

Forest Town Nature Conservation Group (FTNCG)

Registered Charity Number: 1157957

Principal Address: c/o 25 The Birchlands,
Forest Town, Mansfield NG19 0ER



Registered Charity No. 1157957

Forest Town Nature Conservation Group

Annual Report and Accounts 2017

(for the period 1 April 2016 - 31 March 2017)

Object of the Charity:

'to promote for the benefit of the public the conservation, protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment in and around Forest Town'

Produced by **Josh Downen** (Treasurer) and **Shlomo Downen** (Chair)

Approved by **all Trustees** on 31st May 2017

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Declaration

The Trustees of the Forest Town Nature Conservation Group declare that they have approved this Trustees' Report and Accounts for the period 1 April 2016 - 31 March 2017.

Signed on behalf of the charity's Trustees

Signature:

Full name: Shlomo Downen

Position: Chair

Date: Wednesday 31st May 2017

1. Introduction

Since our 1st February 2011 inaugural meeting the Forest Town Nature Conservation Group (FTNCG) has held meetings, open to the public, at various locations around Forest Town. Electronic copies of the notes of these meetings are available from: <http://www.foresttown.net/index.php/nature/ftncg-minutes/>

In May 2014, with the active support of the wider community, FTNCG bought the Spa Ponds Nature Reserve (including Packman's Road and Spa Lane). On 23rd July 2014 the Forest Town Nature Conservation Group was formally registered as a Charity with the Charity Commission (Registration No. 1157957), and in March 2015 FTNCG formally transferred the deeds for Spa Ponds to the Charity Commission's Landholding Service.

This is our third formal Report and Accounts as a registered charity. This Report and Accounts was written to ensure compliance with FTNCG's obligations under the Charities Act 2011 in accordance with Section 27 of our Constitution.

As of 27th May 2017 the Forest Town Nature Conservation Group comprised 52 members under the terms of Section 8 of FTNCG's Constitution. In accordance with Section 12 of FTNCG's Constitution, this means that the quorum for the Annual General Meeting (AGM) would be 5 members entitled to vote on the business to be conducted at the meeting.

In accordance with Sections 10, 11, 12 and 31 of the Constitution, formal notice for the AGM will be formally issued on or before the 19th of June 2017 to all FTNCG members and trustees, for the AGM to be held on the 5th of July 2017, i.e. at least 14 clear days before the AGM and within 15 months of our previous AGM (which was held on Wednesday 4th May 2016). The notice will set out the date, time and place of the meeting and the general nature of the business to be transacted at the AGM.

Thanks from the Chair

Thanks go out to all those who donated time and money to support FTNCG in the last year, including Sarah who headed up this year's fundraising effort, Tim who kindly supplied some lovely photographs for use on mugs and cards, and John Callaghan who ensured the mugs were well designed.

Thanks also for our dedicated Spa Ponds Wardens, Barry and Alan, who manage to keep Spa Ponds so clean and tidy. FTNCG continues to be blessed with generous and talented photographers, and we wish to thank Dennis for all of his photographic support as part of the Spa Ponds Heritage Project.

We remain grateful to the Forest Town Community Council for their ongoing interest in the work of FTNCG. FTNCG is also grateful to enjoy the support of a host of groups and agencies, including the Environment Agency, our District and County Councils, the Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust, the Mansfield & Ashfield Wildlife Group, and the Old Mansfield Woodhouse Society.

Finally, my sincere thanks go out to all those involved in this year's 'big thing' - the Spa Ponds Heritage Project (see more about this project on page 6, below) - including all those involved in sharing and recording oral histories, not least Ann who organised this aspect of the project, the fantastic and dedicated Heritage Project Management Team and all those active in researching Spa Ponds' rich heritage, Mark who is helping us better appreciate the site's ancient trees, and the many others, like Matt Beresford, James Wright, and Stephen Walker, who are sharing their knowledge and expertise with us.

FTNCG is thankful to the Heritage Lottery Fund who helped make the Spa Ponds Heritage Project a reality. The project is helping us understand what an honour and privilege it is for FTNCG to be custodians of such an interesting and historic site.

2. Structure, Governance and Management

The Forest Town Nature Conservation Group's (FTNCG's) Constitution, adopted on 22nd May 2013 and amended on 14th July 2014, is the governing document that establishes FTNCG as an association with the following charitable object: *'to promote for the benefit of the public the conservation, protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment in and around Forest Town'*. FTNCG Membership confers no financial benefit, and is set at £2 per annum (waivable on request).

FTNCG Trustees for 2016/17 were as follows:

Name	Office / Role	Date of Trustee Appointment
Lorraine Downen	Secretary	1 st February 2011
Shlomo Downen	Chair and Minutes Secretary	1 st February 2011
Josh Downen	Treasurer	1 st February 2011
Richard Smith	Vice-Chair	22 nd May 2013
Alan Alberry	Spa Ponds Warden	2 nd July 2014
Rosemary Powell	Trustee	2 nd July 2014
Ross Lacey	Trustee	2 nd July 2014
James Healy	Trustee	4 th May 2016

FTNCG is a member (or affiliate) of the following organisations:

- The Conservation Volunteers (TCV)
- Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust
- The Nottinghamshire Biodiversity Action Group (NottsBAG)
- WatersideCare
- The Rufford-Clipstone Landowners Group
- Save Sherwood Forest
- Sherwood Catchment Partnership
- Council for British Archaeology (CBA)
- CBA East Midlands

3. Review of the Past Year

Throughout the period 1st April 2016 - 31st March 2017 FTNCG Trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit. Over the year, FTNCG undertook the following activities in relation to our objective *'to promote for the benefit of the public the conservation, protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment in and around Forest Town'*:

- Holding meetings, open to the public without charge, to consider, plan and carry out the conservation, protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment in and around Forest Town.
- Maintaining both electronic and hard copy communications with more than 50 members and a further 100 supporters, providing ongoing updates and promoting activities of potential interest, via e-mail, our website and Facebook pages, and by sending printed copies to postal addresses.
- Working as a Group to deliver more than 3,000 volunteer hours litter picking and conservation work in and around Forest Town, primarily at Spa Ponds. These efforts resulted in recognised improvements of the physical and natural environment in and around Forest Town. These figures are based on hours reported and recorded, they do not capture all of the hours actually delivered by FTNCG volunteers.
- Maintaining membership of / affiliation with charitable organisations with similar objects to FTNCG, including: The Conservation Volunteers (TCV); Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust (NWT) and the associated Mansfield & Ashfield Local Group; the Nottinghamshire Biodiversity Action Group (NottsBAG); WatersideCare; the Rufford-Clipstone Landowners Group; the Sherwood Catchment Partnership; the Council for British Archaeology (CBA) and CBA East Midlands.

- Working with other like-minded public benefit organisations and agencies, including: Forest Town Community Council (FTCC) and FTCC's Planning Sub-Committee; Forest Town Heritage Group; Nottinghamshire County Council (Public Rights of Way), and Via East Midlands; Forestry Commission; Environment Agency; Mansfield District Council; Nottinghamshire Fungi Group; MBarchaeology; the Heritage Lottery Fund; the Nottinghamshire Amphibian & Reptile Group (NARG); EMEC Ecology; the Woodland Trust; the Nottinghamshire Biological and Geological Record Centre, Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Entomology Society and a variety of County Wildlife Recorders.

Throughout the period FTNCG Trustees met, both formally and informally, including holding two 'formal' Committee Meetings (on 20th April and 14th September 2016). Minutes of these meetings were circulated to all FTNCG Members and Supporters, and are available from: <http://www.foresttown.net/index.php/nature/ftnccg-minutes/> Printed copies are available on request. These minutes, and the notes associated with other FTNCG meetings, provide a record of FTNCG public benefit contributions.

This Report provides some examples of FTNCG public benefit contributions made during the Report period of 1st April 2016 through 31st March 2017:

- Cooperating with the Forest Town Community Council (FTCC) and FTCC's Planning Sub-Committee, including providing monthly FTNCG updates at FTCC meetings.
- Contributing to efforts to manage invasive non-native species (such as Himalayan Balsam), and playing an active role as part of the Sherwood Catchment Partnership, whose aim is to "*conserve and enhance the Rivers Idle, Ryton, Poulter, Meden, Maun, their tributaries and surrounding land, to create a healthy and wildlife rich water environment for the benefit of both people and biodiversity*".
- Meeting with fellow local landowners and police to address anti-social behaviour, e.g. to curb illegal off-road biking, to protect the physical and natural environment.
- Promoting recording and reporting of wildlife sightings. In August 2016 some 350 FTNCG-recorded sightings covering the period 1st December 2015 - 19th August 2016 were reported to the relevant County Recorders.
- Carrying out regular water quality testing and sharing results with WatersideCare, the County Biodiversity Officer, and the Environment Agency, as appropriate.
- Taking part in International Clean Up Mansfield Day on 10th June 2016, including balsam pulling, litter-picking and rubbish-clearing at the Spa Ponds Nature Reserve.

Spa Ponds Heritage Project: Celebrating 700 years of history

This year-long project focusing on the heritage of Spa Ponds (also known as 'Gara Ponds') is taking place 700 years after the creation of the medieval fish ponds. The Heritage Management Plan to be produced as part of this project will guide FTNCG's management of Spa Ponds, complementing our existing Ecology Management Plan.

"Spa Ponds Nature Reserve has some fascinating history, and to celebrate its 700th anniversary we have set up this project to find out more about the use of the site from medieval times to present day, and celebrate its heritage and to work together to produce a plan to manage the site's heritage based on our research and sense of place."

The Heritage Lottery Fund supported project, which has already seen the delivery of more than 250 volunteer hours, is providing participants with training and guidance from historians and community archaeologists, including MBarchaeology. To better appreciate Spa Ponds' heritage value, participants are developing an understanding of the basics of archaeological and historical research and landscape fieldwork, and applying this newfound understanding to exploring written records in archives, libraries and museums. We are also gathering memories, photographs and artefacts of the site, including through the project's oral histories element.

Visit the Spa Ponds Heritage Project section of our website at:

<http://www.foresttown.net/heritageproject/> to read more about this exciting project.

4. Financial Review

Estimated basic annual running costs

Current running costs for FTNCG amount to more than £500, but if necessary these costs could be limited to around **£500**, for example, as follows:

£120 for Membership:

- **£40** - The Conservation Volunteers (TCV) Community Network
- **£40** - Council for British Archaeology (CBA)
- **£35** - Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust (NWT)
- **£ 5** - CBA East Midlands

£165 for Insurance:

- Includes Public & Products Liability (for up to £5m cover) and Personal Accident

£215 for Other General Running Costs:

- **£100** - Education and training
- **£ 60** - Sundry items for Spa Ponds (e.g. signs, tools, plants, seeds, etc.)
- **£ 30** - Printing and postage
- **£ 25** - Volunteer travel expenses

Reserves policy for 2017/18

Running Costs (Reserved £1,000; target £1,000): To cover basic annual expenses that must be met, e.g. insurance, health & safety equipment and training, Trustees have set the reserve at a level equivalent to two years' running costs at £500 per year. £100 of this may go towards match funding for the Wetland Habitat Recreation project.

Contingencies (Reserved £700; target £700): To cover unexpected expenses, in particular those associated with maintaining public safety at Spa Ponds.

Match-funding (Reserved £150; target £2,000): To position FTNCG to take advantage of match-funding opportunities Trustees have set a target to ring-fence £2,000. This financial element would be used alongside volunteer hours to support the success of bids where appropriate, with the target rising in future years as finances allow. £250 has been pledged as match funding in a bid for the Wetland Habitat Recreation Project, £100 of which would come from our Running Costs budget. If the bid is unsuccessful we may reallocate the £150. As there are no other match-funding projects foreseen in the near future, and because it is important to spend money now on charitable purposes, the reserve is currently set to £150 to allow more to be spent on projects to be realised in the coming year. FTNCG is contributing £1,000 of cash as match funding for the Heritage Project (in addition to a sizeable in-kind contribution).

Spa Ponds Site Improvement Works (Reserved: £1,350; target £3,500): 2017 was a bumper year for works paid for by FTNCG and carried out by EMEC. Trustees would like to be able to continue to pay EMEC for further improvement work in accordance with our 2015 Habitat Management Plan. If necessary, some money ring-fenced for site improvement may be used to pay towards the Wetland Habitat Recreation Project.

Wetland Habitat Recreation (Reserved: £0; target £10,000): £3,150 has already been put into this exciting project to convert an area including Pond 0, Pond 1 and at least part of Pond 2 into restored wetland habitat to secure biodiversity gains, particularly for amphibians. In January 2017 FTNCG paid £2,400 for work carried out by EMEC, and in March 2017 the Environment Agency paid £750 to Naturescape for plants and trees. There is an outstanding bid for £1,000 for further work on this project. This project can be scaled up or down depending on available funds. Some money may need to be spent on core sampling of Pond 0 (also known as Fern Gulley) and/or Pond 1 as part of this project, in accordance with our emerging Heritage Management Plan.

Spa Ponds Heritage Project (Committed: £7,468.73): The Spa Ponds Heritage Project formally began on 1st November 2016 and will formally end on 31st October 2017. The Project will entail spending a total of £9,500, of which £7,468.73 had yet to be spent by 31st March 2017. The £9,500 figure includes the aforementioned £1,000 match-funding contribution from FTNCG and £8,500 from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

The charity's principal sources of funds (including any fundraising)

For the period covered by this Report & Accounts FTNCG's income was nearly £14k, including £8,500 Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) grant for the Spa Ponds Heritage Project (which runs through to the end of October 2017) and the remainder was unrestricted.

£8,500.00	Grant from the HLF for Spa Ponds Heritage Project
£4,000.00	Anonymous donation
£529.00	Sale of books, cards, mugs, etc
£250.00	Donation from Forest Town Community Council
£250.00	Donations from councillor ward funds
£207.55	Donations from individuals, inc. membership
£200.00	Donation from Mansfield & Ashfield Wildlife Group
£6.25	HMRC Gift Aid
£0.21	Bank interest
£13,943.01	TOTAL INCOME FOR 2016/17

In addition to funding bids for specific projects, members of the Group intend to continue general fundraising efforts and FTNCG will continue to seek funding through membership donations, general appeals, and grant funding from Councillors' constituency pots. As well as obtaining Gift Aid on future donations, in the coming year FTNCG expect to receive a small sum for Gift Aid from donations made during 2016/17.

How expenditure has supported the key objectives of the charity

Expenses were incurred in relation to the Forest Town Nature Conservation Group undertaking activities to carry out the charity's object '*to promote for the benefit of the public the conservation, protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment in and around Forest Town*'.

£4,140.00	Contracted Work on Spa Ponds
£2,031.27	Spa Ponds Heritage Project (HLF)
£473.60	Purchase of mugs, cards and books (mostly for re-sale)
£248.24	Membership & Insurance
£175.00	Speakers fees
£118.31	Tools, seeds, petrol, etc.
£23.65	Printing & Postage
£7,210.07	TOTAL EXPENDITURE FOR 2016/17

Liabilities

The Heritage Lottery Fund requires FTNCG to spend a total of £9,500 on the Spa Ponds Heritage Project by the end of October 2017, or else the HLF will claw back some of their grant funding. As £2,031.27 was spent in 2016/17, the remainder of the project budget (£7,468.73) is listed as a liability in the balance sheet as it will need to be spent by the of October within that period.

5. Annual Statement of Accounts

Accounts for 1 April 2016 - 31 March 2017

Opening balance (Total)			
	Cash	£28.90	
	Bank	£3,927.01	£3,955.91
Total income			£13,943.01
Total expenditure			£7,210.07
Closing balance (Total)			
	Cash	£45.33	
	Bank	£10,643.52	£10,688.85

Accounts for 1 April 2015 - 31 March 2016

Opening balance (Total)			
	Cash	£32.80	
	Bank	£1,999.18	£2,031.98
Total income			£3,353.07
Total expenditure			£1,429.14
Closing balance (Total)			
	Cash	£28.90	
	Bank	£3,927.01	£3,955.91

<u>BALANCE SHEET AT 31 MARCH 2017</u>		£	£
<u>Assets and Liabilities</u>			
FIXED ASSETS			
<i>Tangible assets</i>			
Tools, Seeds, Tree Guards, etc (Cost)	118.31		
FTNCG Mugs (£3.60 X 25)	90.00		
Roller banner & printer	245.00		
Tools etc (Accumulated depreciation)	(118.31)		
Roller banner&printer (Depreciation)	(135.00)		
Total fixed assets		200.00	
CURRENT ASSETS			
<i>Cash at bank and in hand</i>			
Current Account - Coop Bank	10,643.52		
Petty Cash	45.33		
Total cash at bank and in hand	10,688.85		
Total current assets		10,888.85	
LIABILITIES			
<i>Creditors due within one year</i>		7,468.73	
NET CURRENT ASSETS	10,888.85		
Total net assets		3,420.12	
<u>Represented by funds and assets</u>			
<i>Unrestricted funds</i>			
General Fund	3,220.12		
<i>Restricted funds</i>			
Spa Ponds Heritage Project	7,468.73		
<i>Other assets</i>			
Tangible assets	200.00		
Total funds		10,888.85	

<u>BALANCE SHEET AT 31 MARCH 2016</u>		£	£
<u>Assets and Liabilities</u>			
FIXED ASSETS			
<i>Tangible assets</i>			
Tools, Seeds, Tree Guards, etc (Cost)	402.07		
Tools etc (Accumulated depreciation)	(402.07)		
Total fixed assets			0.00
CURRENT ASSETS			
<i>Cash at bank and in hand</i>			
Current Account - Coop Bank	3,927.01		
Petty Cash	28.90		
Total cash at bank and in hand	3,955.91		
Total current assets			3,955.91
LIABILITIES			
<i>Creditors due within one year</i>			0
NET CURRENT ASSETS	3,955.91		
Total net assets			3,955.91
<u>Represented by funds</u>			
<i>Unrestricted funds</i>			
General Fund	3,800.57		
<i>Restricted funds</i>			
Spa Ponds	155.34		
Total funds			3,955.91

Notes: (1) In February 2017 the Environment Agency paid Naturescape **£750.00** for FTNCG to receive plants for Wetland Habitat Recreation at Spa Ponds Nature Reserve, consisting of £625 for "Pond Plants and Bare Root Trees" and £125 VAT. This is not included in the accounts. (2) Gift Aid income is attributed to the year in which it was paid by HMRC rather than the year of the original donation. (3) Unclaimed Gift Aid donations are not listed as an asset.

6. Summary of 2016/17 FTNCG Activities

April 2016 - More than 231 volunteers hours delivered

- Our 6th April 2017 FTNCG meeting, attended by 16 FTNCG Members, was an opportunity to welcome several new members to the Group.
- On 8th April half a dozen FTNCG volunteers explored the Local History Library in Mansfield. We looked at some maps and acquainted ourselves with the various resources available at the Library. Our research session also helped inform our Spa Ponds Heritage Project application for a Heritage Lottery Fund grant.
- FTNCG Trustees met on 21st April to prepare for the Annual General Meeting and to discuss the management of the Spa Ponds Nature Reserve. Meeting notes are at: [http://www.foresttown.net/nature/Notes from FTNCG Trustees Meeting 20 April 2016.pdf](http://www.foresttown.net/nature/Notes_from_FTNCG_Trustees_Meeting_20_April_2016.pdf) Trustees approved the 2015/16 Report & Accounts, available from: [http://www.foresttown.net/nature/FTNCG 2016 Report and Accounts.pdf](http://www.foresttown.net/nature/FTNCG_2016_Report_and_Accounts.pdf)

May 2016 - More than 316 volunteers hours delivered

- FTNCG held our Annual General Meeting (AGM) on 4th May 2016. In addition to our AGM business we enjoyed an informal conversation about planned and potential FTNCG activities. You can read the AGM notes by visiting: [http://www.foresttown.net/nature/FTNCG 2015 AGM Minutes.pdf](http://www.foresttown.net/nature/FTNCG_2015_AGM_Minutes.pdf)
- There were several work sessions at Spa Ponds during the month of May, including a number of tree planting and pond plant planting session, and some tidying up sessions featuring the heroic removal of a wooden structure (child's playhouse? chicken coop?) from the River Maun.
- On Friday the 13th of May three dozen people showed up for an evening Bat Walk led by Ruth Testa and others from the Nottinghamshire Bat Group. They then kindly lent us a bat detector, which we shared around for a month or so before returning it and eagerly awaiting the results. We learnt of seven bat species identified at Spa Ponds, including: Common pipistrelle; Soprano pipistrelle; Daubentons; Whiskered/Brandt's; Noctule; Brown long-eared; and Myotis (possibly Natterers).
- May also saw the launch of a new on-line way to donate money to FTNCG via: <https://mydonate.bt.com/charities/foresttownnatureconservationgroup>

June 2016 - More than 308 volunteers hours delivered

- June was a good month for litter picking, balsam pulling, weeding and bridleway maintenance at Spa Ponds, including a special session in honour of International Clean Up Mansfield Day, held on 10th June 2016, for which FTNCG won an award.

June 2016 (continued)

- 15th June's FTNCG meeting attracted 16 people for discussions about designing a series of mugs and cards to help raise some funds, and about the HLF bid for financial support for the Spa Ponds Heritage Project.
- On 24th June FTNCG was honoured to host the launch of a book written by James Wright entitled "A Palace For Our Kings – The history and archaeology of a Mediaeval royal palace in the heart of Sherwood Forest". The book tells the stories of the eight kings who held parliament, Christmas feasts and tournaments in the area we know as Kings Clipstone, and of the individuals that built, worked and lived there. The book even includes information about the peel and ponds, including our beloved Spa Ponds - located on the edge of what was known as Clipstone Park.

July 2016 - More than 179 volunteers hours delivered

- July also saw several more sessions pulling balsam, picking litter, surveying wildlife, water quality testing, and bridleway maintenance at Spa Ponds. There was also a site management meeting that took place on-site at Spa Ponds.
- A "Spa Ponds Vision" was produced as part of the Rufford Colliery-Clipstone Area Conservation Masterplan. This is available on request.

August 2016 - More than 149 volunteers hours delivered

- Regular sessions litter picking, balsam pulling, as well as planting and water testing at Spa Ponds were held throughout August, led primarily by our Wardens.
- Wildlife sightings submitted to FTNCG and collated by our recorders were tidied up and sent off to the official County Wildlife Recorders.
- FTNCG mugs and cards were made available for purchase at the Forest Town Craft Market for the first time, with much success!

September 2016 - More than 328 volunteers hours delivered

- In addition to yet more litter picking, balsam pulling, bridleway maintenance, etc. at Spa Ponds, carried out by FTNCG volunteers and by EMEC Ecology, September also involved an important Trustees meeting, the Minutes of which are available at: [http://www.foresttown.net/nature/Notes from FTNCG Meeting 14 September 2016.pdf](http://www.foresttown.net/nature/Notes_from_FTNCG_Meeting_14_September_2016.pdf)
- The Spa Ponds Heritage Project was officially announced to the world on 28th September 2017.

October 2016 - More than 295 volunteers hours delivered

- October 2016 featured a Fungi Walk led by Ann Ward of the Nottinghamshire Fungi Group (2nd October), an FTNCG meeting attended by 16 people who were treated to an illustrated talk about FTNCG's activities and plans (5th October), and a work session at Spa Ponds (22nd October) where Rich led 14 volunteers who picked litter, fetched timber out of the ponds, added to bike deterrents installed by EMEC, carried out water testing, and strimming, and even a spot of strimmer training.
- On 11th October two FTNCG members received First Aid training.

November 2016 - More than 306 volunteers hours delivered

- On 2nd November Matt Beresford of MBarchaology was on hand for the FTNCG meeting that launched the Spa Ponds Heritage Project. The meeting also provided Ann Childs with the opportunity to introduce the oral histories element of the Project, and it gave Mark Fretwell the space to say something about the tree identification training that also forms an important part of the Heritage Project.
- Les Warren of WatersideCare came to Spa Ponds to deliver some phosphate testing training to a number of FTNCG volunteers on 11th November 2016.
- The 18th November saw the formation of the Heritage Project Management Group.
- Volunteers carried out dead hedging, litter picking, and bridleway maintenance at Spa Ponds on 19th November, while other volunteers helped promote the Heritage Project at the Forest Town Craft Market.
- Phil and Janet tested water quality on 27th November, with Phil exercising his new phosphate testing skills. Water quality testing results can be found at: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1vb7kkQfHjrThAoHb8LTfD7kSRH2luJ2aGz9_Rr4xX40/

December 2016 - More than 233 volunteers hours delivered

- 2nd December's Heritage Project Management Group meeting included a site walkover with Matt Beresford.
- 13 people contributed to the 7th December Spa Ponds Site Management meeting. Notes from this meeting are available from the FTNCG website at: http://www.foresttown.net/nature/Notes_from_7_December_2016_Spa_Ponds_Site_Management_Meeting.pdf
- FTNCG representatives attended the opening of the Extreme Weather Exhibition in Nottingham (15th December) which featured information about the Great Hurricane's impact on Clipstone Park in the early 1700's.

January 2017 - More than 173 volunteers hours delivered

- On 6th January a number of FTNCG volunteers met up with EMEC at Spa Ponds.
- On 14th January 2017 FTNCG held an Introductory Workshop led by Matt Beresford of MBarchaeology as part of the Spa Ponds Heritage Project. An illustrated account is available at: <http://www.foresttown.net/index.php/2017/01/15/account-of-14th-january-2017-introductory-workshop/>
- The first in a series of Oral Histories Training Sessions was held on 27th January.
- In addition to ongoing litter picking carried out by our Wardens throughout the year, FTNCG volunteers gathered on 28th January 2017 to pick litter, repair dead hedges and manage bramble and bracken at Spa Ponds.

February 2017 - More than 260 volunteers hours delivered

- The 3rd February Heritage Project Management Group meeting was immediately followed by another Oral Histories Training session.
- A delegation of FTNCG volunteers were shown around Valeclose Plantation.
- Matt delivered a History Research Skills Training Workshop on 25th February 2017. You can see the illustrated account of this Workshop, which is available from: <http://www.foresttown.net/index.php/2017/02/27/account-of-25th-february-2017-research-skills-workshop/>

March 2017 - More than 565 volunteers hours delivered

- Another Heritage Project Management Group meeting was held on 3rd March 2017.
- On 4th March there were 15 FTNCG volunteers who gathered for a cleanup at Spa ponds as part of the Great British Spring Clean. This session included installing several bird boxes, lovingly constructed and kindly donated (and installed) by Kevin.
- Another Oral Histories Training session was held on 10th March 2017.
- On 11th March MBarchaeology's David Astbury delivered a LiDAR Workshop. Visit <http://www.foresttown.net/index.php/2017/03/15/account-of-11th-march-2017-lidar-workshop> for the illustrated account.
- The 17th March Heritage Project Management Group meeting was followed by a history research session.
- 23rd March's toad count with 11 counters. We hope to be back counting toads again next year to support the county-wide surveying effort.
- On 24th March there was another Oral Histories Training session.
- The 31st March Heritage Project Management Group meeting was followed by preparations for the 1st April "Memories of Gara (Spa) Ponds" public session. It was a memorable day indeed but falls outside the reporting period so tune in next year!