

Forest Town Nature Conservation Group (FTNCG) Committee Meeting Notes

Thursday 1st May 2014, from 7 pm – 9 pm, at the Downen residence

Present: Shlomo, Lorraine, Josh, Ian and Richard

Rushpool update

Facebook pages created and well liked. Interpretation panel discussions progressing (slowly). Future of project depends somewhat on both the Sherwood Forest Trust (SFT) and Mansfield District Council (MDC), and on the availability of funding for further work. It was noted that Helen reported that gorse clearing work to date has helped encourage the return of song thrush and has attracted some willow warblers.

Actions:

- Shlomo to contact SFT's Andy Hollis (copying in Rich) re: MDC clearing gorse and SFT supplying hoops, etc. to help keep the site tidy. Also ask for progress report re: Trevor's observations and an update on the progress with interpretation panels.
- Rich to organise a wildflower survey in the summer.

Spa Ponds Purchase update

Our solicitors are still waiting for a reply from MDC. Shlomo has chased this, and it should now be forthcoming. The transfer of the deeds to FTNCG should proceed quickly once MDC's response is received. Although the exact costs have yet to be determined, we think we have sufficient funds in our spa Ponds sub-account to cover purchase and legal costs. We are still waiting for Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust (NWT) to progress the Site Management Agreement (which is not required for the purchase, but would be helpful for FTNCG's application to the Charity Commission).

FTNCG's Charitable Status update

Initial application submitted and guidance received from the Charity Commission. Shlomo and Josh progressing this. Although not a requirement, the addition of one or two non-Dowens as FTNCG trustees would be good practice. Members have been encouraged to volunteer.

Meeting with Police / Landowners Meeting update

Shlomo met with Sergeant Paul Clarke regarding off-road biking at Spa Ponds and informed local police of the Landowners meeting (attended by police colleagues from another division). Ian described the situation at Strawberry Nob. Shlomo urged Ian to report each and every off-road biking incident to the police. Shlomo also explained he would not be available to attend the next Landowners meeting on Monday 12th May, and as no one else from the Committee is free to attend, we will send our apologies.

Actions:

- Shlomo to send apologies for the 12th May Landowners meeting.
- Ian to report past and future off-road biking incidents to the police.

Stinting Lane Hedge Survey update

Three evening surveys took place in April, enabling the whole stretch of both hedges to be surveyed. Notable finds include native bluebell and lesser celandine, both of which are ancient woodland indicator species. Our thanks to all those who took part in this year's surveying.

Local Green Space update

Shlomo submitted FTNCG's nomination of Spa Ponds to MDC, who acknowledged receipt. The timescale for a decision is uncertain.

Finance update

Josh reported that the FTNCG bank account stands at just under £18,000 in total.

Action:

- Josh to produce more detailed accounts for the Annual General Meeting (AGM).

'Newsletter' / AGM reminder

Shlomo distributed copies of the poster promoting Erin's Big Bike Ride. Details will be circulated to FTNCG members as part of the next 'newsletter' / AGM reminder, alongside an explanation of the revised plans for the post-AGM speaker.

Forthcoming FTNCG activities / volunteer opportunities:

Balsam Pulls at Spa Ponds

Sunday 4th May and Saturday 31st May, from 10am at the Clipstone Drive entrance.

Samworth Academy Making A Difference (MAD) Day at Spa Ponds

Monday 30th June – We need volunteers! Rich offered to help.

King John Re-enactment at Sherwood Pines

Further information to be circulated to members. FTNCG will have a stall at this event on both Saturday and Sunday, 17th and 18th May. Rich to give Shlomo and Lorraine a lift to the event on Saturday and Ian to give a lift to the event on Sunday. Additional volunteers would be much appreciated.

Mercian Community Archaeology Open Day at Castlefield (Kings Clipstone)

Saturday 6th September. Event will include FTNCG stall focussing on Spa Ponds.

Nottinghamshire Fungi Group forays

Sunday 21st September at Vicar's Pond, and Saturday 22nd November at Ransom Wood.

Rainworth Heath Broom clearance

Sunday 16th November, from 10 am.

Ideas for future FTNCG activities

Wildflower and butterfly surveying.

Guided walk around Strawberry Hill, possibly on Wednesday evening 2nd July.

Invite Andy Gaunt / Mercians back, possibly in November.

Guided walk around Brackenhurst, possibly in Spring 2015.

Future FTNCG meetings at the Forest Town Welfare, from 7 pm

- Wednesday evening 7th May (our AGM)
- Wednesday evening 4th June
- Wednesday evening 2nd July
- Wednesday evening 3rd September (venue to be confirmed)
- Wednesday evening 1st October (venue to be confirmed)
- Wednesday evening 19th November (venue to be confirmed)