MINUTES OF THE FRIENDS OF MEADOW PARK COMMITTEE MEETING

16th July 2025

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

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

3) MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES PLUS DEVELOPMENTS

i) Co-opting Kevin Robotham onto the committee
Kevin Robotham has attended this meeting with a view to potentially joining our committee. Kevin was proposed by Diana, and seconded by Carol. Welcome Kevin!!

ii) Updates on Arboretum and Forest School (Andy)
ARBORETUM:
The trees have been inspected week beginning 14/7 to check for any obvious effects of the dry weather and all are ok. The annual clearance of the Poplar and Blackthorn was completed.
The Stonebridge border trees are still coping with the dry weather as best is possible

FOREST SCHOOL:
Both Lantern Lane and Brookside are continuing to enjoy the area for their forest school activities, this week will be the last main sessions prior to summer break, although it was mentioned that there might be another one next week. Both schools will be returning in September.
The second post mentioned in the last report had the concrete fixing all broken up so has now been sawn down. We didn't notify this vandalism to the Police.
Both posts have been offered to the schools and Brookside have requested them so they are in the process of being transferred. We will not be replacing the posts for the time being.
As usual the regular collection of bottles from the area continues !!

iii) Carnival feedback (Conrad and Mary)
- The weather at the carnival was very hot and windy hence not many people were moving around and visiting stalls, but were instead sitting down with picnics etc. However, some leaflets were distributed and people were chatted to. In general it was felt there were less stalls, and it was more commercial. Also there was an empty stall next to us, which didn't help. Due to the wind we couldn't put out our leaflets, but some children did come over to the stall to do "can you identify this butterfly". Thanks go out also to Jenny and John for helping out at our stall.
- We discussed whether it was worth the effort, but felt that the weather didn't really help, but we will end up getting a few members from it. Mel mentioned that we may be able to get the stall for free next year, which would make it more worthwhile.

iv) New FOMP leaflet and butterfly, plant and bird leaflets (Mary and Diana)
- in the end we went for 500 leaflets each of the new membership leaflet and also the butterflies and wildflowers 1 and 2 leaflets, this was the most cost efficient way of doing it, and they should last us a good while. We have had really good feedback on all of the leaflets. We were also fortunate to get an extra 500 of the butterfly leaflets for free as the first batch were not folded, but Diana and Mary were able to do this manually which has saved us some money!
- Mary contacted the 2 East Leake Estate Agents, Smiths and John German for a contribution to help with the printing, Smiths could have helped us by printing in their office, but wanted to include their logo (which we don't want to do). However both may help us out in the future in some other way.
- Currently there are some leaflets in Mel's shop, and some at the leisure centre. Kev suggested the parish council offices could have some, and Carol suggested the health centre. Mel suggested that we could put some in the library and that she has a spare plastic stand to put them in.

- Kev mentioned that we should monitor how many we send out to various places, and what the take up is like. We should also only distribute them in controlled amounts to ensure they last throughout the year.

- Ian suggested that we could do a QR code which could be put on our leaflets and in the plinths etc, that people could scan to take them to our web page on the East Leake website. Ian produced the QR code during the meeting, and this has now been sent to Brenda, Mary and Diana for future use.

- We also discussed if the leaflets were showing on our webpage, and it has been confirmed that they are showing as "downloadable resources".

v) Publicity Officer role (Kev)

- Kev stated that Brenda's main concern with her role was keeping the list of members up to date, and dealing with the e-mails that bounce back. Kev stated that we should consider dealing with this issue as our main priority and consider who could help us with this. At this point Kevin Robotham kindly volunteered to look at this issue for us. Andy mentioned that due to privacy issues that only 2 people can deal with the members list, and it must adhere to the government rules.

Note – update on e-mail lists: There aren't specific government rules dictating exactly how many people in an organization can access an email membership list. However, organizations must adhere to data protection laws like GDPR (in the UK) and PECR, which regulate how personal data, including email addresses, is collected, used, and accessed. These laws emphasize the need for a legitimate reason for accessing such lists and ensuring appropriate security measures are in place.

NEXT STEPS - Kevin R to liaise with Andy and Brenda with regards to how we update and maintain the list going forwards, and how Brenda and Andy can access it.

vi) Severn Trent pipeline latest (Kev)

- We have no new updates with regards to when any work will commence across the park. Kev has spoken with Jason Billin who said that this work is still at the design stage, but ST are tendering out to see who will do this work, and he will chase them for an update by the end of July. Andy mentioned that ELPC are planning to do the path repairs in the park at the start of August, and hence ST will have to repair any path damage.

NEXT STEPS - Kev has contacted Georgina Robinson (Fisher German Surveyor), who has said that she will liaise with the project team and let us know when and what is happening – Kev to chase this up.

vii) Gordon Dyne walk / new plant and insect records

- Gordon Dyne(Chair of the Wildlife Trusts Rushcliffe local members group) arranged a walk on Wednesday 9th of July around Meadow Park. We advertised this on various pages on Facebook. 42 people attended and we spent 2 hours walking around the park discussing the nature and history (history information supplied by Neil). It was well received.

- It has been a good year for orchids in the park. As well as the green winged orchid re-appearing again, over 50 spotted orchids, marsh orchids, and hybrids were seen. We have also seen a pyramidal orchid appear in the park for the first time, and according to the BSBI atlas this is a new record for our area. Adders tongue fern has also been recorded again. All of these species are good indicators of ancient meadows.

- We have also spotted a new species of butterfly in the park this year which is great news! (the Purple Hairstreak).

NEXT STEPS - Neil to do a summary with regards to the history of the meadows.

viii) Ash die back review (Neil / Kev)

- Neil and Kev walked the park with Tom Petit (RBC Landscape Officer) and Paul Phillips. We identified 1 large tree (near to Kestrel Bridge) which needs some cutting back. We also identified a few smaller ash trees near to the butterfly bank which will need felling, but overall our ash trees are doing ok at the moment.

NEXT STEPS – RBC to action the work on the large ash tree. FOMP to action the others, and Andy may mark these up with a discreet spray paint marking.

ix) Hay cut timings (Kev)

- Kev mentioned that due to the hot and dry weather, and concern expressed by Andy of potential fires, we have decided to bring the hay cut forwards.

Update :- The hay cut took place on the 17th of July. As planned, Stonebridge Field has been left uncut, and the farmer was able to cut the arboretum for us this year.

x) Slow worms. (Kev)

- Gordon Dyne has asked if we could put down some slow worm mats in the park, to see if any slow worms are present. Slow worms are attracted to the warmth generated by the mats (as they are cold blooded reptiles) and they like to live under the mats.

NEXT STEPS – Kev to place the mats in selected discreet places around the park.

xi) Any Other Business

Red Kites and Buzzards

- A member of the public has asked whether Red Kites chase Buzzards or can they live together?

Update :- While Red Kites and Buzzards can interact and even clash,it's not accurate to say Red Kites chase Buzzards in the way that Crows might harass a Red Kite. Red Kites and Buzzards share similar habitats and food sources, leading to occasional conflicts, especially over food. Kites are more scavengers, often eating carrion, while Buzzards are more likely to hunt live prey. There are instances of Kites dive-bombing Buzzards, possibly to displace them from a food source, but Buzzards don't always retaliate. Overall, their interactions are complex and not always consistent with a simple chase scenario.

Helicopter in Meadow Park

- The helicopter buzzing around the park a couple of weeks ago was surveying "Electric Avenue", the electric wires that run through the trees at the south side of Gibson's Field. It is possible that the the Electric Company will come to cut back some of the branches near the wires, and it was confirmed that they have their own key to access the park at Bateman Road gate.

Black Poplars

Kev mentioned that Notts County Council are planning to do some DNA sampling of the black poplars that Neil has planted along Kingston Brook to see see if they are native with a view to taking cuttings for propagation. Neil confirmed that the black poplars are native.

Arboretum tree map

- Andy stated that the arboretum map needs updating and asked Andrew if he knew who made the original map. It was suggested that Malcolm Lane did it, but we aren't sure.

NEXT STEPS – Andy to ask Ann Weekly if she remembers who did the original map.

Major Oak tree clone in Oak Meadow

-Andy was interested to know what the wording was on a plaque originally intended to be put up by the tree (Major Oak clone)

NEXT STEPS – Andy to speak to Kevin Shaw or Neil Wright of Microprop to find out the wording.

Update : Andy has spoken with ELPC, who had kept the original wording from 2002, Andy will now investigate having a plaque made, as the tree was planted in 2002 to celebrate the Queens Golden Jubilee.

4) TREASURER'S REPORT (Andy)

ACCOUNTS:

We are still in a very healthy state with balance in the Bank as at July 14th:

£1402.01 – Total Balance

£985.86 – General Funds

£416.15 – Arboretum
Bank charges to date: £60.43
One very big surprise from HSBC, as from July 1st they will be not be charging the £5 monthly fee for operating the account
Income for the year to date:
Membership renewals/new members - £671, Donations - £553
Total: - £1224
Debits paid:
Purchase of various leaflets from The Printers - £441.90

AED 14/7/25

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 June consisted of a light trim of various hedges in the park that were encroaching on various paths, trim of the willow structure, tidy up of the BMX track in Bateman Rd copse, work in the sculpture border and litter pick.
July – work party scheduled for the 12th of July cancelled due to 31deg temperature, rescheduled for Saturday 19th
UPDATE: Tawny Owl nest box – cost £44, still to find a suitable tree
Hours worked to date: 227.5

Unscheduled activity: Over the last 2 months covered Wild flower survey and Bird survey. Generally cutting back of various growth, mainly on Hall Field north path plus others. Removal of Himalayan Balsam from brook in Stonebridge and Oak Meadow. Liaise with both Forest Schools. Clear Poplar and Blackthorn sucker growth from Arboretum. Various leaflets for FOMP
Hours worked to date: 437

Total Hours to date: 664.5

Next Meeting Date - Weds Sept 10th 2025, 7.30pm.