MINUTES OF THE FRIENDS OF MEADOW PARK COMMITTEE MEETING

24th Sept 2025

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

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

3) MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES PLUS DEVELOPMENTS

i) Updates on Arboretum and Forest School (Andy)

ARBORETUM / STONEBRIDGE:

Both the areas, along with the rest of the park have had some welcome rain over the last few weeks. The trees in the arboretum although stressed, have held up well during the dry spell, only time will tell if any long term damage has been caused. The Stonebridge border is looking a bit more on the sorry side, with the trees being newly planted they are struggling and being only watered a few times during the period are showing signs of stress – again only time will tell if they survive. Any trees that do not make it will be replaced.

On a sad note the WILD SERVICE TREE, situated near the Bateman Road gate has virtually been cut in two by the high winds a fortnight ago with several branches being brought down. These have now been removed and advice will be sought to see what remedial work will be required to help it continue to grow.

FOREST SCHOOL:

Both Lantern Lane and Brookside have now returned to the Forest School area for the new term.

The second post mentioned in the last report has now been dug up and buried after a major effort from our team of volunteers. As previously stated due to continued damage to the two posts they will not be replaced. The teacher from LL has stated that they have enough equipment to use the trees on that side along with the existing posts. Both sawn off posts have now been transferred to Brookside for use in the school area.

As usual the regular collection of bottles from the area continues !! and unfortunately at least two fires have been lit in the log circle area with another removed prior to starting.

Additional Notes:

- Andy continues to pop down when he can on Mondays to check that the Lantern Lane session is going ok, and Mary and Diana pop down when they can on Tuesdays to help out the Brookside group. Mary mentioned that Diana collected some old logs and branches for the kids to practise sawing.
- We discussed that if we continue to get more trouble with the existing Forest School area in terms of fires, damage and noise created by people using the area outside of the Forest School times (generally in the evenings) that this could become a problem for the local residents. We discussed whether we could move it to another area, where that could be. We couldn't really think of another area that would currently work in the park, except perhaps the copses in Stonebridge Field. We will just have to keep a watching brief on this problem.

ii) FOMP information on the village website (Mary)

- Mary and Diana have reviewed the Meadow Park section of the website, and Mary took us through the proposed changes on her PC. The following ideas were agreed at the meeting.

- In "History" it was proposed that we mentioned Forest Schools
- We should mention that we are now a Local Wildlife Site.
- We talked about the background music, but agreed on balance that it was fine to keep.
- The headings for the "Newsletter", "Facebook" etc should be put above the pictures.
- To access 'Newsletters' the user currently has to select 'Read More' and then select 'Friends of Meadow Park Newsletters'. This can be simplified by displaying the actual 'Newsletters' after the user selects 'Read

More'. Mel suggested that we should add the year and seasonality on them as well and group in five year blocks.
- When you click on "Read More" under the Facebook heading you are taken to a page with 2 links through to Facebook. The link on the left opens Facebook within the Meadow Park website and the user can use the back arrow to return to the Meadow Park website. The link on the right (which is more obvious) opens Facebook in a new tab and you cannot use the back arrow in Facebook to return to the Meadow Park website. It would appear therefore that the link on the left is the one to keep, but we need to speak to John to understand this better.
- the heading for "Contact Us" form when you complete it and press "submit" goes through to Brenda. Mary offered to action these in future to help Brenda with her workload and Brenda has agreed that this is a good idea.
- The "Return to Meadow Park" link takes you back to the main page, but it should ideally take you to the previous page you were on.
- The "Meetings" tab should should be simplified in the same way as "Newsletters". There is currently an error on the labelling of the link, which says "Newsletters" instead of "Meetings".
- the "Downloadable Resources" section will have 3 icons for the nature leaflets (Flowers, Birds Butterflies) and 3 icons for the information leaflets (MP leaflet, Map, Form to join) .
- Under the "Join Us" section we will take "except August" out of the work party information as we do now have work parties on every month (weather excepting). We also need to have the wording to reflect the leaflet information to re-iterate the fact that members don't have to attend the work parties etc.
- We agreed that it would be interesting to know how many page views the FOMP pages get per month.

NEXT STEPS - Once Mary has completed the changes, she will send an email out to all committee members prior to Jan meeting asking them to look at the website and feedback at the meeting.

iii) Severn Trent pipeline latest (Kev)

- Kev has had a reply from Georgina Robinson of Fishergerman who has informed us that the pipe laying across Meadow Park is scheduled to commence in April 2026 (and Mel confirmed that ELPC has been told that the pipes will go through the Recreation Ground between April and September next year).
- We have also been told that the understanding is that the pipes will be carried out following an open cut methodology.
- Kev has replied by stating " It would be very useful for us to understand the impact on the grassland and hedgerows, and the exact route. We would also like to know how the cut turf will be handled and how a biodiversity net gain will be achieved during this", and he has asked for a meeting to discuss this further.
- Kev suggested that he ought to be included in the ELPC meetings with Severn Trent, as this would make more sense than him attending separate meetings.

NEXT STEPS - Kev to ask Sue whether he can be included in ELPC meetings to cover off the Meadow Park issues at the same time.

iv) Slow worm monitoring (Kev)

- Kev has been monitoring the mats, but no sloworms have been found. However, mice and voles seem to love them, so it may be worth putting a few similar things to the mats for creatures to live under in the park. Kev will return the mats to Gordon Dyne.

v) Arboretum map (Andy)

- Andy is updating the old arboretum map to reflect the tree changes. He has the old map (physical copy), but not the original computerised document, so he plans to write the changes on his copy and then give it to the printers when it is finished. Mary mentioned that the new map should have the new logo, and we discussed also producing a number copies of the arboretum map to do as leaflets. Mel mentioned that the details on the arboretum guide should also match with the membership leaflet. Andy also showed us a children's arboretum guide that had been produced by Lantern Lane School, and we felt that it would be good to have some of these as well (Andy to ask Lantern Lane if they can print some off).

NEXT STEPS - Mary to send the new logo and map to Andy and Kev. (done).

- Andy to complete the leaflet and obtain printing costs. All to be reviewed and signed off at the January 2026 meeting.

vi) Owl boxes (Kev)

- These will be put up by the local ecologists when they have an opportunity to do it.

vii) Green Climber (Kev)

- This has been arranged for the 7th of October, It is due to commence at 9am at the Arches entrance to Meadow Park. Brenda asked which areas will be done. Kev explained it will be the usual areas and margins. The main area to concentrate on is Hall Field, and thereafter other field margins that are being encroached upon by scrub and invasive species such as blackthorn. Mary asked about the Russian vine along Bateman road. Andy felt that this slope is too tricky for the Green Climber, so we will ask Helen Burton to do this with the tractor flail whilst she is trimming some of the hedgerows.

NEXT STEPS - Andy to find a few volunteers for guarding the paths on Tuesday. (Done).

- Kev and Andy to walk the park and review the areas to use the Green Climber. (Done).

- Kev to contact Helen Burton about doing some more hedge cutting down the park in the next couple of months.

xi) Any Other Business

Paths (Andy)

- Andy mentioned that the paths that have been identified for repair are being done in the next few days. This is being actioned and arranged by ELPC.

Jubilee Oak Plaque

- Andy has sorted this out, and the plaque is now up.

Butterfly bank

- The Limestone has been ordered and delivered (funded by David Wilson Homes). We plan to extend the bank at our next Saturday work party, and Kev and Andy have cleared the area of scrub in preparation for this.

4) TREASURER'S REPORT (Andy)

ACCOUNTS:

We are still in a very healthy state with balance in the Bank as at September 22nd :

£1425.33 – Total Balance

£1009.18 – General Funds

£416.15 – Arboretum

Bank charges to date: £60.43

Spend to date: £1579.84

Income for the year to date:

Membership renewals/new members - £686, Donations - £563

Total: - £1249

Outstanding Debit : Purchase of Bulk bag of Limestone chippings from Travis Perkins £133.55, VAT £26.71 order total £160.26

David Wilson Homes have generously agreed to cover the cost £133.55 of this purchase with a donation.

AED 22/9/25

5) ACTIVITIES UPDATE (Andy)

WORK PARTY

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

Scheduled:

The work in August consisted of - mowing grass, fit new rail, treat fence and add plaques to Jubilee Oak. Vista adjacent to the forest school area from Gibson's Field opened up, work on post removal. Brash removed from work on Bateman Field ditch and added to the dead hedge – litter pick
September – Cut back of various growth in Stonebridge copse and Little Meadow to allow better access for the green climber. Hedge trimmed in copses and added to dead hedges – litter pick.
Hours worked to date 300.5

Unscheduled activity:

Over the last 2 months covered Wild flower survey and Bird survey. Cut back of growth in Bateman Field ditch – create dead hedge. Watering of trees in Stonebridge border. Light trim of growth in the arboretum and various paths in the park with assistance from BG volunteers. Tidy up of fire in forest school area. Remove branches fro damaged Wild Service tree in the arboretum. Liaise with forest schools.
Hours worked to date: 507.25
Total Hours to date 807.75

Next Meeting Date (AGM) - Weds Nov 12th 2025, 7.30pm.