

Present:

Cllr Rosemary Healy, NCC Portfolio holder: Highways, Transport, Cleansing & Parks	Jenny Bailey, Notts Healthcare, GSP & Highbury community Garden
Eddie Curry, NCC Head of Public Realm	Robin Stalvies, Carrington Residents Assoc & Community Garden
Adrienne Kelly, NCC FPA programme manager & Greenspace manager	Rachel Richards, Plant.NG wild
Martin Willis, NOSF Chair, Wild.NG & NWT	Graham Pearce, FoNA
Tom Huggon, NOSF Trustee & City Open & Green Space Champion	Chris Thompson, LAF
Rob Kirkwood, NOSF Trustee, NOSF GSP link & FoWP	Paul Swift, FoWGP
Julia White, NOSF Trustee & NOSF GSP link	Brian Grocock, NOSF Ambassador & FoCP
James Dymond, NOSF Trustee	Karen Fry, NOGS & NGN
Amanda Chambers, GSP Programme manager	Julian Griffiths, FoNA & FoF
Laura Armitage, GSP Project officer	June Perry, FoF
Kate Lisle, GSP Project Officer	Lucy Kennedy, STAA & NWTCLG
Kat Horner, GSP & Natural England	

Apologies: Cherry Underwood, Pete Forster, Sarah Manton, Kathryn Cooper

Previous Forum (June 2021) – no comments made

Round Table:

Friends of Woodthorpe Grange Park – PS introduced himself as Acting Chair following the sad demise of Alex Staniforth. Many of those present paid tribute to Alex – long standing Chair of FoWGP, strong supporter of NOSF & key part of Notts Ramblers. Plans by FoWGP, supported by NCC, for permanent memorial & tribute to Alex on the park.

FoWGP have established a successful weekly volunteer gardening group & will be picking up on delayed preparation work for the 2022 centenary of Woodthorpe Park. NOSF & NCC offered support. EC & RH will discuss possibility of reinstating Sherwood Festival. Further FoWGP information: www.woodthorpefriends.co.uk

Friends of the Forest & Friends of Nottingham Arboretum – JP highlighted the successful installation of Town Trail interpretation on the Inclosure Walk. See: <https://www.oss.org.uk/our-general-secretary-opens-nottinghams-historic-town-trail/> JP asked that consideration be given to featuring the Town Trail on NCC website. GP recommended the Arboretum Café under its new management. JG further explained the importance of the Inclosure walk & paid tribute to JPs longstanding work on the project, JG also thanked GP for his contribution to successful Heritage Week events.

Friends of Wollaton Park – RK reported that regular volunteering activity now fully resumed with considerable progress on the Walled Garden project. RK also highlighted GreenSpace social prescribing activity with the recent national project event at St Ann's allotments. RK asked that acknowledgement be recorded for the efforts of Cherry Underwood & Nicola Hinton towards the success of the event. RK also stressed the importance of the GSP project & requested that Forum members offered positive responses & support.

Carrington Community Garden – RS highlighted the difference with the above larger spaces & groups & consequent greater difficulties with funding & insurance. Those present agreed that the diversity of groups & spaces is valuable & that small spaces are of equal importance as is community support for them.

St Ann's Allotment Association – LK outlined the range of STAA projects with increased volunteer activity of increasing breadth & a change from former patterns of regular activity. Welcome but with additional challenges.

Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust City Local Group – LK set out the planned 2022 “Roadshow” programme with monthly activities comprising volunteer conservation sessions, walks & surveys across all the City Local Nature Reserves

Local Access Forum – CT outlined ambition for a designated River Leen walk from Newstead to the Trent & requested support. Wish for improvements on some existing sections e.g. widening of canal towpath. EC highlighted recent footpath improvements on several sections & emphasised need for County involvement. RR suggested potential for tree planting on parts of any route. Agreed that TH/MW/CT meet & discuss City aspects.

Future Parks Accelerator programme:

AK described considerable staffing over the last year but new team now in place, particularly April focussed on commercial work & Claire coordinating relationships with wider strategy teams. Parks Challenge, Sites Quality audits & natural capital accounts now complete; Biodiversity opportunity & tree planting mapping being finalised. Future strategy being formulated, to be completed by end march with sign off & adoption by end June. Key themes: sustainable future governance, climate change tie-in, connectivity through wider public realm, health, accessibility, active travel, biodiversity net gain, development of improved offer on key sites.

MW requested update on progress re insurance for groups, AK to follow up. EC raised importance of strengthening links so that GSP work is built into future strategy. AC will share end of year GSP learning document with EC/AK. RK asked about opportunities to feed into strategy. AK stated that contact with NOSF will be made within a next week or so & that draft would be available for consultation from end Jan/early Feb. LA enquired re progress on biodiversity mapping. AK said this expected to be loaded to Nomad in January. Agreed that AK would provide update & synopsis at next Forum.

Parks Development update:

Parks team now back at full strength with appointments of new Green Space Development Officer & Parks Ranger. All areas now GDO covered. Programme of paly area refurbishment continuing with works starting, funding decisions awaited & further bids being progressed. Lottery team visit made to Victoria Embankment Memorial Gardens, funding decision expected in 2 weeks. 41 Green Flags awarded + 4 Green Heritage Awards, 23 Green Flag Community Awards also 3 University & Canal & River Trust site awards. “Afterlife” bench donated by Netflix to be installed at suitable location. Significant increase in volunteers recruited & Green Guardians website launch expected early new year. Blossom Together project planting started at St Marys Rest Garden with further consultation & design work underway at Lenton Rec.

EC highlighted that considerable progress made despite significant staffing changes. Relatively new team now in place, sustainable & fit for the future. ERDF funding continuing despite Brexit with work continuing at Valley road & projects for 2022 including access & biodiversity enhancements at Colwick Park, Colwick Woods & Ventnor Rise. EC also set out 2022 programme to reduce use of pesticides, esp. glyphosate, beyond previous reductions through not spraying in parks & reduced spraying on verge edges. Four strands: 1. Sherwood/Carrington trial of pesticide free streets in partnership with Wild.NG. 2. Areas trialling hot steam foam treatments. 3. Areas trialling acetic acid. 4. Usual practice. Noted that all bar strand 4 should enable greener streets & that all bar stands 1 & 4 entail additional cost. Programme will be reviewed autumn 2022. EC also noted considerable dividends of new volunteer coordinator post in increased volunteering & additional tree planting. Also noted that Broadmarsh vision due to be published early December, potential greening positives...

TH requested speedy re-establishment of NCC Open & Green Space Champions Group. This now expected early January.

BG requested consideration of turning extensive closely mown green spaces across Bestwood into wildflower meadow. Seconded by TH. BG highlighted long decline in urban biodiversity. Others stressed importance of maintaining public access, ensuring appropriate native planting & carbon benefits. Need for public education & consultation stressed. EC responded that presentation due to City Labour Group next week encouraging such changes.

JG invited RH to future FoNA/FoF meeting, accepted in principle.

JP stressed importance of correct naming of sites e.g. Arboretum not Arboretum Park, Forest not Forest Rec.

GreenSpace: Green social prescribing programme:

Greenspace@nottinghamcvs.co.uk

AC highlighted that GSP is there to tackle mental health issues & social isolation and that the voluntary sector is crucial to this. AC set out some current statistics emphasising the complexity of working across many different organisations, link workers & other health professionals and above all the overwhelming demand for such provision. Need is for hyper-local provision of easy equitable and safe access to formal & informal green spaces. Success will require sustainable investment into the voluntary sector.

LA described work with walking groups. Initial discussion shows many groups stopped during covid & unlikely to restart so looking to establish new groups & walk leaders aiming to establish overarching network to enable individual groups to access Ramblers Association insurance & support for one collective fee

KL explained Trusted Provider Status to ensure appropriate referrals, support & structures in place. Mental health descriptors are being detailed so that expectations of groups and for individuals are understood. Database being established for social prescribers to access. Training being provided for groups. Crucial that people are referred and supported appropriately to avoid damage both to those referred and to supporting groups. STAA acknowledged as Trusted Provider, LK stated that process was friendly & positive. KL also noted that through NCVS GSP team can further support participating groups. KL also presented plan to turn "Blue Monday" into "Green Monday"

JB acts as mental health lead from Mental Health Trust provides Inpatient & Community Health Services. Current work includes Highbury Community Garden which can also provide a gateway to green providers. Setting up referral sessions to connect Services & Voluntary sectors.

KH from Natural England, national partner for GSP projects, supports the Notts & Derbys programme delivery. Reflects NE internal re-awakening of focus on health and the environment as part of their vision of thriving nature for people and planet. This has four focus areas: resilient landscapes & seas; sustainable development; greener farming & fisheries and now connecting people and nature. This where GSP fits along with wider work towards nature-based learning. KH/RK/MW to meet & discuss further.

RK then stated his view that the GSP work thus far had been very impressive & reiterated the role of NOSF as connecting groups to GSP and wider NOSF aim of providing infrastructure and support for smaller groups enabling their engagement with GSP amongst their other aims. GSP Project Officers are also connecting groups with NOSF CT asked for engagement with GSP on behalf of Notts Guided Walks partnership. LA/CT to discuss further.

Peoples Forest:

MW, on behalf of SM, reported on progress. The Hustle Holt, City's first Tiny Forest on Woodthorpe Park was a tremendous success, brilliantly designed by Rachel and supported by so very many fantastic volunteers and a growing tree-planting wave of Muslim women! Big thanks to Adam and Green Hustle for funding the city's first tiny forest and to Sandra in particular for her excellent volunteer and Council team co-ordination.

Communications continue on the Castle Oaks school tree planting on behalf of the Council and planting will begin again in the new year.

In discussion with a local architects wishing to sponsor future plantings. And finally, Dukki Design have also nominated to make a donation to the People's Forest in lieu of their boycott of Black Friday! Big thanks to them.

RR request for further donated trees to be planted at Woodthorpe. To be discussed with Sandra as Volunteer & Tree planting co-ordinator. RR echoed praise of Sandra for her work this season – brilliant, well-organised & efficient. EC pleased to announce that Sandra's posted now extended.

In response to RK RR described the Tiny Forest methodology based on dense planting in prepared ground enabling faster growth. RR & PS to discuss other donated trees.

Next meeting: Tuesday 25th January 2022