

Notes from Forest Town Nature Conservation Group (FTNCG) Trustees Meeting, 7-9PM Wednesday 20th April 2016

Present: Lorraine, Shlomo, Josh, Rich, Rose, Alan, and Jez [7]

Apology: Ross [1]



Registered Charity No. 1157957

SPA PONDS SITE MANAGEMENT

Alan provided a Warden's update: Bolts on horse stile welded so they can't be removed, and Chris has replaced the rails along the steps; Balsam starting to appear (from 18th April); Boards and signs have been removed again, and off-road bikers are accessing the site; Wardens continue to litter pick and clear outlet pipes on a regular basis.

Shlomo provided a further update on Chris' quote for work and offer to walk around the site to provide quotes for additional work. Trustees considered how best to proceed re: installation of new (metal) fencing.

Action: Shlomo and Josh to research insurance for fencing. Shlomo to authorise Chris to proceed with metal fencing to be painted dark brown (and to alert Chris re: winching of metal fencing by bikers at nearby farmer's field), and to ask Chris about also dropping some trees at the top and bottom of the river bank, and planting willow behind the fencing to be installed. Shlomo to clarify with Chris whether or not there are jobs that need to be carried out prior to the installation of fencing. This work is expected to cost no more than £1,500.

Shlomo explained FTNCG was given a £250 voucher to be spent via The Conservation Volunteers. An order has been placed for £75 worth of plants (mostly oxygenating plants for the first pond) and £75 worth of trees (25 each of Black Poplar, Common Buckthorn, Alder Buckthorn and Bird Cherry, as well as 50 Spindleberry), and £100 worth of tools.

Shlomo apologised for not having made progress with arranging first-aid training, explaining that he has been very busy. Jez volunteered to help move this forward.

Action: Shlomo to pass on Les Warren's contact details to Jez. Jez to contact Sarah Spurry.

PREPARATIONS FOR ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM) TO BE HELD ON 4TH MAY

Shlomo confirmed that the paperwork, including 'proposals and willingness to stand' form is complete, although Ross' written confirm still needs to be formalised with his signature.

Action: Ross to make arrangements to sign the form in advance of the AGM

Trustee discussed and approved the Report & Accounts, including the Reserves Policy. Trustees also considered potential post-AGM discussion topics including: Brief Spa Ponds and Rushpool Updates; Volunteering opportunities (as per Lorraine's e-mail message); Spa Ponds Oral History project (Ann Childs taking the lead); Photos → objects of beauty for sale (e.g. at Forest Town craft market stall); Heritage Management Plan project / local history research; First Aid Training; and fundraising.

DOGS ON LEADS POLICY FOR SPA PONDS

Following discussion it was agreed that there is a need to update FTNCG's Health & Safety policy to include explicit reference to potential dangers associated with volunteers' dogs. The need for FTNCG volunteers to set an example to other dog walkers (who we expect to keep their dogs on their lead around the ponds) was noted, as was the need to protect wildlife (e.g. to protect ducks from being mithered by dogs). All Trustees were keen not to discourage volunteering by dog owners. The area of where FTNCG expects dogs to be kept on leads (i.e. near the ponds, but not necessarily on the path down from Clipstone Drive) needs to be clearly defined and community to site users.

Action: Shlomo, Lorraine and Josh to revise H&S policy and define and communicate the area for dogs to be kept on leads.

VOLUNTEER EXPENSES POLICY

Trustees agreed that FTNCG's policy is to reimburse reasonable expenses as funds allow. Volunteers are expected to secure the Treasurer's agreement prior to any expenses being incurred wherever possible.

RUSHPOOL UPDATE

Trustees considered the update provided by Helen (FTNCG's Rushpool Liaison) via email. Helen reported that one bin was removed for reasons unknown, but that the other bin was being used. She noted that the steps area would benefit from a litter pick. She also noted that some arsonists had set fire to old gorse on the site, and that there had been shopping trolleys abandoned in the area. Butterflies, chiffchaff and song thrush were spotted on the site, and the grass to the side of the paths has been mowed.

Action: Rich to contact Helen to arrange a date and time for a Rushpool session for litter picking and/or identification and monitoring.

PROGRAMME FOR 2016

- ▶ Bat Walk with Ruth: Friday 13th May 2016, from 9pm
- ▶ Moth catching session with Ian: late May / early June (depends on weather)
- ▶ Rushpool session in Summer
Action: Rich and Helen to arrange
- ▶ Balsam pulling - From 10am Friday 10th June as part of Intl. Clean-up Mansfield Day
Action: Shlomo to send insurance info and risk assessment to Forestry Commission
- ▶ Next Trustees Meeting in early June - Rose sends her apologies
Action: Shlomo to contact Rich re: Rich's availability

MINI 'MAKING A DIFFERENCE' (MAD) DAY - JULY 2016

Received invitation from Forestry Commission but no Trustees are available on the date provided. FTNCG will not be taking part this year but wish all the best with the event.

Action: Shlomo to inform Forestry Commission

SPA PONDS HERITAGE

Trustees endorses plans to develop a bid for the Heritage Lottery Fund to pay for training and support with producing an initial Heritage Management Plan for Spa Ponds.

Action: Lorraine (with the support of others) to work with Matt to draft a Bid for Trustee's consideration. Relevant documents to be shared via Google Drive.

Ann has agreed to record peoples' recollections of Spa Ponds ('oral histories'). Anyone interested in sharing their story with Ann should get in touch.

Action: Members to be made aware of this opportunity, e.g. at post-AGM discussions.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Lorraine flagged the benefits of formulating a Trustees Communications Strategy which outlined the ways that Trustees communicate and discuss issues between meetings.