

Present:

Sarah Manton, NOSF Trustee & Barker Gate Rest Garden	Caroline & Edward Beaumont, Memorial Gardens Assoc.
Fliss Hogg, NCC Senior Greenspace Development Officer	Robin Stalvies, Carrington Residents Assoc & Community Garden
June Perry, Friends of the Forest	Kate Lisle, GreenSpace Project Officer
Martin Willis, NOSF Chair, Wild.NG & NWT	Graham Pearce, Friends of Nottingham Arboretum
Tom Huggon, NOSF Trustee & City Open & Green Space Champion	Laura Armitage, GreenSpace Project officer
Rob Kirkwood, NOSF Trustee & Friends of Wollaton Park	Julian Griffiths, Friends of Nottingham Arboretum & Friends of the Forest
Liz Vyvyan, Memorial Gardens Assoc.	Brian Grocock, NOSF Ambassador & Friends of Churchfield Plantation
Nigel Sarsfield, Local Access Forum	Karen Fry, Nottingham Organic Gardeners & Nottingham Growers Network
Claire Smith Harris, NCC FPA Project Manager	

Apologies: Cherry Underwood, Eddie Curry, Adrienne Kelly, James Dymond, Lucy Kennedy, Ros Yousof

Round Table feedback:

Friends of the Forest – JP highlighted special interest in the Inclosure lands as a whole. Raised concerns over the use of these as designated cycle highways. Acknowledged authority of Council to designate Parks as cycle routes but emphasised specific nature of Inclosure land as specified for recreational use only by act of parliament.

Friends of Nottingham Arboretum - GP reported quiet activity of late. Now trying to identify & source new trees for Arboretum. Questioned NCC policy on memorials in parks following recent request refusal. Echoed by JG who also stated view that issue of cycling required further discussion. JG also questioned premise for installation of Netflix sponsored benches. NS welcomed installation & highlighted participation of CALM (the Campaign Against Living Miserably). <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-nottinghamshire-60057551> FH emphasised that installation of Netflix benches had led to good media coverage helping to promote importance of green spaces to mental health & potential gaining new audience. Noted that the 2 current installations (from 25 nationally) intended to stay in the Arboretum and Highfields Park but opportunity to look at a city-wide project in due course.

FH reiterated long-standing policy to generally refuse requests for memorial plaques – impression might be given of parks as memorial sites & experience of memorials being targets for vandalism. Other options offered include certificates of sponsorship & (on a few sites) commemorative books. **FH will discuss further with FoNA.**

Friends of Wollaton Park – RK reported that regular volunteering activity now fully resumed with considerable progress on the Walled Garden project. RK also acting as NOSF Rep to GreenSpace & recommended involvement with project.

Carrington Community Garden – RS highlighted problem of bank charges for small groups with limited funds.

MW/RS to discuss possible NOSF support.

GreenSpace – LA & KL highlighted progress in aim of putting people in touch with nature-based activities to support mental health. 18 months of project remain, network of trusted providers being developed.

Friends of Churchfield Plantation – BG reported problems with fly tipping of garden waste & problems with bikes/e-scooters being raced through woods.

Nottingham Growing Network – KF reported success in gaining funding to employ p/t co-ordinator to further connect community gardeners.

Memorial Gardens Association – LV & CB described growing success of weekly gardening group, 17 participants at most recent session. Welcomed success of Lottery bid. Highlighted problem of removal of very large rockery stones.

Agreed that ASB issues described above be raised by NOSF and that further discussion would be arranged on memorial and cycling issues, the latter to include representatives for Local Access Forum & Active Travel team.

Previous Forum Minutes (November 2021) – minutes accepted; BG asked for feedback on request for wilding of grassed areas, **MW to pursue.**

AGM business:

2020/21 annual report and accounts accepted.

B Standing, C Underwood, R Yousof, S Manton, M Willis, T Huggon, J Dymond, R Kirkwood, J White unanimously re-elected as Trustees in their current roles. J Osoro Pickering standing down as Trustee & becomes NOSF Ambassador.

Platinum Jubilee:

TH, in role as Deputy to Lord Lieutenant, involved in planning of celebrations. Intended to take place throughout the year but focussed on rearranged may bank holiday Thursday & Friday 2nd/3rd June + subsequent weekend. Locally there will be formal celebrations at Council House & Castle, parades & beacon lighting at Greens Mill & Woodthorpe Grange Park. Informal celebrations can be held – street parties but especially on Parks & open spaces. Queens canopy project already launched to encourage planting of million + trees. Opportunity for individual tree planting. Funding expected to be available. TH to discuss with Sandra at NCC.

Good opportunity for groups to get people out and onto our parks. Should be funding to support this. TH to act as NOSF contact & further information to be shared.

GP raised question of planting times – acknowledged that this should be done earlier or later in the year. SM asked re applying for funding, through NOSF or individually, to await further information. MW noted that SALTAR already planning event on Stockhill park. RS asked re advice on planting practice, “right tree in right place”. **MW to provide information through NOSF.** NS shared link: <https://queensgreencanopy.org/>

Parks Development update:

Funding confirmed for refurbishment of play areas at Seaford Avenue & Amesbury Circus, work to commence April together with steps & play area at Coppice Park. Funding bid for Melbourne Park failed, other options being investigated. Further FCC bids in for Arkwright Park & Ronald Street play areas & consultation ready for next round of bids.

Green Flag application process underway with updates/improvements to action & management plans. Some information needed from groups for Green Flag Community awards.

Green Guardians volunteer programme launched in August and Aug-Dec stats show 1530 volunteer hours, 118 sessions & 6000+ trees & 13000+ plants & bulbs put in. Noted that Friends of Groups work not included in these figures. Website still to come. Volunteer management training for NCC staff underway.

Future Parks Accelerator programme:

FPA project an opportunity, through HLF/NT providing money & expertise to encourage development of long-term strategy for care & development of LA green spaces. John Sheaff Associates (Landscape Architects) currently running consultations with parks stakeholders to ensure appropriate input to newly developing 25-year strategy which will produce a technical report and a shorter user-friendly report for wide distribution. Scheduled for completion late March/April. NCC Open & Green Space Champions Group being re-established as FPA governance body. Brand & marketing strategy also being developed which will promote parks, inc volunteering. Volunteer co-ordinator post extended for further 2 years with aim to make sustainable. Specific work also underway on 5 key sites exploring new methodologies to enable more effective marketing & grow support.

Victoria Embankment Memorial Gardens Project:

£1.1 million lottery funding gained towards £1.7 m project enabling physical work & restoration; landscaping – footpaths to improve accessibility; undercroft restoration to provide toilets & volunteer hub; work on pond & fountains; completely refurbished café inc visitor centre & employment of team leader. Works start March for completion by October but with 5-year programme of activities. MeGA have been key partners to the bid & will continue to be closely involved with many of their ideas incorporated into activity plan.

LV expressed wish for involvement in Team Leader recruitment. CB asked if there could be a new tree trail map. TH & BG strongly welcomed project as necessary to restore Memorial gardens to original condition. TH highlighted need to address problem of removal of stones. TH also asked re potential WW2 Roll of Honour project & NOSF involvement.

LA asked re condition of paddling pool. FH replied that renovation of existing facility not possible, ambition to provide new splash park and consultation planned with investigation of possible funding.

Peoples Forest:

Hockley Hustle Holt now established, signage being prepared & tree guardians recruitment underway.

Castle Oaks – awaiting confirmation from Castle trust re date & location planting of central oak. Final round of contact with schools underway. Discussion to be arranged with NCC re sites for trees which schools can't accommodate.

Nottingham Forest FC – recent focus on “Forest Kingdom” & native wildflowers noted. SM to contact re possible support.

Sherwood Forest Trust – October start set for acorn collection & growing on of saplings.

Bio-diversity mapping:

CSH updated on progress – mapping for habitat & canopy now complete, Ecosulis cleaning data in preparation for developing opportunity maps which will be disseminated through a feb/march workshop. Tree canopy report will be available in march.

City Nature Challenge 2022:

Nottingham to participate for the 3rd year, the first with in-person activities. Last year saw 2770 observations of 745 species with 251 participants.

Run by the Wildlife Trust City Local Group which encourages participation on a group or individual basis & will provide support where possible. Contact us at: nwtcitygroup@gmail.com

And see: <https://uk.inaturalist.org/projects/city-nature-challenge-2022-nottingham-city-uk?tab=about>

AOB:

TH reiterated call for further discussion on memorials policy & exceptions, installation of benches policy & cycling in parks. RK stated concern re different implementation/interpretation of policy within different parts of NCC.

Next meeting:

Tuesday 26th April