

WOODTHORPE GAZETTE

THE BI-MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF WOODTHORPE GRANGE PARK
MARCH/APRIL, 2019



I would first of all like to begin by thanking all sixteen volunteers, which included a family of four, who turned up at short notice for the litter pick that took place on Saturday 26th January, 2019.

As it says on the bottom of the advertising flyer: 'This is one litter pick that cannot wait', and on reflection it certainly was one litter pick that couldn't wait.

As you will see from above it was the area surrounding Woodthorpe and Winchester Court flats the friends concentrated on. It was also the intention of moving onto the wooded entrance to the park from Sherwood Vale, the area referred to as a fly tippers haven. However, due to the immense amount of discarded rubbish found lying in the vicinity of the flats the move onto the wooded area had to be postponed to another time.

Fly Tippers Haven!

Referring to the wooded entrance to the park from Sherwood Vale as a fly tippers haven, it was very much the same in the area that was once part of the former suburban railway where the residents of Woodthorpe Court flats garages are situated. In this area amongst all the discarded drinks cans and waste paper a large quantity of large empty screw top containers that had corrosive liquid printed on the side

along with two broken fridges were found. As it would be considered hazardous waste the containers were left where they were found and reported to the Nottingham City Council's Environmental Protection Agency who arranged to have them removed.



Together with a large quantity of 25 litre containers there were two fridges and a quantity of domestic waste.



A large quantity of domestic waste bags found by one of the volunteers behind the residents' garages at the end of Chestnut Walk.

With such a large group of volunteers the immediate area in the vicinity of the flats, which included both sides of the former railway cutting where the garages are located were cleaned. For those amongst us who could climb the steep bank where it was safe to do so, we proceeded to clear the area.

However, it was what was found that was interesting. Buried deep in the brambles at the bottom of the bank was a perfectly intact motorcycle frame, which led me to believe that what was found was incriminating evidence. In other words, it had been stolen from somewhere, and the thief had got wind that someone official was after to him. To get rid of the

evidence the thief decided to throw the stolen item into the brambles where it wouldn't be found.

Apart from the usual drinks bottles and cans other items found were discarded footwear, earthenware crockery and the remains of an industrial sewing machine.



Incriminating evidence amongst 10 bags of rubbish



A photograph of just some of the 16 volunteers who took part in the litter pick on 26th January

As in previous editions of the Woodthorpe Gazette, the theme running through this edition is that which blights our landscape, the careless discarding of rubbish, whether it be cans, bottles and paper, to fly tipping of large items such as industrial waste etc.

In a report published by the Nottingham City Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee, dated the 8th November 2017 it is estimated to cost the UK economy approximately £150 million every year just to clear up rubbish dumped by the likes of those who fly tip in places like the wooded entrance to Woodthorpe Park on Sherwood Vale or the dumping of large quantities of garden waste over the parapet of

the bridge further down Sherwood Vale onto the site of the former Nottingham Suburban Railway, which during last summer was deliberately set alight and partially destroyed decking in the adjoining property. As it turned out had the fire and rescue services not arrived when they did, there could have been tragic consequences.

The report then goes on to say, apart from fly tipping being a criminal activity that can cause serious pollution to the environment, it costs local authorities £50 million each year to clear it up. The report also says fly tipping undermines legitimate waste management companies who are undercut by illegal operators and because of their actions can deter investment in the area and lead to a lack of pride among local people.

People who fly tip

People fly-tip to avoid paying a levy. An authorised officer could, in 2017, when this report was first published by the Nottingham City Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee, issue a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) of up to £300 to anyone transferring bulky waste without a Waste Management Licence. However, in June 2018 the FPN was revised and is now punishable for up to a fine of £50,000 or 12-months imprisonment if convicted in a Magistrates' Court. However, the offence can attract an unlimited fine and up to 5 years imprisonment if convicted in a Crown Court.

Littering is also a classed as a criminal offence as well. Anyone caught throwing down or dropping an item in any public open space is said to be littering. If a person is found guilty of the offence, they too can be issued with a fixed penalty notice of £80 or could potentially be prosecuted and risk a fine of up to £2,500.

According to a report in the Nottingham Post, in 2018 there were 4,730 cases of fly-tipping reported in the city in 2017 - but only two people were successfully prosecuted. Despite this, the number of fly-tipping incidents has dramatically fallen since the year 2015-2016, when 7,862 cases were reported.

The report then goes on to say, fly-tipping costs on average £56 per incident to clear away. This means the council spent around £264,880 from April 2017-April 2018 clearing away waste.



Graffiti: Urban Art or Vandalism

According to a report in the Nottingham Law Journal, volume 26, 2017 by Dr Janice Denoncourt, graffiti writing is a form of social expression encompassing a wide range of activities — from simple tags of identity, to scrawled expressions of protest and politics, sometimes in very rough locations. It remains a controversial and illicit form of literary expression, which despite having existed since ancient times, is considered vandalism if created without permission. This is because it is usually created in urban public spaces and its visibility means that it affects whole communities rather than just the creator or the owner of a tangible property? What determines whether it is wrong or right for a graffiti writer to vandalize property with that same feeling has literary merit? Indeed, cities spend millions of pounds to erase its existence at the taxpayer's expense and graffiti crews are regularly sentenced to jail for causing criminal damage. Yet, since 2008 leading museums such as London's Tate Modern have curated graffiti displays by internationally renowned personalities such as Blu from Bologna, Faile from New York and Sixeart from Barcelona. Meanwhile, world-renowned British graffiti creator Banksy chooses to keep his identity secret to remain free to create his graffiti unfettered. It is important for graffiti creators to ensure their individually stylized work is highly visible and placed in prominent locations to ensure maximum exposure — this is not always welcome if the graffiti writer paints without permission, which is the norm.



An example of Banksy's art that challenges the viewer to the image of the "hero." This hero is not your typical hero though; he is a homeless man holding a sign with this message to the public: "KEEP YOUR COINS, I WANT CHANGE."

'Graffiti isn't graffiti really unless it's illegal'



The bridge on Sherwood Vale that once led to the Nottingham Patent Brick Company

For some, graffiti is an art of expression, however for some it remains an eyesore - a blot on the landscape, as the above example shows.

This was very much the view of a presiding JP who in 2018 prosecuted a Prince's Trust student for causing £100 damage to an advertising board on Clumber Street in Nottingham.

JP Ann Coxall in her summing up during the sentencing said: 'It is a shame to see a young man here for criminal damage.'

On somebody else's property it is not art, it is graffiti and it is a crime. Usually that someone else has to repair it at their own expense but not in this case.' As she concluded: 'It is one of the things you will have to do,' as the guilty was ordered to pay for the clean-up and come up with £85 prosecution costs as well as paying £20 in government tax.

In a report published in the Nottingham Post online in September 2018, since 2011 there have been 2,617 pieces of graffiti removed by the Nottingham City Council. Overall the number of incidents is declining, however there was a small increase in 2017/18 compared to 2016.

As the report goes on to say: From a peak of 589 racist and sexist incidents in 2011/12, there were 184 in 2017. However, there has been a downward trend in the number of reports concerning general graffiti, which is down from 10,969 10 years ago to 3,212 in 2018.

As the report concludes, the figures, which were revealed under the Freedom of Information Act, show around one in every 20 graffiti incidents is classed as racist or sexist.



Fly Tipping and Graffiti: what is the answer?

To try and find an answer to the question of the problem of fly tipping and graffiti is open to much debate in trying to find a suitable answer.

It is quite easy to say both fly tipping and graffiti identify with what is wrong in society. However, that answer is too simplistic as the answer provides another question of what [is] wrong with society?

My answer to the question of why do people break the law by fly tipping and why do people spray paint walls with graffiti is more to do with social and economic circumstances.

As regards to graffiti, from a social perspective, is to say those who commit this form of artistic vandalism have been inspired by the street or urban artist Banksy.

Banksy's work has caught the imagination the world over with the social messages attached to his work.

Although, by some, his work has been considered as just straight forward vandalism and should be removed. However, by some his work is seen as art that reflects the current political climate of the 21st century, and therefore should be preserved.



Two gay police officers
Another example of Banksy's Artwork.



As harsh as some of the examples of Banksy's artwork are, his artwork has a great number of followers. Or perhaps as it should be said, a whole group of latter-day Banksy's, believing that if Banksy can become a graffiti artist with street cred, then so can we!

Of course, with the example of a court case of a student being brought to justice for damaging a notice board, it doesn't always work that way. This is because unlike Banksy who has never been brought to justice, where as a number of graffiti artists have! Also, no one knows Banksy's identity where a number of graffiti artists that have been brought to justice because they have had their identity exposed on CCTV!

In conclusion, Banksy's work may be met by some with utter revulsion and at the same time by others who see his work as an inspiration. In other words, it is like saying, one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter!

On the subject of fly tipping, all I can say at the risk of repeating myself, fly tipping is a subject that has been discussed in previous editions of the Woodthorpe Gazette. If you recall in the September/October, 2018 edition I wrote:

As a note of caution, when clearing large amounts of garden waste, you will hear of people with a van offering to remove garden waste for a cash-in-hand fee, on the premise that they will take it to a recycling centre for you. It may sound perfectly

WOODTHORPE GAZETTE

THE BI-MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF WOODTHORPE GRANGE PARK
MARCH/APRIL, 2019

innocent, especially if you are on a tight budget. However, what they do with your rubbish and most of all your money is entirely up to them. For all you know you could be handing your money over to someone with an ulterior motive who is after making a fast buck and doesn't care where they dump your rubbish. Therefore, a note of caution is, if you need someone to remove a large quantity of garden rubbish and you want someone who is local, take a look on the internet. For example, on the Google search engine just type in the words 'Garden Waste Disposal Nottingham' and you will come up with 423,000 results in just 0.62 seconds, so there is plenty to choose from. Let us not forget the Nottingham City Council operate a collection of bulky items as well. It is free and easy to request. In fact, you can even book a collection online. The full website address is: <https://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/bin-and-rubbishcollections/request-a-collection-of-bulky-items/>

The note of caution still applies. Therefore, to remind ourselves, here are a few examples of what has been fly tipped, especially in the wooded entrance to Woodthorpe Park on Sherwood Vale.



32inch television, two fridges and a mattress



Garden waste

The Great British Spring Clean 22nd March to 23rd April, 2019

**THE GREAT BRITISH SPRING CLEAN
22ND MARCH TO 23RD APRIL 2019**

**THE
FRIENDS OF WOODTHORPE GRANGE PARK
WILL BE HOLDING A LITTER PICK
MEET SATURDAY 23RD MARCH 2019
AT THE PLANT SHOP 10.00 AM START
REGULAR PARK CLEANING EVENTS ARE HELD
THROUGHOUT THE YEAR
DETAILS ON www.woodthorpefriends.co.uk**

**BE CLEAN! BE GREEN
.....BIN IT!**

As you will see from above the Friends of Woodthorpe Grange Park will be making their contribution to the Great British Spring Clean by meeting at 10.00am outside the Plant Shop on Saturday 22nd March, 2019 for another litter pick. So, if as many volunteers as the previous litter pick turn up it will make it a great occasion.

As a matter of interest, from the turnout for the litter pick that was held on Saturday 26th of January, it has been decided to hold a monthly litter pick. No dates have been set, however I would ask you to keep a lookout on the Friends of Woodthorpe Grange Park's website on www.woodthorpefriends.co.uk and on the Friends Facebook page and Twitter page.



WOODTHORPE GAZETTE

THE BI-MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF WOODTHORPE GRANGE PARK
MARCH/APRIL, 2019

1922 – 2022

Woodthorpe Grange Park's Centenary

This edition of the Woodthorpe Gazette as you will have read has mostly been taken up with the environmental issues of fly tipping and graffiti. However, there is one date for your diary, although it's in three years' time, that is on Wednesday 1st June 2022, Woodthorpe Park will be celebrating its centenary.

How we celebrate the occasion has to involve the local community. That is not just the Friends of Woodthorpe Park but the local business community, schools, sports clubs, and local charities, in fact everyone who benefits from Woodthorpe Park. In other words, this would be an event organised for the whole community by the whole community.

It has been suggested, if there were a whole chain of events taking place throughout Nottingham, we could invite one of the members of the Royal Family to pay us a visit.

The last, and only time Woodthorpe Park had a visit from a member of the Royal Family was on Tuesday 10th July, 1928 when HRH King George V and Queen Mary paid a visit. Apart from being welcomed by members of the council, they were also met by an enthusiastic crowd of 17,000 school children from the surrounding areas who were all transported in by train to Sherwood Station then on to Woodthorpe Park.



1st June, 1922: Mayor Alderman H. Bowles officially declaring Woodthorpe Grange Park open

As an example of a chain of events, on the same day as HRH King George V and Queen Mary visited Woodthorpe Park, they then went on to officially open the Trent Building on the Highfields Estate at the University of Nottingham.

Could a chain of events similar to what happened 91 years ago happen in Nottingham again? What do you think?

It would of course mean casting our net that much further and would involve other organisations outside Nottingham as well. However, with a bit of effort from the community I believe it can be done.

I say to everyone - come on Sherwood get your thinking caps on and let's make this thing work!

The subject of Woodthorpe Park's centenary will be discussed in future meetings of the Friends of Woodthorpe Grange Park. Should you wish to become involved in organising the event please look out for future dates of meetings on the Friends of Woodthorpe Park website and Facebook page.

As a PS to Woodthorpe Park's centenary 2022 will also be the 70th anniversary of the reign of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

2022 therefore could be a year of celebrations, not just for Woodthorpe Park but for Her Majesty the Queen as well.



HRH King George V and Queen Mary leaving Woodthorpe Park

Date for your Diary

The next Meeting of the Friends of Woodthorpe Grange Park will be held at 6.30pm on Wednesday 27th March, 2019 at the Sherwood Community Centre, Mansfield Road, Sherwood, which will be the Annual General Meeting.