

FRIENDS OF WOODTHORPE GRANGE PARK

Notes of meeting held on 27 March 2024

Attendees

FoWGP

Paul Swift – Chair
Derek Stafford
Janet Grimley
Kim Parnham
Helena Shipston
Bill Shipston
Peter Wood
Linda Wood
Matt Wilson

NCC

Hilary Thruppston

In welcoming attendees, Paul emphasised that the group's meetings were open to all and do not operate as or like a committee.

Agenda

Item 1 - Apologies for absence

Mavis Broomhall
Anne Spalton

Item 2 – Progress from the group response by the FoWGP to the NCC's public consultation on budget proposals.

Hilary advised that over 5,000 responses to the public consultation had been received. She was not sure what the current position is in respect of the parks and open spaces service, but emphasised that although not a statutory service, it is considered by NCC to be a priority and efficient service. It is therefore hoped that there will be no loss of staff and little or no change to the level of service provision.

Paul referred to a recent meeting of the Nottingham Open Spaces Forum, which he attended on behalf of the group and that there was a recognition at that meeting of a greater dependency on volunteers to support NCC services going forward, as well as the ongoing importance of external funding.

Item 3 – All-Weather Footpath

Hilary outlined the plans to establish a new all-weather footpath around the northern edge of the park, utilising external funding secured from the 'Transforming Cities Fund', on the basis that part of the route would provide a new link for pedestrians and cyclists between Mansfield Road and Woodthorpe Drive to avoid having to use the traffic lights junction.

Item 4 – Train Sculpture Renovation – Update

Hilary advised that the estimated costs of restoring the sculpture (using funding secured by FoWGP from the Co-op) were around £1,300 and that to avoid having to pay VAT, FoWGP should transfer the money to NCC. The group agreed with this suggestion.

Item 5 – Gravestone Repair – Update

The costs of this (also to be met from the Co-op) funding should also be transferred from FoWGP to NCC for the same reasons as above and this was also agreed by the group.

Paul noted that the group would still have some of the Co-op funding available to support other projects. Peter and Linda suggested that priority should be given to projects that would support greater biodiversity, including replacement trees and new plants.

Bill asked whether the land comprising the former golf course provides an opportunity for new tree planting. Hilary advised that it does and that there are already plans in place to do this.

Helena raised concerns regarding the extent of wet land around the café next to the play area arising from recent levels of rainfall. Hilary acknowledged these concerns but that they may be difficult to resolve.

Item 6 – Uniform Wearing

Paul proposed that the group purchase some polo shirts and tabards for members to wear when undertaking work within the park. After some discussion, the group agreed that these should be in blue.

Action – Matt to amend order as per the agreed position.

Item 7 – FoWGP Activity Insurance

Paul emphasised the importance of ensuring that any activity undertaken by group members within the park was covered by appropriate insurance as per that for NCC employees.

Other Matters

Paul asked that any suggested items for future group meetings be sent to him in advance of the relevant meeting and that he will send out an email to this effect.

Paul highlighted the forthcoming 'virtual' 'Armchair Heritage Walk' around the park which he will be undertaking at the Grange at 2.00 pm on 19 April.

Paul noted, for information, that a local resident, Liz Cordle, will be providing the opportunity for local people to participate in 'Painting in the Park' during the Sherwood Art Week which will take place in June.

Hilary advised that NCC had recently applied to renew 'Green Flag' status for some of its parks and that although Woodthorpe Grange Park was not included in the application this time, NCC would be introducing their own similar standard to apply to the park and which would help avoid some of the financial implications associated with 'Green Flag' status.

Next Meeting

Paul proposed that future meetings of the group be held on an approximately quarterly basis. This was agreed.

It was therefore agreed that the next meeting be held at 6.30 pm on Wednesday 26 June 2024.