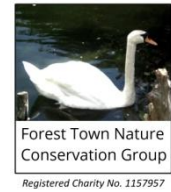


**Spa Ponds Heritage Project**  
**'Celebrating 700 years of history'**

[www.ForestTown.net/HeritageProject](http://www.ForestTown.net/HeritageProject)  
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## **Oral Histories of Spa Ponds Nature Reserve: Researcher Role**

Why oral histories (people's stories)?

Books and pictures tend to give the structure of a place and are often seen through the eyes of an historian / academic / non-local person or even a conservationist! People's stories and memories of place give added dimensions and depth to our understanding and knowledge of what is important to local people.

This form of research is termed phenomenological qualitative research and is a well-respected rigorous form of research. It is able to capture the individual meanings, experiences and values the site offers for local people. It is able to give a window on what makes the site special, and this will add further to the local heritage.

In this type of research there are no complicated numbers, graphs, statistics etc. involved, just an interest and rapport with people and their stories...and common sense.

It is a very ethical form of questioning and analysis having a person-centred approach, avoiding bias and leading questions, using emotional intelligence, insight and collaboration with other researcher colleagues in order to be as real, accurate and truthful to what the storytellers are saying and communicating. Skills learnt as a researcher form valuable life experiences.

There is opportunity for a few people to volunteer for a researcher role and attend some training sessions, including practice sessions.

If you are interested or just need to chat more, please contact Ann Childs via: [ann.childs@btinternet.com](mailto:ann.childs@btinternet.com)