

Forest Town Nature Conservation Group (FTNCG) Meeting Notes

Wednesday 17th July 2013, from 7 pm – 9:40 pm, at the Forest Town Welfare

30 participants were present, including guests as well as regular FTNCG members.

Report from the Committee Meetings of 26th June and 4th July 2013

- The following roles were agreed in accordance with FTNCG's Constitution: Shlomo as Chair and Co-Secretary, Josh as Treasurer, Ian as Vice-Chair, Lorraine as Co-Secretary / Membership Secretary, and Richard, who was co-opted onto the Committee, as Facebook Manager and Rushpool Liaison (Liaising with the Sherwood Forest Trust (SFT)).
- Ian still awaiting response to FTNCG's improved offer for the purchase of Spa Ponds.
- Rufford off-road biking objection submitted on behalf of FTNCG Committee.
- Gun Club tyre wall concerns passed on to the Forestry Commission.
- At 4th July meeting the Committee confirmed arrangements with the Co-Operative Bank to enable signatory change, removing Alyson and add Ian, retaining Josh and Lorraine, and to establish an instant access savings sub-account for Spa Ponds Appeal funds. Papers have been accordingly sent to the Co-op.
- Future programme, beyond September's fungi talk – Wednesday 6th November; Christmas party 4th December. From March 2014 FTNCG meetings will be held on the 1st Wednesday of the month for most months (5th March, 2nd April, 7th May (AGM), 4th June, 2nd July, 3rd September, and 1st October 2014).

Rushpool Update (Richard)

- SFT's Ian Major to contact both Local Improvement Scheme team and MDC to arrange meeting with other "main players" at 4:30 pm on 30th July at the Rushpool site.
- Further updates at Open Committee meeting and/or Sept./Nov. meetings, as well as ongoing (e.g. by e-mail/Facebook).

Rainworth nightjar walk

- Rearranged for Tuesday evening 13th August from "Pit Lane" at 7:30pm. Participants are advised to bring a torch. Booking with contact details essential!

Spa Ponds

- Just over £8,700 pledged to date, including £1,000 from FTNCG; £500 from Forest Town Community Council, and £250 from Councillor Denise Moody.
- Meeting with the Environment Agency's (EA's) Dan Widdowson to explore water issues and potential funding on Thursday 15th August from 10 am.
- Working with NWT on signage near the bridge making the no bike rule clear.
- Two recent successful balsam pulls. Wardens Barry and Alan requesting support with another balsam pull, to focus on the Beeston Lodge area. Date not yet set for this.
- Betty, Alan and Barry also volunteered to run a stall to raise funds for Spa Ponds at the Forest Town Village Market on Saturday 27th July (while Dowens are away on holiday)
- The Spa Ponds Presentation by Mercian Archaeological Services was followed by discussion of the future site management and the formation of Clipstone Park, Palace and Ponds Group to fulfil strategic and profile-raising functions (see notes overleaf).

Some Notes from the discussion about the future management of Spa Ponds

- Andy Gaunt (Mercian Archaeological Services) confirmed that it would be reasonable to say that the 700 year anniversary of Spa Ponds would come at the end of 2016.
- Andy explained how non-invasive work could include field walking, desk-based research into environmental and historical records, including those archived by Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust (NWT), and geophysical testing to help map the surface of the site.
- The idea of collating oral histories (memories of Spa/Gara Ponds) was also raised.
- Shlomo reported that, having spoken with NWT Estates Manager Charles Langtree, NWT is supportive of such activities.
- Shlomo also mentioned the LIDAR owned by the EA, and Andy suggested that if these could be accessed it would remove the need for at least some of the geophysical testing (and could reveal areas for other forms of testing).

Action: Shlomo to find out the resolution of the EA LIDAR data, and report back.

- A potential funding application to the Castle Studies Trust was discussed, including how this would focus on Beeston Lodge and environs. This would require the support of the current landowner.
- Those present were supportive of the idea of forming a Clipstone Park, Palace and Ponds Group to fulfil strategic and profile-raising functions, without becoming an admin-heavy organisation. Shlomo used the term 'disorganisation' to describe this approach.
- Pauline gave an update on the progress of her book about Clipstone Camp (World War I).
- Andy agreed to produce a Factsheet that could be used to help raise the profile of the site, and thereby help raise funds for the purchase and management of the site.

Action: Andy to produce Facesheet (based on the presentation he delivered) and pass it on to Shlomo.

- Read more on the Mercian Archaeological Services website: <http://www.mercian-as.co.uk/> and on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Mercianarch>

Dates for your Diary:

Saturday 27th July at Kingsway Hall: Forest Town Village Market

Sunday 4th August: Cedar Wildlife Sanctuary Fun Day

Tuesday evening 13th August, from 7:30pm: Guided nightjar walk around Rainworth Heath

Sunday 18th August at Vicar Water Country Park (Vicar's Pond): Sherwood's Historic Heathlands event

Wednesday evening 25th September, from 7pm at the Forest Town Welfare: FTNCG meeting featuring a Fungi talk by Ann Ward, Chair of the Nottinghamshire Fungi Group

Saturdays 26th October and 23rd November: Rainworth Heath work party (mainly scrub clearance)

Wednesday evening 6th November, from 7pm: FTNCG meeting in the Forest Town Welfare's Sherwood Room

Wednesday evening 4th December, from 7pm: FTNCG Christmas Party in the Forest Town Welfare Lounge