

**Notes from Forest Town Nature Conservation Group  
(FTNCG) Committee Meeting  
Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> April 2015 at the Downen Residence**

Present: Shlomo, Lorraine, Josh, Rose, Barry, Alan, Rich, Ross and Ian [Note: Ross and Ian joined during the Brief Updates]

Apologies: Mark and Helen



Registered Charity No. 1157957

#### Bank Account

- Trustees mandated the suggested substitution of Richard Smith in place of Ian O'Brien as a (non-Downen) FTNCG bank account signatory.

Action: Shlomo to contact Coop Bank requesting the necessary forms.

#### Brief Updates

- Fundraising Group to reconvene Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> May from 11am at Helen's.
- Plans for a Forest Town (FT) History Day with FT Heritage Group progressing. The event will take place at the FT Methodist Church on 14<sup>th</sup> November.
- No news yet re: Lottery / Landscape Partnership Scheme (LPS) 'Development Phase' funding. In discussions with Mercians it was suggested that February 2016 would be the earliest possible start date. Trustees discussed this and agreed to move ahead planning for a February start, and if LPS funding falls short to use Group funds and funds raised over the year to progress this project in 2016. Basic archaeology surveys needed to inform site management. Rose suggested FTNCG proceeds with optimism, and scale project down if necessary.  
Action: Lorraine to report back to Mercians, and secure 2016 dates from them to enable FTNCG to begin to promote the Spa Ponds Heritage Project.
- Lorraine sought and received Trustee support to pay for Richard to attend the one week Mercian training school to train him to be able to lead the volunteers participating in the archaeology work days and generally liaise for the Group. The course costs £250 and lasts five days. Lorraine suggested FTNCG join Council for British Archaeology (CBA) to benefit from their support - all agreed.  
Action: Rich to attend free day of archaeology training on Castlefield in July, and to contribute to fund-raising efforts to pay for further training.  
Action: Shlomo and Josh to progress FTNCG CBA membership application.
- Informal discussions with Andy Hollis from Sherwood Forest Trust (SFT) led Lorraine to ask Trustees for agreement in principle for FTNCG to move forward with joint funding ideas for Andy to lead training work days with FTNCG and other volunteers on Spa Ponds carrying out tasks identified in our emergent work plans for the site. Trustees agreed, expressing enthusiasm for bringing in volunteers.  
Action: Lorraine to report back to Andy, and keep Trustees informed of progress.

- Summation and closure letter needed re: Rushpool LIS project to SFT, MDC and NCC to give thanks and formally dissolve the project partnership, bringing to a close Richard's role as Rushpool liaison, with FTNCG returning to original commitment to continue picking litter and monitoring and recording biodiversity.  
Action: Lorraine, Rich and Shlomo to agree and send 'thank yous' as appropriate.
- Shlomo reported that the Spa Ponds press call with police was postponed again.
- Trustees considered the content and resource implications of the Spa Ponds Ecology Report and Management Plan recently received from EMEC Ecology, noting that a site management meeting was needed to plan programme of works, discuss bids and funds, access issues, and volunteer recruitment and training. Ian introduced the notion of formally declaring the site as "Open Access".  
Action: Shlomo to circulate possible dates for Spa Ponds management meeting.  
Action: Ian to bring OS Map to help consideration of Open Access status.  
Action: Contact photographers for permission to use some of their photos.

### Report and Accounts

- Trustees carefully considered each page of the Draft Report and Accounts, and, following discussion, approved the Report and Accounts, and associated Reserves Policy, and affirmed the £2 suggested donation for Membership could be waived in cases of hardship. Trustees directed Shlomo to sign the declaration.  
Action: Shlomo and Josh to finalise Report and Accounts and make copies available at the AGM and via FTNCG's website.

### AGM 'run through'

- Trustees considered and approved the draft Agenda for the AGM. Shlomo noted that Helen Johnson had nominated 8 Trustees, all of whom signed the form to formally confirm their willingness to serve.  
Action: Shlomo, Lorraine and Josh to continue to prepare for the FTNCG AGM, including scripting the Review of FTNCG's 4<sup>th</sup> Year and raffle prize arrangements, as well as printing copies of the Report and Accounts, Agenda, etc.

### Any other business

- Spa Ponds Wardens Barry and Alan noted the return of Himalayan Balsam to the site and environs. Plants are reported as being only about 4 inches (100 cm) tall. Balsam pulling will begin once the plants have grown a bit taller. This depends on the weather, so Wardens were asked to continue to monitor and to report back.  
Action: Expect first Balsam pulling session at Spa Ponds in early June. Wardens to continue to monitor and to report back.
- Ian noted that the recent episode of Countryfile included shots of the sort of kissing gate that might suit Spa Ponds, i.e. gates designed for disabled access.

The meeting was brought to a close before 9 pm.