

WOODTHORPE GAZETTE

THE BI-MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF WOODTHORPE GRANGE PARK
JULY & AUGUST, 2018

Welcome to this the third edition of the Woodthorpe Gazette. You will notice I have made a slight alteration, instead of just showing in the sub-heading the month of publication, in this case July, I have included the month of August as well. This will mean the next edition will cover the months of September and October. By making this slight alteration it will allow me not only to report on events that have occurred up to the month of publication but to report on future events as well and to also review past events that have occurred over the year in future publications such as the November & December publication.... ED

‘Summer’s lease hath all too short a date!’

Sonnet 18, William Shakespeare 1564 – 1616

When sitting in my garden that looks out onto Woodthorpe Park whilst listening to sounds of summer, of birds chirruping whilst watching the squirrels scurrying between the branches of the trees I often think of the delightful Sonnet 18 by William Shakespeare especially as ‘Summer’s lease hath all too short a date,’

As the warmth of the sun’s rays has a soothing effect, I often think of summers past when I was younger when the world, it seemed, moved at a much slower pace.

My mind’s eye still captures images of when amidst birdsong you could hear the languid sounds of the push lawnmower, or the gentle clip, clip, clipping of hedgerows being trimmed.

This melodic sound would be interwoven with sporadic bursts of conversation between neighbours exchanging opinions over the efforts they have put into tendering their roses or of how much energy they have expended whilst mowing their lawns.

This was all, of course, the sound of summer Sundays; to a time when it was still possible to see people dressed in their Sunday best queuing in the café on Woodthorpe Park for tea, sandwiches and ice creams, which all those years ago was situated in the Grange; and then to see people in all their finery walking in the park’s formal gardens when signs like ‘keep off the grass’ were strictly adhered to.

As a precursor to those seemingly far off days, on Sunday mornings before 8am it was quite common to hear the peeling of bells coming from the direction of St. Martin’s Church in Sherwood summoning its parishioners to prayer.

Those Sundays now seem a distant memory when the only shops that were open were newsagents, which only stayed open until 12 noon. Now all that has changed. The Lord’s day now unfortunately has to compete with Sunday trading, all of which has had a detrimental effect on the once peaceful Sunday afternoons in the garden. Originally introduced on the 26th August 1994 this piece of legislation allowed retailers to legally open from 10am to 4pm on Sundays. As a consequence, this has tempted people away from places of worship to places such as DIY stores.



Tea and sandwiches in the café at the Grange on Woodthorpe Park. Please note, when walking in the gardens **‘PLEASE KEEP OFF THE GRASS!’**

The Song Thrush and Black Bird now have to compete to be heard over the humming of the electric powered lawnmower and/or hedge cutter, or, at worst, the revving of the petrol driven lawn mower or hedge trimmer, sometimes both electric and petrol at the same time where it’s even advisable for the operator to wear ear defenders! (Not that they weren’t available before the Sunday trading laws, it’s just they have become a more common feature). To complete the ensemble, to remind us of the world we now live in, the distant sound of an emergency vehicle rushing to the aid of some poor hapless victim of an accident or crime!



Wear ear defenders when operating this gardening equipment!

Yes, the sun’s rays still have a soothing effect, and summer Sundays are still interspersed with the sound of birdsong. But with the aid of modern equipment taking all the effort out of gardening and the distant hub-bub of sound, you have to agree summers in the 21st century have become very noisy!

Another Environmental Issue – Dog Fouling!

In the previous two editions of the Woodthorpe Gazette, the subject was raised concerning litter and in particular fly tipping. However, an equally important environmental issue has been raised, that of dog fouling.

The issue was first raised in a message posted on the Friends Facebook page by (Tracy) who said:

As a regular visitor to the park I was somewhat concerned by the message board that displayed two signs regarding fines where litter was said to be a higher fine than dog poo.

I'd rather my grandchild fall into a pile of crisp packets than a pile of dog poo, the problems arising around dog poo are far more serious than litter. Is this a mistake by the council?

What do you park users think? I did my own research by standing by the said signs and asking members of the public and all that I asked about the signs were in agreement with me.



As a consequence of the above posting it engendered comments that all have valid points. Apart from myself as editor, thanking the person for raising the issue, another respondent commented:

Both are horrible and the fines should be equal, but while dog poo biodegrades, plastic waste does not, and is ultimately more damaging to the environment.

A third respondent pointed out that the issue of dog fouling maximum fines are set by national laws hence the difference.

A look on the UK Governments website concerning dog fouling on www.gov.uk/control-dog-public/dog-fouling it says: “You can be given an on-

the-spot fine if you don't clean up after your dog. The amount varies from council to council. It's often £50 and can be as much as £80.” It then goes on to say: “If you refuse to pay the fine, you can be taken to court and fined up to £1,000.” As a conclusion it says: “Some councils have stricter rules on dog fouling. They may make owners carry a poop scoop and disposable bag when they take their dogs out to a public place.”

Following on from the UK Government's website, I typed onto the google search engine the question: “How many dog fouling incidents get reported?” Under Direct Line Insurance Group on www.directlinegroup.com/media its banner headline said: “Quarter of a million pounds in dog fouling fines.” It then goes on to say: “Local authorities across the UK have issued over 2,099 fines for dog fouling in 2016 to date, totalling £120,359. In 2015, at least 4,451 fines were given for dog fouling offences totalling in excess of £247,282.” It also points out that Barnsley Borough Council handed out the highest number of fines amongst UK authorities in 2015 (359), with a value of £17,950 in total.

In Nottingham in an evaluation report, dated April to June 2017, under the heading of Nottingham – let's keep it clean! It says: “As a council, we are proud of Nottingham's reputation as Britain's cleanest city and we want to maintain this. The council works hard to keep Nottingham clean. Despite this, the 2016 Respect survey showed that littering, closely followed by dog fouling, are perceived by residents to be the biggest anti-social behaviour issues in neighbourhoods. To address this situation, the campaign aimed to encourage citizens to play their part in helping to keep the city clean.”

Under a seven-point objectives list that included the reduction of littering, dog fouling and fly tipping the council in the evaluation report asked the public to pick up litter when they were out and about and to encourage people to sign up to be “Clean Champions.” That is to volunteer to litter pick in their own neighbourhood.

As a result, 66% of those who responded to the scheme said they had seen the ‘Keep it Clean’ campaign. As a consequence, awareness of the “Clean Champions” scheme increased from 11% to 24%. Finally, 36% said they picked up litter after seeing the ‘Be a Hero’ poster. Another positive result of this campaign was that the number of dog fouling incidents in Nottingham fell by 11% as compared to the same period in 2016. Also, the number of fly-tipping incidents reduced by 4% as compared to the same

period in 2016. However, as the report goes on to say: “Although the decrease is small it should be seen in the wider context of a national rise in fly-tipping.” It then goes on to say: “We also believe there was some double counting of fly-tips reported in 2017 so the actual percentage decrease in fly-tipping was probably greater than 4%, but it is impossible to quantify the exact extent of this.



With there being so many differing reports into the issue of dog fouling, all with valid points of view, the only answer I can give is that the responsibility of the dog lies with the owner.

Woodthorpe Park is a haven for dog owners. No matter what time of day it is, there is always someone taking their dog for a walk. As a dog owner myself, all I ask is please respect the environment and clean up after your dog. After all, it will be a very sad day if the council were to slap a Public Space Protection Order, 2017 (PSPO) on Woodthorpe Park which outlines the times that dogs are ‘not allowed’ to use certain areas of the park.

Finally, for those interested in reading the new dog walking legislation, visit the D for Dog website on: <https://www.dfordog.co.uk/blog/new-dog-walking-legislation-pspo.html> and the Nottingham - let's keep it clean evaluation report on:

<http://committee.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/documents/s64519/CLEAN%20CAMPAIGN%20EVALUATION.pdf>



Woodthorpe and Winchester Court Flats – The story so far!

Originally built in 1965 on the site of the former Nottingham Suburban Railway’s Sherwood Station and described in Nottingham City Homes website as: “Situated in the stunning setting of Woodthorpe Park in Sherwood and boasting panoramic views over the city and the park that is literally on your doorstep,” the two 16 storey blocks of flats with 180 dwellings which have been a feature on Nottingham’s landscape for over 50 years is currently going through a major transformation to bring both blocks of flats up to the standards required for the 21st century.

Originally announced in 2016, Woodthorpe and Winchester Court flats are being converted into a Energy Efficient Extra Care Housing scheme with a new three-storey building with up to 40 one-bedroom flats that are designed as independent living schemes so that people are able to remain in their own home for longer, with support on hand should they need it.

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To support this housing scheme, the complex will come complete with its own communal facilities, specialist bathrooms, scooter stores and care provider offices. Finally, the purpose of the whole scheme is to reduce the dependence on residential care and to reduce the pressure on local NHS hospitals as well.



Not my photograph: Woodthorpe and Winchester Court flats were built by Wimpey Construction. Legend has it that the two 16 storey blocks of flats were to be built 21 storeys high, however the residents of Sherwood Vale raised a petition and had them reduced by five storeys to 16.

One of the design features of the whole Woodthorpe and Winchester Court complex are the resident's garages adjacent to Winchester Court that were built on a curve

To this day, this is one design feature that has perplexed Wilmott Construction. It wasn't until showing them a photograph of the original Sherwood Station, were they able to find out why the residents garages were built the way they are, as you will see by the adjoining photograph.



Sherwood Railway Station: The station that was built on a curve!



Not my photograph: The garages were built where the two railway platforms once stood, hence the curved design.



Not my photograph: Circa 1960's: The construction of Woodthorpe and Winchester Court flats.

In the two-year period from 2016, and in particular from the time of when redevelopment work started in 2017, in a relatively short period of time, the environment is slowly being transformed. Apart from

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discovering a bat colony, which delayed the redevelopment project, it is estimated the building work will be finished sometime in 2019.



Photograph taken in January 2017 of the original 1960's look of the flats, which is slowly but surely being totally transformed.

The transformation work began with the demolition of the Woodthorpe Court resident's garages, followed by the demolition of the Winwood Community Centre.



25 July 2017: Demolition of the Woodthorpe Court garages



27 July 2017: Demolition of the Winwood Centre



29 July 2017: With just the wheelchair ramp remaining is all that is left as a timely reminder of the Winwood Centre.



The Winwood Centre, built as a community centre for the residents of both blocks of flats, has been a feature since the early 1980's. The picture above, taken in 1977 shows what the place looked like before it was built. Notice in the foreground the proliferation of factory chimneys that have long since disappeared!



28 August 2017: Preparation of the groundwork

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1 November 2017: After the ground work been prepared and the foundations laid, the construction of the three-storey communal building finally began.

With work in progress the skeletal framework that will be the three-storey communal building is, from when the above photograph was taken, beginning to take shape, albeit with scaffolding around it. Also, the two blocks of flats are in advanced stages of redevelopment as well, with the replacement of the balconies, double glazing windows and outside wall insulation.



4 June 2018, Woodthorpe Court: Work in progress replacing the balconies, windows and outside wall insulation.



4 June 2018: Work in progress in the construction of the three-storey communal building.

As previously pointed out, the redevelopment of Woodthorpe and Winchester Court flats is estimated to be finished sometime in 2019. If, however you are curious as to what the completed project will look like, there is a comparison with renovation work that was recently carried out on Manvers and Bentinck Court flats in the Sneinton area of Nottingham. Like Woodthorpe and Winchester Court flats, Manvers and Bentinck Court flats were also built in the 1960's and to the same design specifications. As a result, from 2019 onwards Woodthorpe Court and Winchester Court flats will look like this:



Manvers and Bentinck Court flats, Sneinton, Nottingham.



Architect's drawings of the finished work on Woodthorpe and Winchester Court flats.

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The three Storey Communal Centre and Winchester Court on the far right.



L/R: Woodthorpe Court, the Communal Centre, and Winchester Court.



The Communal Centre and Woodthorpe Court in the distance.



FLY TIPPING ONCE AGAIN HAS RAISED ITS UGLY HEAD!

Just when we thought the subject of fly tipping had been well covered I have to report that again building waste and other items have been fly tipped in the same area as previously reported, the wooded entrance to Woodthorpe Park on Sherwood Vale.



Photographs taken on the 9 June, 2018

In response, I posted on both Twitter and on the Woodthorpe Friends and Sherwood in Nottingham Community Facebook pages saying: “Yet more evidence of fly tipping. I am convinced that the part of Sherwood Vale that leads onto Woodthorpe Park has become an unofficial dumping ground!”

As the entrance to Woodthorpe Park on Sherwood Vale has become a hotspot for fly tippers, in response isn't it time for direct action to take place like installing surveillance equipment in that area and on the bridge above the area that was once the Nottingham Suburban Railway's Sherwood Station where I once saw two people throwing what appeared to be garden rubbish over the parapet of the bridge onto the ground below.

Watch this space as I will be again reporting on this issue in a later edition of the Woodthorpe Gazette!

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Dates for your diary

All the dates for meetings of the Friends of Woodthorpe Grange Park for a whole year have been published on the Friends website and can be accessed on the following website address: <http://www.woodthorpefriends.co.uk/page139.html>
If, however, you do not have access to a computer the dates are as follows:

Wednesday 25th July, 2018
Wednesday 26th September, 2018
Wednesday 28th November, 2018
Wednesday 30th January, 2019
Wednesday 27th March, 2019 (AGM)
Wednesday 29th May, 2019

As with all bi-monthly meetings, unless stated otherwise are to be held in the meeting room in the Grange.

Coming up in the next issue of the Woodthorpe Gazette

This the third edition of the Woodthorpe Gazette which I feel has covered a number of subjects of importance from an environmental point of view as well as topical. Therefore, coming up in the next issue, which will be the September/October edition, apart from items of news, there will be articles covering the historical walks around Woodthorpe Park, the park's Café and the Plant Shop.

“Finally”

As summer's lease hath all too short a date and, as already pointed out, the next edition of the Woodthorpe Gazette will be the September/October edition, the 'season mists and mellow fruitfulness,' I feel I cannot let this moment pass by concluding this edition of the Woodthorpe Gazette by quoting the whole of Shakespeare's Sonnet 18.

Before I do, may I take this opportunity to say: whatever you are doing and where ever you are going for a holiday this summer stay safe and have a wonderful time.

ED



The Immortal Bard
William Shakespeare

Sonnet 18

*Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer's lease hath all too short a date:
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd;
And every fair from fair sometime declines,
By chance, or nature's changing course, untrimm'd;
But thy eternal summer shall not fade
Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st;
Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his shade,
When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st;
So long as men can breathe or eyes can see,
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.*

