S REPORT (Andy)

ACCOUNTS:

We are still in a very healthy state with balance in the Bank as at March 16th:
£2311.09 – Total Balance
£1894.94 – General Funds
£416.15 – Arboretum
Bank charges to date: £35.41
Income for the year to date:
Membership renewals/new members - £615, Donations - £486
Total: - £1101
Debits paid:
East Leake Carnival pitch booking - £25
Hedge cutting by Burtons Farms - £240
Outstanding Debits for this year are the purchase of a further batch of bow saws from B&Q for £217.20 and 5 off nest boxes and 10 front plates from RSPB - £116. Totalling £333.20

AED 16/3/25

5) ACTIVITIES UPDATE (Andy)

A major thank you again to all our regular Volunteers plus the additional help from small groups of volunteers from British Gypsum, who are now helping us on a regular monthly basis

Scheduled:

The work in February and March continued the clearance in the Hall Field north border with pollarding/coppicing/hedge laying and dead hedging. This first stage of winter work in this area is now complete with just some tidying remaining.
A further 7 nest boxes have now been fixed to various trees in the park
UPDATE: Tawny Owl nest box – cost £44, still to find a suitable tree.
Hours worked to date: 143.5

Unscheduled activity:

Over the last 3 months covered Wild flower survey, Bird survey, continued work on the north copses by FOMP and with assistance from BG volunteers. Planting of wild flowers in the cleared areas and other areas of the park.
Laying of wood chippings in Forest School area and sections of the Bateman road path.
Hours worked to date: 208.75
Total Hours to date: 352.25

Work Party + any extra days required in March / April

This will consist of continuing the tidying up of the Hall Field north border – creating Hibernacula, and the remnants of the hedge flail in Stonebridge and Little Meadow.

Next Meeting Date - Weds 21st[h] of May 2025, 7.30pm.