

FRIENDS OF WOODTHORPE GRANGE PARK

Notes of Meeting held on 2 May 2025

Attendees

FoWGP

Paul Swift (Chair)
Peter Wood
Linda Wood
Anne Whitchurch
David Lue
Barbara Coulson
Marian Staniforth
Helena Shipston
Bill Shipston
Mavis Broomhall
Ian Broomhall
Janet Grimley
Matt Wilson
Derek Stafford

NCC

Hilary Thrumpston

Paul welcomed everyone to the meeting and how it was pleasing to see so many in attendance, including some new members of the group. All attendees introduced themselves.

Agenda

Item 1 – Matters arising from meeting held on 24 January 2025

No matters arising outside the items on the agenda for 2 May 2025.

Item 2 – Progress Report by Chair

FOWGP now has 25 members.

Paul will be leading a Heritage Walk around the park on 13 May and 23 May, to which all are invited to attend.

The Community Police Officer (PC Martin Barker) and his PCSO have expressed an interest in attending meetings of the group to provide advice and answer any questions. Matt felt this would be useful for any feedback on issues relating to fly-tipping, littering etc.

Item 3 – Train Sculpture

Hilary advised that the person who will carry out the painting is currently engaged elsewhere in the city but this will be his next job plus one. The timing will also be dependent on the weather. Matt noted that the work had been commissioned by the group through NCC.

Item 4 – Gravestone

Peter has emailed the specialist who has offered to carry out the restoration at no cost and the work will be undertaken as soon as possible. In the meantime some landscaping has been undertaken around the gravestone with some further works planned.

Item 5 – Events

Paul circulated a draft poster advertising the two heritage walks on 13 May and 23 May. He also referred to the Sherwood parish walk which he will be leading on 7 June and which all are invited to participate. The walk will be around 6 miles and will finish at St Martin's Church where refreshments will be available. Any donations will go to Nourish Sherwood and Christian Aid. Finally, Paul highlighted the annual 1845 Inclosure Walk around the open spaces given to the people of Nottingham in perpetuity by the Inclosure Act 1845. This year's walk, which is around 5.5 miles, is on 29 June starting at the Wilford Bridge on the Embankment.

Other Matters

Matt referred to the new surface path on the northern side of the park and whether NCC could provide some signage to indicate the distance around the park. Derek noted that there was already one sign at the Mansfield Road entrance.

Matt noted that there were some new recycling bins in the car park, but Hilary advised that these were for NCC and not available for public use.

Paul asked whether NCC had any plans for the re-use of the former golf kiosk in the café building. Hilary advised that this space was very small and is now being used for storage.

Barbara asked what had happened to the mosaics. Hilary advised that these were currently being restored in the workshop.

Paul referred to two people who have been undertaking some voluntary work in the park as part of their Duke of Edinburgh Award.

Peter advised the buffer to accompany the train sculpture should hopefully be provided very soon. Peter also advised that he will be leading a tree walk in the park during the upcoming Sherwood Arts Week. Finally, he noted the poor condition of the cedar tree close to the Grange and asked how this might be treated.

David asked whether NCC might be able to provide some CCTV within the park to deter vandalism and anti-social behaviour.

Bill noted that the area at the bottom of the park was no longer marked out as a football pitch. Hilary advised that the previous teams who used this area had not re-booked it for the current season. Hilary also confirmed that the fair would be returning to this part of the park as per previous years.

Hilary reported that following the large trees that had fallen down over the winter, NCC would be using UK SPF funding to plant some new semi-mature trees.

Hilary also reported that NCC have received interest from the owner of a hot air balloon to use the park as a launch site.

Date of next meeting

Friday 25 July 2025 2.00 pm.

Item 3 – Train Sculpture

Hilary confirmed that the costs of the work to the sculpture would be £1,137 and that NCC would need to await an extended period of dry weather to enable preparatory works to commence, hopefully in March 2025.

Paul emphasised the need to maintain the sculpture and its immediate surroundings following the works and to ensure that the area remains open and visible to deter vandalism. He also suggested that the sculpture should be re-painted in the colours of the original train company (Great Northern).

Peter advised that he had recently spoken to someone who would be able to supply and install a buffer to accompany the sculpture, again at no cost.

Item 4 - Ideas for events this coming year

Paul advised that he was looking to continue providing illustrated heritage walks, starting from March 2025, ideally providing two on each of the days to enable more people to attend, given the popularity of the most recent talks. Paul also noted that the FoWGP had now been recognised by the Nottingham Civic Society and that there was an opportunity to strengthen links between them and the group.

Peter advised that he would wish to undertake further tree walks and where possible to join in with other groups across Nottingham.

Paul suggested that more structured gardening sessions should be arranged, preferably in the week rather than at weekends in the hope of attracting more participants.

Paul advised that, inspired by the 1845 Enclosure Walk, he was proposing to lead a walk in May around the perimeter of St Martin's Church in Sherwood. This route would include a section through Woodthorpe Grange Park.

Hilary noted that this year will be the 30th anniversary of the tropical house within the park and that the plant centre would be looking to use this as an opportunity to refresh and promote the tropical house.

Other Matters

Matt advised that the group's current balance was £1,504.40.

Paul asked about what was happening with the trees that had fallen in the recent storm. Hilary advised that NCC were waiting for drier weather to enable machinery to access the area and remove the trees without destroying the grass.

Matt asked whether anyone in the group was aware of any current fly-tipping issues within the park. Paul advised that some fly-tipping continued to take place at the entrance to the park from Sherwood Vale, but was not aware of any other areas where this was a problem at present.

Paul asked about the anticipated timescale for any works to repair the steps leading from the vehicular exit to the park down to the Dell Garden, where a barrier was currently in place. Hilary advised that NCC would look to undertake the repairs as soon as possible, but could not give an expected timeframe for this.

Matt noted the group currently has around 30 registered members.

Linda advised that she had recently attended the Nottingham Open Spaces Forum on behalf of the FoWGP and that the group's profile had been raised both by members attending the forum and noting the activities and actions that the group have been undertaking.

Hilary advised that NCC's Head of Parks had recently resigned their post and that a replacement would be recruited, although the new postholder would have a broader range of responsibilities.

Date of next meeting

Friday 2 May 2025 2.00 pm

The meeting ended at 3.00 pm.