

Friends of Woodthorpe Grange Park Meeting Report Tuesday 12th October 2021

The meeting of the Friends of Woodthorpe Grange Park held in the Grange on Tuesday 12th October 2021 beginning at 6.30pm was an informal meeting without any agenda to see how many people would attend. Being as it was the first meeting of the Friends since January 2020, as acting chair, following the sudden and unexpected death of Alex Staniforth, I was surprised by how many people attended the meeting.

As the meeting was informal, I began by pointing out the many volunteering tasks the Friends group can now take part in, all of which are posted on the Friends website under the heading of 'Volunteers Needed,' which is accessed from the homepage of the Friends website on www.woodthorpefriends.co.uk

As part of bringing people back together again, it was pointed out that the Saturday morning two-hourly gardening session, which began in July has proved to be a success. Beginning as a weed pulling session in the formal gardens – mostly bindweed has now extended itself to the removal of self-seeding bramble bushes, elder, and sycamore.

With regards to the removal of self-seeding bramble bushes, elder and sycamore, all have been removed with the knowledge and guidance coming from Mr Peter Wood a retired horticulturalist and landscape architect.

I also was able to report that under the umbrella group Future Parks Accelerator, I was also able to announce that as acting chair I had been asked to take part in two Woodthorpe Park Development Workshops, which I will report at the next Friends meeting.

With regards to widening the scope of volunteering, not just at Woodthorpe Park but throughout all of Nottingham's parks and open spaces, Martin Harris, Nottingham City Council's Parks Technical Officer was able to announce, under the title of Nottingham Green Guardians, Nottingham now has a voluntary activities coordinator.

Based primarily at the Grange the coordinator, Sandra Lawton's activities are to oversee the activities carried out by other Friends groups based on Nottingham's parks and spaces but also the many corporate volunteering activities that take place from time to time. For example, the two-day Hockley Hustle Mini Forest Tree Planting session, which is taking place on Woodthorpe Park between the 29th and 30th October and organising volunteers for the Big Tree Giveaway at the Plant Shop between 18th and 31st October.

What began in April 2018 as a newsletter for those who are not on either Facebook or Twitter entitled the Woodthorpe Gazette, apart from six editions published in 2020, with little or no activity taking place because of the coronavirus pandemic all future editions came to a halt. However, with activities now taking place there is much to report on. Therefore, with all that has passed in the three months, an October/November edition should be available before the next Friends meeting.

As there were no minutes available from the previous Friends meeting, which was held on Wednesday 29th January 2020 at Winwood Court, the next meeting, which will be held on Wednesday 24th November 2021 at 6.30pm at the Grange will be minuted. With there being a 21-month time lapse since the Friends last had a meeting was one of the reasons I closed access to the agendas and minutes of meetings page. Please be assured all minutes from previous meetings that go back to 2017, when they were first published online, I have saved on file.

Finally, I would like to thank all those who attended the first "informal" meeting of the Friends of Woodthorpe Grange Park. As I have already pointed out it was the first in 21 months and I look forward to meeting you all again at our next meeting.

Paul R. Swift, Acting Chair, 17th October 2021.