

Forest Town Nature Conservation Group (FTNCG)

Committee Meeting

Wednesday 18th January 2012, from 6 pm – 9 pm, at The Downen's

Present: Lorraine (Chair), Dave (Vice-Chair), Alyson (Membership Secretary), Josh (Treasurer), Shlomo (Secretary), Jeff (Rushpool Representative) [6]

Planning for the next Rushpool Open Space Work Party Session

The next Rushpool Open Space work party will take place from 10 am – 1 pm on Saturday 3rd March 2012. The focus will once again be on clearing gorse. Dave informed the meeting that NWT's Ruth Testa will be unable to attend, so it is all the more important for Andy Lowe to be there. The session will provide an opportunity for Dave and Andy to plan for future hedging (e.g. identifying areas that need to be cleared during 2012 before hedges are planted early next year).

Actions:

- Shlomo to contact Mansfield district Council to request chipper support, and also to let Jo Hull and Tim Downes know about the session.
- Shlomo and Dave to discuss the session with Andy, and to ensure that Andy will be joining us.
- Meeting with Jo Hull and Andy Lowe (and FTNCG representatives) to be arranged to go over Rushpool Open Space site management plan. Discussions to cover: improving upon the old site management plan; considering the site and its environs; identifying opportunities for signage; need for barrier to prevent caravan access to the (increasingly cleared) site.
- Dave to ensure we have the tools (our own or borrowed, e.g. from NWT) necessary to carry the work on the 3rd March, including a "pronged fork". It is expected that Dave will liaise with Andy Lowe by late February.
NOTE: Subsequent to the meeting Shlomo was informed that the tools ordered from the BTCV would be delivered on Tuesday 24th January (although the hot water flask has yet to be ordered).
- Lorraine to order hot water flask (and cups), for Alyson to store and bring to work days. On work days when Alyson is unable to attend, Dave will take responsibility for bringing the flask.
- Lorraine to investigate the process for extending insurance cover to include the tools (that are to be securely stored by Dave). Anticipated cost of around £13.25 for the 6 months before renewal,
- Shlomo to e-mail Thynghowe Archaeology Project information to Dave and Alyson.

Spa Ponds Update / Future Plans

Dave reported that he has completed his warden training with NWT, and is now a recognised warden.

Actions:

- Dave to ask Ruth about clearing the fallen tree from the path (at Spa Ponds)
- Arrange a meeting with Ruth for all wardens and trainee wardens, in advance of April's balsam pull, to discuss: site management plan for the whole Spa Ponds site, as well as the approach to the balsam pull (and accompanying seed planting).
- Shlomo to chase up request for seeds with NWT Estates Manager Charles Langtree.

Chestnut Fund Tool Application

Our application was successful, and nearly £350 worth of tools is to be delivered shortly. As recorded above, Dave offered to store the tools, and Lorraine will extend insurance cover accordingly. It was also noted that MDC's Jo Hull had obtained some litter picking tools for us, and had identified some potential volunteers willing to undertake some litter picking.

Lottery Bid

FTNCG can now move forward with our more substantial Lottery bid.

Actions:

- Dave to identify tools, etc. (including waders) for inclusion in our Lottery Bid, and pass a tools wish list to Lorraine and Shlomo.
- Lorraine and Shlomo to move forward with the draft bid.

Friends of Greenwood Community Forum

Background to the Greenwood Community Forest and the associated Forum is available from: <http://www.greenwoodforest.org.uk/> and http://www.greenwoodforest.org.uk/working_together.php The Forum brings together Friends Groups from across a geographical area that overlaps with, but that is not the same as, the Mansfield District Council-run Friends Group Network (see overleaf). Forum membership benefits the FTNCG by raising our profile, connecting us with other Groups, and by giving us easier access to relevant information, e.g. about activities and events of interest to Friends Groups in Nottinghamshire. FTNCG is now a member of the Forum, having paid our £10 subscription fee (for one year's membership). Lorraine, Shlomo and Josh attended a meeting of the Forum as representatives of FTNCG. The Forum meeting was held at the Warsop Parish Hall on Monday 9th January 2012, and was followed by a walk around The Carrs. The next Forum meeting is scheduled for Monday 16th April 2012.

Mansfield District Council-run Friends Group Network

Dave and Rose will be the FTNCG representatives at next Network Meeting (14th February). That meeting will be an opportunity for Dave and Rose to thank MDC for their previous support for our Rushpool Open Space action (with chipper, gorse and rubbish clearance, etc.), and to confirm arrangements are in place for MDC support for the 3rd March return to Rushpool. At the Network meeting, the FTNCG can also offer to make our sightings recording template (http://foresttown.net/nature/FTNCG_Wildlife_Sightings_Report_Form.pdf) available in .doc format for other Groups to adapt.

Dave and/or Rose may also take the opportunity to ask other Groups for recommendations regarding potential guest speakers to invite to address the FTNCG.

Actions:

- Shlomo to circulate Jo Hull's notes from the first meeting of the re-launched MDC-run Friends Network (ensure Dave, Alyson and rose received copies).

Planning for Future FTNCG Meetings, including the Annual General Meeting

The advantages and disadvantages of several potential venues and meeting times were discussed. It was agreed that the daytime meetings during the winter months were a success, and that evening meetings would be easier for people to attend during the spring and summer months. Future meetings could include guest speakers to talk about bird spotting, bats, insects and woodland. There may be opportunities to coordinate with the emerging Mansfield & Ashfield "Local" Group (see below) for guest speakers and field trips. The FTNCG could experiment with an annual outing at a weekend in August, e.g. we could arrange for a NWT volunteer to show us around the Attenborough Nature Reserve, and we could arrange transport (e.g. hire a mini-bus) and ask participants for a donation to cover our costs. The FTNCG constitution appears to require us to hold an Annual General Meeting (AGM) before the end of May.

Actions:

- Lorraine to explore the option of using the Methodist Church as an evening venue.
- All to check their diaries for availability for future meetings, and especially the AGM.

Nottinghamshire Biodiversity Action Group (Notts BAG)

Nottinghamshire Biodiversity Action Group is a partnership of voluntary, statutory and community groups working together to conserve and enhance the wildlife of Nottinghamshire to the benefit of people. Further information about Notts BAG can be found at: <http://www.nottsbag.org.uk/>

Actions:

- Shlomo to write to Chris Jackson with our request for the FTNCG to join Notts BAG.
- Josh to add a link to Notts BAG as part of our website.

Mansfield and Ashfield "Local" Group

Shlomo described the purpose of the Mansfield & Ashfield branch of NWT, and invited all present to attend on 31st January.

Next Meeting

The next FTNCG meeting will take place on Monday (afternoon) 30th January 2012, from 2pm at the Forest Town Methodist Church Hall. The next evening meeting will take place on Wednesday 29th February 2012, from 7pm at the Forest Town Welfare.