

Friends of Whirlow Brook Park (FoWP) Newsletter

Issue 4 - October 2021



Message from the Chair

Our warm, dry September is over and thankfully the gardens have had some much needed rain. The colder weather has not deterred our volunteers who continue to grasp the nettle and the pesky alchemilla mollis in the children's play area. You can now really see the difference. In a week or two's time you can expect to see some new fencing by the top car park, and after 18 October the ponds will be looking a little cleaner after a combined assault by Su3a gardeners, Abbeydale Rotarians, some university students and ourselves. The pond side may be looking a bit battered for a few weeks but it will have been worth it.

The support of 40 members at our first general meeting was much appreciated. A two year forward plan was tabled and can be viewed on our website.

<https://friendsofwhirlowbrookpark.org.uk/forward-plan/>

We now need to turn our attention to fundraising by various means in order to make the improvements that can't be achieved by sheer graft. Our first application has already been approved - the People Keeping Well Partnership has granted £500 towards a cordless sander for the benches and a heavy duty hose-reel and cart.

We are also looking outwards, networking with others in order to increase visitor numbers. We plan to include walks from the park on the website and better signage within the park. The history team has met and plans to comb the city archives. One thing is certain - whatever the weather, we won't be short of things to do over the winter!

Shelagh Woolliscroft
FoWP Chair

General Meeting - update

We held our first very successful General Meeting on Tuesday 28th September at Whirlowbrook Hall. The meeting was chaired by Councillor Colin Ross. Around 40 members attended. The constitution, introduced by Roger Lasko, was unanimously adopted. Members received a verbal progress report on work undertaken by the steering group, a financial statement and a summary of future plans. Six people were elected to the management committee, namely:

Chris Cave
John Coldron
Maggie Girling
David Jordan
Roger Lasko
Shelagh Woolliscroft

Roles are to be allocated at our first management committee meeting.

This leaves a further six places which may be filled by co-option. We need more help with fund-raising, organising events, and volunteer management. If you're interested and feel you could make a contribution, please contact Shelagh on 0114 255 8948.

Additionally, Bridget Tattersall has kindly agreed to be an adviser on health and wellbeing, Kevin Marsden is currently acting as Minutes secretary and Molly Laycock is providing administrative support.



Follow us on Facebook

Please follow us on Facebook - the more likes and followers we get the more exposure we will have to spread the word about our lovely park and recruit more volunteers! Search for <https://www.facebook.com/friendsofwhirlowbrookpark>

Our next volunteer days

All volunteer sessions start at 9.45am, meeting at the grass square just below the top car park. No need to book - just turn up! There will be a sign in sheet and health and safety information for new volunteers. We will also ask for an emergency contact number for a partner, friend or neighbour. (Under GDPR we don't keep this data and it is shredded after each session). Please wear sturdy shoes and bring gloves. There are a variety of gardening tools to use but you are welcome to bring your own. Bring a drink and hand sanitiser.

Saturday 16 October
Monday 18 October
Saturday 6 November
Wednesday 17 November
Saturday 4 December
Monday 13 December
Saturday 8 January
Monday 18 January
Saturday 5 February
Monday 21 February

Volunteers should still continue to wear masks in the gardener's store. And please don't come to the sessions if you feel unwell or have been 'pinged' by the NHS App.

The Big Pond Clear Out - Monday 18 October

For those of you who are not regular volunteers you might be interested in a one off project. On Monday 18th October we are having an all-day volunteer session, tackling the mud and weeds in and around both ponds in the park. All wellies on deck! Starting at 9.45am and continuing till mid-afternoon. Refreshments provided or bring your own. There is one loo available outside. We will ensure this is fully cleaned and hand sanitiser provided.

Flood Alleviation in the Limb Valley

The General Meeting opened with an interesting talk from Roy Mosley from the Sheffield and Rotherham Wildlife Trust, on Flood alleviation in the Limb Valley. Working with Sheffield City Council, this is a two year project to help solve the problems of flooding and water control in the Limb Valley. Its findings will inform the Environment Agency's Project 'Upper Don: Source to Sea'.

The first phase, lasting six months, will be a feasibility study, including wide-ranging consultation. The second phase will be a series of practical interventions, including attenuation ponds that fill and slowly release water, leaky dams and tree planting extending to Ecclesall Woods. In some areas the soil may be aerated to help limit surface run-off. Many of these measures will be invisible to walkers. Water flow and storage will also be used to create habitats for wildlife, especially endangered species such as the willow tit.

Care will be taken to avoid damaging industrial archaeology. The project will initially focus on the upper catchment area, Lady Canning's Plantation and Whirlow Fields.



Initially, council land will be used, with the aim to include private landowners in the future. Surveys are being carried out by Hallam University, to assess the wildlife in the area. There will be hydrological monitoring to establish a baseline and measure impact. Volunteers are welcome to help with data collection and practical work. The project will be evaluated and

it is hoped there will be long term benefits to the area. The type of trees to be planted would be mainly local native species depending upon the land eg, oaks and birch for drier areas, alder and willow

for wetter areas. The funding will come from the Environment Agency. Findings will be communicated through the Wildlife Trust website, notices on site and other appropriate means.

Volunteer Update

Hopefully you will have noticed a few changes in the park since our last newsletter. Volunteer numbers continue to grow with a great team atmosphere forming. We also had four university students at the last session on 2 October. SCC Parks Dept have now cleared the sunken garden and removed the overgrown conifers. We have planted 60 lavender plants along the top of the sunken garden and these are being carefully tended.



Parks have also removed a lot of overgrown shrubbery around the lower pond ready for our big Pond Clear out day on Monday 18th October. We continue to work on clearing the beds and kids' play area. The kids' maze is slowly being repainted thanks to Parks Dept for supplying the paint and brushes. (Any willing volunteers to help with this will be much appreciated!)

Tool Sharpening 16th October

Are your garden tools in need of sharpening before you put them away for the winter? Bring them along on **Saturday 16th October** between 9.30am and 11.30am for our tool sharpening guru, Geoff to work his magic. He will do secateurs, shears, edging shears etc in return for a small donation to FoWP.



Volunteers' Christmas Lunch 13 December

Volunteers in the park are invited to join us for a Christmas lunch on Monday 13th December at the Hammer and Pincers at Bents Green. We have booked a table for 20 so first come, first served!



The cost is £12.99 for two courses or £14.99 for three. Shelagh will bring menus to the next three volunteer sessions on Saturday 16 October, Monday 18 October and Saturday 6 November. People can then make their menu choices and pay a non-refundable £2 deposit. Anyone who cannot get to one of the volunteer events can book by phoning Shelagh on 0114 255 8948. The balance will be payable direct to the pub on the day. Looking forward to it!

Christmas Cards on Sale

We now have the official Friends of Whirlow Brook Park Christmas Cards ready for you to buy! Priced at 50p each they are available at Parkhead Newsagents and Dore Moor Garden Centre. If anyone knows of any other shops, cafes, libraries etc that would be willing to stock them please let us know. Contact us via the website or phone Maggie on 0114 236 5699.



Subscriptions

We currently have a database of around 120 'friends' - about 70 % who are paid-up members. If you haven't paid your subscription so far it's an easy thing to do and will only cost you £10 a year which covers all members of a household.

If you have online banking please set up an immediate payment of £10 to our bank account Friends of Whirlow Brook Park sort code 05-02-30 Account no 71217977. And then a standing order for the same date for the following years. Please use a reference consisting of your last name and postcode. The banks are, at differing speeds, setting up new procedures to check details of account numbers and sort codes and, until these are fully in place, you may get a warning message. Please do not be put off by this; the above details are correct!

If you do not have internet banking and would like to set up a standing order in the traditional way, please download the standing order form from the website. If you prefer to pay an annual subscription by cheque please use the option in the form below to request contact details of our treasurer.

If you wish to join the Friends of Whirlow Brook Park and haven't already done so, please complete and submit the application form on our website. Thank you.

<https://friendsofwhirlowbrookpark.org.uk/join-the-friends/>