

# WOODTHORPE GAZETTE

THE BI-MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF WOODTHORPE GRANGE PARK  
JUNE, 2018

## What Did You Think?

Welcome to this the second edition of the Woodthorpe Gazette. What did you think of the first edition? I have to admit, to begin with, there were a number of grammatical errors which when noticed, I soon altered. Taking all things into consideration, I don't think that it was too bad for a first attempt!

## Spring Has Finally Sprung!



As the photograph, which was taken from the roof of Woodthorpe Court Flats shows, Spring has finally sprung. However, as I write this article rain is falling from leaden skies. But I am not too downhearted as according to those nice people in the metrological office, we are destined for typical April weather of sunshine and showers...Let's hope it brings forth May flowers!

Whilst on the subject of flowers, the sudden burst of warm weather has brought on a growing spurt. As a consequence, trees that have been bereft of leaves since last autumn's fall have almost overnight turned a light tinge of green, as the prolonged season of winter has turned into a much-delayed, and longed for, season of spring.

With trees turning green, also plants, both wild and cultivated, have come to life as well. Suddenly Woodthorpe Park has become a riot of colour. From the varied rich colours of cherry blossom and magnolia tree to the linen white of snowdrops, coupled with the varying shades of spring from buds on the branches of trees coming to life.

This riot of colour that is Spring has been suitably captured on camera by local photographer Hope Anne Coates. Rather than just select a few of her images I decided to arrange all the photographs that were taken into a collage, which I christened 'Flora and Fauna of Spring.'



*'Flora and Fauna of Spring'*

Finally, whilst still on the Subject of Spring, let us take the opportunity to remind ourselves, and to wax lyrical the beautiful poem by Robert Browning:

## 'Home Thoughts From Abroad'

Oh, to be in England  
Now that April's there,  
And whoever wakes in England  
Sees, some morning, unaware,  
That the lowest boughs and the brushwood sheaf  
Round the elm-tree bole are in tiny leaf,  
While the chaffinch sings on the orchard bough  
In England – now!

And after April, when May follows,  
And the whitethroat builds, and all the swallows!  
Hark, where my blossomed pear-tree in the hedge  
Leans to the field and scatters on the clover  
Blossoms and dewdrops – at the bent spray's edge  
That's the wise thrush; he sings each song twice over,  
Lest you think he never could recapture  
The first fine careless rapture!  
And though the fields look rough with hoary dew,  
All will be gay when noontide wakes anew  
The buttercups, the little children's dower -  
Far brighter than this gaudy melon-flower.



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## Getting The Message Across: *Letting the public know who we are!*



Example of a pop-up display banner

During the previous meeting of the Friends of Woodthorpe Grange Park, which was held on 28<sup>th</sup> March, 2018, with just a few minor adjustments, the Friends adopted a constitution, which means the whole friends group have become more formalised. For example with the adoption of a constitution, apart from forming a committee, with chairman, vice-chairman, secretary and treasurer we can as a group, apply for funding.

With funding, this will allow us to raise the profile of the Friends with such things as a pop-up display banner, which can be used during events, for example when the Plant Shop is holding an event in the park's greenhouses like the Christmas Fair. Also, it allows us to purchase sundry items such as high viz vests which can be worn when members are taking part in volunteer sessions on the park.

As was mentioned at the meeting on the 28<sup>th</sup> March, with funding we could eventually go on to financially support future events on Woodthorpe Park. This would not only advertise the event but also mention the Friends as one of the sponsors. These are

of course just a few of the possibilities the Friends can help to promote.

There are of course many other possibilities, all of which will be discussed in future Friends meetings. For now, it is a case of watch this space!



1922 – 2022

## Woodthorpe Park Centenary

In the previous issue of the Woodthorpe Gazette I wrote: 'On the 1st June, 2022 Woodthorpe Grange Park will be celebrating its centenary. As Woodthorpe Park is very much a people's park, and although it is still four years into the future, we the Friends of Woodthorpe Grange Park would like to hear from you the public of what your memories and experiences are of our Park.

There are of course many ways in which you can now air your views either via email on [woodthorpefriends@gmail.com](mailto:woodthorpefriends@gmail.com) or through Messenger on the Friends of Woodthorpe Grange Park Facebook page.

In the cyber communication world that we now live in, email or messaging is now the preferred method of communication as it is much quicker and easier to convey messages over much greater distances. In other words, you can email/message a friend or colleague on the other side of the world and it will arrive in a matter of seconds... How small the world has become!

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As a way to involve the public and to ask visitors to Woodthorpe Park to express their views and experiences, what could be simpler than through a 'Story Sheet, as you will see by the example below.



A story sheet is something that is already in progress on Highfields Park. This is where members of the public are asked to answer three simple questions. The first is, 'do you have memories of going to a park when you were a child?' The second question is, 'what did you do?' This is then followed by the third question, which is open ended, and that is, 'share your memories with us!'

Whilst it is not my wish to plagiarise someone else's work, I do however feel something like this could be adapted to questions about people's childhood and family experiences of visiting Woodthorpe Park.



### Take a seat and tell us your story

As you can see by the image below, members of the public are asked to take a seat and fill in a story sheet

(example below) and place it, although not in the picture, in the adjacent picnic basket.



If you are wondering where the display of all the old photographs, the seat, and questionnaires are located, they are located in the D.H. Lawrence Arts Centre on Highfields Park.

What do you think about us having something similar adapted for Woodthorpe Park? If we were to invite visitors to the park to fill in a story sheet, where would we place them? Would it be in the Café by the children's playpark, or in the Plant Shop, or perhaps, in conjunction with the Friends of Woodthorpe Park, on a display stand when there is an event taking place such as the annual Christmas Fair?

All of this, to my mind, is quite simple to put together, and a way of finding out about people's experiences of visiting Woodthorpe Park, and something to bear in mind in the run up to the park's centenary in 2022.



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## Woodthorpe & Winchester Court Flats

Woodthorpe and Winchester Court Flats have been a landmark on Woodthorpe Park for 50 years, and as someone who is old enough to remember Woodthorpe and Winchester Court Highrise Flats being built and now being refurbished, makes me feel like someone who is an old sage.

This feeling of old sage like maturity comes about when reminiscing about that period, (which was during the 1960's) while talking to the contractors who are carrying out the refurbishment.

Apart from introducing myself and waxing lyrical about the past you re-enforce it by telling them you are a photographer who has been taking periodic photographs of the building work that is being carried out on both blocks of flats.

This is then followed by the million-dollar question: Is it at all possible that I could take some photographs of the building work on the building site?

This is something I did last November when I asked the contractors Willmott Dixon if I could come onto the building site to take photographs. As there is an intercom system that connects from a locked gate

adjacent to the garages that serve the residents of Winchester Court.

Asking a question such as permission to come onto a building site feels like an eternity, as you wait for an answer. When the answer finally came I jumped for joy, as the voice at the other end of the intercom said: 'You can't go onto the building site, but I'll take you onto the Roof of Winchester Court Flats, if that's okay - come back in half-an-hour!'

With my mind reeling at the prospect of taking photographs from the roof a thought sprung into my mind: 'This is a rarer gift than gold!'

Kitted out in a highviz jacket, safety shoes, and a hard-hat and armed with my camera I duly turned up, and with Willmott and Dixon's Health and Safety Officer we proceeded up 15 floors in the lift in Winchester Court. We then climbed a further flight of stairs on the 15<sup>th</sup> floor that leads onto the roof, which meant that we were 16 storeys high. Once on the roof, as it was a clear day the view over the western parts of Nottingham looking towards Derbyshire was breath taking to say the least.

As it was November when I went onto the roof, the trees were turning many shades of golden brown, therefore the view overlooking Woodthorpe Park was magnificent.



Woodthorpe Park in Shades of Golden Brown



Looking towards the Children's Playpark

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**Can you see where you live?**



**Looking towards Woodthorpe Grange**



**Looking up Sherwood Vale - I can see my house!**



**Looking onto the park and towards North Nottm.**

Since these photographs were taken I have been a further two times onto the rooves of both flats. The second time was again, onto the roof of Winchester Court, and the third time onto the roof of Woodthorpe Court. To my mind, Woodthorpe Court is the better of the two, and like the first time was a clear, and I hasten to add, sunshiny day.

Bearing in mind, for those who came with me it was cutting into their work time, for which I am eternally grateful. My only regret is there was not enough time to spend on the rooves of both Winchester and Woodthorpe Court. How I would have liked to have taken my binoculars and maybe setup my tripod with a much larger lens. However, as time was of the essence, beggars cannot be choosers.

As I've already said, I am eternally grateful to the contractors for allowing me onto rooves of both these buildings. Who knows, maybe I will get another chance.... Watch this space!

Finally, the photographs I took from Winchester Court Flats last November are available to view on the Photo Galley Page on the Friends of Woodthorpe Grange Park website on [www.woodthorpefriends.co.uk](http://www.woodthorpefriends.co.uk)



**Aerial View of the Children's Play Park**



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## Fly Tipping – The Saga Continues!

You will recall, in the first edition of the Woodthorpe Gazette I raised the issue of the bottom entrance to Woodthorpe Park on Sherwood Vale being a haven for fly tippers, I can say it did bring a modicum of success.

The success came more from a chance meeting with a Community Protection Officer who called at my home address on a separate issue. I contacted BBC Radio Nottingham, who had been running news stories about fly tipping in Nottingham, and who then asked me to send them a detailed email together with photographs, which I subsequently did! They told me they would get in touch with me but to this day I am still waiting to hear from them.



The above photograph you will recall I published in the first edition of this newsletter. As you will see in the following photograph the two fridges and the television were missing. Believing that these had been taken away by someone, it was only after further investigation that I found the television broken at the foot of the former railway bridge.



**A 32inch TV now in 32 pieces!**

As you can see by the above photograph the 32inch flat screen television, having been thrown over the bridge by those wishing to make mischief is now in 32 pieces. Since the above photograph was taken there are now contractors working on bridge strengthening repairs as the bridge is going to be backfilled and capped at both ends, as you will see by the photograph below.



As a little PS to this article, believing that nothing was being done in response to the issue of fly tipping, it was by chance that walking up from Woodthorpe Park onto Sherwood Vale I saw a scenes of crime notice stuck to one of the fly tipped items with the heading: "Environmental Crime Investigation." This I thought was a little too late, as some of the items had gone missing or had been discarded elsewhere, and a little later on what was left was soon cleared up!





I wonder if they caught the culprits?

## Woodthorpe Grange Members Litter Pick An Unexpected Haul

Compared to the first members litter pick on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> March, when in cold and damp weather five members turned up, this time in glorious sunny weather, fourteen members turned up outside the park's Plant Shop for the second litter pick, which was held on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> May.

Unlike our first litter pick, which was still in the depths of what felt like an extended winter, and because the ground vegetation had barely begun to grow made litter picking easy. This time, with the weather at last showing positive signs of spring the vegetation had time to grow and as a consequence covered over litter and other discarded items we had come to pick.

Before we had even started, for some members there was an air of despondency with the thought that we would not do so well today because of the ground cover having grown since our first outing. As there were so many members present we split up and set off into different areas of Woodthorpe Park.

Pushing a large barrow, borrowed from the park's Plant Shop, the group I was in, to begin with, made our way behind the walled garden where the houses on Sherwood Vale back onto the park

Walking through what seemed like a sea of broad-leaved garlic, apart from a few discarded items like drinks cans, we had little success.

Not to be downhearted, I said: 'follow me, we'll make our way down to the bottom of the park, again, to where the houses on Sherwood Vale back onto the park, the undergrowth there hides a multitude of sins.' And a multitude of sins we did find!

The first of the big hauls was a dustbin without a bottom. This came in handy as we able to open one of the bags and place it round the rim, thus

making it easy to dump litter into as we pushed the barrow.

If we thought that was going to be the only big haul of the day, the next haul used up all our bags. So full and heavy were they, we had to make our way back to the where we originally started just to empty the barrow.

You will recall, in the previous issue of the Woodthorpe Gazette, I said one member found a huge bag of dumped flyers advertising pizzas. Believe it or not that was only the beginning, we found yet more flyers all advertising the same product.

In all it took another four bags to finally clear up the remaining discarded flyers, only this time we were able to find the website address of the company and telephone number as well, and to our surprise they are still trading on Haydn Road in Sherwood.

Do we therefore inform them that one of their employees is not doing their job, or do we prosecute? Or, perhaps, do we ask, instead of prosecution, for free pizzas?



The undergrowth hides a multitude of sins!



Evidence of discarded flyers



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Having off loaded our haul of discarded pizza flyers and partial dustbin, with the barrow now empty it was off to find the others who had gone off into other areas of Woodthorpe Park.

Once we had regrouped, apart from those who had other commitments, it was all down to the Friends of Woodthorpe Grange Park's watering hole, the café. Apart from all of us agreeing it was better than we originally thought, having made a total haul of twelve bags of rubbish, it was time for a team photograph.



**Well Done Everyone**



**12 bags of rubbish and a dustbin, a good team effort.**

As a little PS to this article, and this is something that members should bear in mind, on sunny days, especially at the weekends and during bank holidays, Woodthorpe Park is full of people and families taking advantage of the good weather and enjoying themselves. Naturally, with the amount of people attracted to not just Woodthorpe Park but other open green spaces as well, a lot of litter is accumulated. As a consequence, bins become full and discarded items begin to spill out onto the ground.

What I propose, on days when the weather is fine, especially during the summer months and at weekends, is draw up a rota so there is one volunteer available to check that the bins on the park are not overflowing with rubbish and to empty them at regular intervals.

I am not suggesting members should be there all day, my feeling is that members are only required to be checking the bins during peak periods and into

the evening when the park's visitors have all gone home.... Please give it some thought!



**It's a nice day – nice days accumulate a lot of rubbish**



**This bin needs emptying!**

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That's all for now folks, I hope you have enjoyed this second edition of the Woodthorpe Gazette. There is a lot more to report and write about. Had I published it in this copy there would have been nothing to write about for inclusion in the third edition of the Gazette.

In the meantime, if anyone has a contribution or comments they would like to make for inclusion in this newsletter please email the Friends of Woodthorpe Park on [woodthorpefriends@gmail.com](mailto:woodthorpefriends@gmail.com) Don't forget, you can always visit our website on [www.woodthorpefriends.co.uk](http://www.woodthorpefriends.co.uk)

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