

CHRISTMAS 2022 NEWSLETTER



Packman's Bridge AKA Spa Lane Bridge - Photo taken by Dennis Platts on 29th November 2021

Season's Greetings to all FTNCG Members and Supporters

Wow! Another amazing year for the Forest Town Nature Conservation Group (FTNCG) seems to be coming to an end, providing an opportunity to reflect on 2022 and anticipate the year ahead.

2022 was overflowing with achievements. With plenty of support from Andy Hollis, FTNCG volunteers learned a range of biodiversity skills and we applied our learning to improving the dead hedges around the Chestnut Wood. This work is ongoing and will most certainly continue in 2023.

We learnt a very important lesson about creating wildflower areas for bees and other pollinators – however much seed is sown, light needs to reach the ground for the seeds to grow! Once again Andy helped us out by removing some trees and by supporting us to renew 100 meters of hedgerow. The hedgerow work and biodiversity skills training were made possible by grants from the Sherwood Landscape Partnership's Miner 2 Major (M2M) project and from Natural England.

FTNCG members organised toad counting sessions in March, confirming that Spa Ponds continues to be somewhere common toads enjoy visiting each year for mating. To support toads, and other creatures, we have introduced plenty of wood piles for them to shelter over winter. Keen FTNCG volunteers also organised a successful moth and bat count one fine evening in late July.

2022 also saw FTNCG volunteers and others (including a wide variety of corporate volunteers) focus on managing the invasive balsam growing in and around Spa Ponds. Much of this work was overseen by the Nottinghamshire Biodiversity Action Group's Chris Jackson and Emma Gilbert.

Without doubt, one of 2022's highlights was the Annual General Meeting and reunion, held at Kingsway Hall in June, with FTNCG Members and Supporters finally able to gather indoors again! Another high point was receiving the news that our bid for Severn Trent Community Fund support was successful, meaning that – together with EMEC – we can finally progress our Pipes, Paths and Ponds project. An ambitious programme of work has begun, and we look forward to EMEC returning to Spa Ponds in January 2023. As the name suggests, the project will see extensive improvements to all four ponds, the pipes that connect them, and the paths between the ponds.

Volunteers continue to monitor water quality at Spa Ponds, and we were fortunate to receive Environment Agency training in interpreting the results. Reassuring to know our ponds are healthy!

On behalf of FTNCG Trustees, I would like to thank you for all of your kind support in 2022, and wish you a safe and wonderful year ahead,

Shlomo

Chair of the Forest Town Nature Conservation Group (FTNCG)