

Notes from the Spa Ponds Site Management Meeting held on 21st September 2018

Present: Lorraine, Shlomo, Josh, Callum, Jez, John G, and Charles [7]

The meeting began at the Downen residence and continued on-site at Spa Ponds.

- It was explained how the Spa Ponds site walk will provide an opportunity to identify tasks for forth-coming work sessions, including an opportunity to tag more of the (mainly sycamore and sweet chestnut) saplings to be removed and used for dead hedging to allow more light and to create spaces for planting elders near the Chestnut Walk.
- Arrangements for November's Naturescape tree delivery were considered. Charles kindly offered to help transport trees if required. It was acknowledged that in advance of delivery (expected around 24th November - to be confirmed) ground would need to be prepared to receive new trees (30 elder, 12 crab apple, 12 black polar and 1 field maple).
- Secure tool storage was discussed.
- Discussions took place about future heritage work for Spa Ponds, following on from the e-mail that was circulated in advance of the meeting that reflected Matt's eagerness to work with the Group to carry out further research. Jez expressed an ongoing interest in Matt's suggestion that a stretch of the suspected deer leap could be recreated to provide a hedge and to illustrate how the deer leap might have looked.

Action: Jez to contact Matt about potential funding sources for this project idea and report back to Trustees, etc.

- It was also confirmed that FTNCG remains open to core sampling via the Nottingham University. Of course the Group remains interested in the history of the site and in abiding by our Heritage Management Plan, although it is acknowledged that due to a return to focussing on nature conservation there remains a need to catch up with the Group's heritage paperwork, e.g. typing up the notes about next actions arising from May's heritage training sessions with Matt. Charles suggested inviting tree historian Andy Alder to visit Spa Ponds (at a time when Mark can also be present). Charles also mentioned a researcher ('Pixy Led') with an interest in sacred wells.

Action: Shlomo to reach out to Andy Alder (and coordinate with Mark), and to befriend Pixy Led on Facebook.

- The Sherwood Water Catchment Partnership meeting on Monday 1st October will provide an opportunity to hear more from Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust in relation to the Lively Up the Maun project and how the project will involve FTNCG and Spa Ponds. It was noted that interpretation boards may be helpful in explaining to visitors to Spa Ponds why trees have been left on the ground, e.g. to help prevent run-off from reaching the ponds. There may be opportunities as part of the Major2Miner project for signage, etc.
- Shlomo referred to the Mansfield District Council (MDC) Local Plan update that he recently delivered to the Forest Town Community Council. He offered to circulate the update to meeting participants, and to produce an update tied more closely to FTNCG in the coming weeks.

It was noted that the current draft reflects MDC's intention not to put forward development proposals for either the Stinting Lane area (including New Mill Lane and Old Mill Lane) or the land around Warren Farm.

Action: Shlomo to circulate FTCC update to meeting participants, and to produce another Local Plan update tied more closely to FTNCG and circulate this to members and supporters.

- The Dowens will be representing FTNCG at the Midlands WatersideCare conference in Birmingham tomorrow (22nd September). Shlomo shared the presentation to be delivered to the Midlands WatersideCare conference.
- Josh demonstrated the My Google Maps facility and the work he has done to make Mark's tree recording data and other geolocation data available via the app., which is now being used to catalogue features at Spa Ponds.

Tasks for future Spa Ponds work sessions:

- Clipstone Drive Entrance
 - Repair kissing gate
 - Replace railway sleeper
 - Strim nettles
 - Level the path
- Along Path (Packman's Way)
 - Thin out marked sycamore, etc.
 - Plant crab apple and elder in November (prepare planting spots in October)
- Ponds 0 and 1
 - Dig out path near spring to create (restore) silt barrier and cut back the root
 - Continue manual dredging of Pond 1
 - Hand clear around roses and log geolocations on the My Google Maps system
 - Clear and strim Pond 0 once the bramble has died back
 - Repair dead hedging along Ponds 0 and 1, including transplanting holly, etc.
 - Lay hazel hedge (Pond 1)
- Pond 2
 - Repair (stake) timber on Packman's Way path side near platform
 - Translocate willow from promontory
 - Lay elder and hawthorn on Packman's Way path near platform (and clear bramble)
 - Use grapple to remove wood in water near woodland path / end of pipe
- Pond 3
 - Clear around the pipe between Ponds 2 and 3
 - Widen bridleway
 - Block off major silt entry point at bottom corner (starting near to farmer's field)
- Spa Lane
 - Trim hawthorn as part of maintaining bridleway