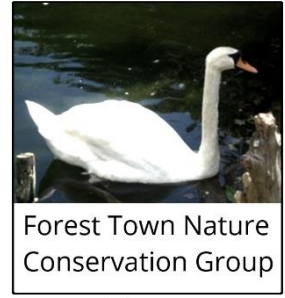


Forest Town Nature Conservation Group (FTNCG)

Registered Charity Number: 1157957

Principal Address: c/o 25 The Birchlands,
Forest Town, Mansfield NG19 0ER



Forest Town Nature Conservation Group

Annual Report and Accounts 2022

(for the period 1 April 2021 - 31 March 2022)

Object of the Charity:

'to promote for the benefit of the public the conservation, protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment in and around Forest Town'

Produced by **Shlomo Downen** (Chair)
and **Josh Downen** (Treasurer and Secretary)

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Contact

Website: <http://www.foresttown.net/nature>

Email: spa.ponds@gmail.com

Declaration

The Trustees of the Forest Town Nature Conservation Group (FTNCG) declare that they have approved this Trustees' Report and Accounts for the period 1 April 2021 - 31 March 2022.

Signed on behalf of the charity's Trustees by Shlomo Downen, Chair of the Forest Town Nature Conservation Group, on 26th May 2022.

Note

As FTNCG comprises more than 50 members, under the terms of Section 8 of FTNCG's Constitution, in accordance with Section 12 of FTNCG's Constitution, the quorum for the Annual General Meeting (AGM) is 6 members entitled to vote on the business to be conducted at the meeting.

In accordance with Sections 10, 11, 12 and 31 of the Constitution, formal notice for the AGM was issued by Friday 27th May 2022, i.e. at least 14 clear days before the AGM, to all FTNCG Members and Trustees for the AGM to be held at Kingsway Hall, Clipstone Road West, Forest Town, on Saturday 11th June 2022.

1. Introduction

By the time this Report & Accounts is presented at our Annual General Meeting (AGM) – the first Forest Town Nature Conservation Group (FTNCG) indoor meeting held in-person since our AGM on Saturday 8th June 2019, and the first FTNCG AGM to be held at Kingsway Hall – FTNCG volunteers will have delivered more than 20,000 volunteer hours since we starting keeping track of volunteer hours back in May 2015 (see page 10 for details of volunteer hours delivered between April 2021 - March 2022).

This amazing achievement has come about through the dedication and kindness of many people, and during the period covered by this Report & Accounts a greater number of people have been involved in volunteering at Spa Ponds than ever before. Not only has FTNCG membership increased to 57 members, and not only is our list of supporters growing ever longer, FTNCG has benefitted from active voluntary support supplied by a wide range of organisations including businesses and faith communities.

The year also saw a deepening of FTNCG's relationship with Ecologic founder Andy Hollis. Andy provided services to FTNCG – sometimes planned well in advance, other times at short notice – including woodland management services (e.g. chainsaw and scarifier work), and training (e.g. tree and hedge surveying and management). We look forward to continuing to benefit from Andy's support and guidance for years to come.

The various projects delivered by FTNCG between April 2021 and March 2022 were made possible by funding from a variety of sources, including Natural England, the Sherwood Forest Landscape Partnership, Keep Britain Tidy, Friends of Outwood Field, and others (see page 7 for details of the charity's principal sources of funds).

We are grateful to all of these funders and to those who helped raise funds for FTNCG, including in conjunction with Portland College. We also wish to thank all those who made donations to FTNCG, including those making personal donations and those local District and County Councillors who allocated funds for FTNCG over the past year.

This Report & Accounts was written to ensure compliance with FTNCG's obligations under the Charities Act 2011 in accordance with Section 27 of our Constitution. If you would like to read more about FTNCG's historic achievements please visit FTNCG's website at: <http://www.foresttown.net/nature/> to access our seven previous Report & Accounts documents, where we provide additional background to the Group's emergence as a land-owning registered charity.

2. Structure, Governance and Management

The Forest Town Nature Conservation Group's (FTNCG's) Constitution, adopted on 22nd May 2013 and amended on 14th July 2014, is the governing document that establishes FTNCG as an association with the following charitable object: *'to promote for the benefit of the public the conservation, protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment in and around Forest Town'*.

FTNCG Membership currently stands at 57 people. FTNCG Membership, which is free of charge (although we suggest donating £5 a year), confers no financial benefit. As set out above, Trustees decided to forgo formal renewal by Members, which usually occurs at our AGM when it is not being held virtually, and so membership will continue for those who have maintained a relationship with the group.

FTNCG Trustees throughout 2021/22 were as follows:

Name	Office / Role	Appointment Date
Shlomo Downen	Chair and Vice-Secretary	1 st February 2011
Josh Downen	Treasurer, Secretary & Website Admin.	1 st February 2011
James Healy	Vice-Chair	4 th May 2016
Alan Alberry	Trustee and Spa Ponds Warden	2 nd July 2014
Lorraine Downen	Trustee	1 st February 2011
Mark Fretwell	Trustee and Tree Officer	5 th July 2017
Phil Goodall	Trustee and Water Catchment Liaison	5 th July 2017
Dennis Platts	Trustee, Photographic Records Officer	16 th September 2020
Samantha Nicholson	Trustee and Landowner Liaison	30 th March 2021

Barry Housely continued as a Spa Ponds Warden alongside Alan, and Helen Johnson continued as FTNCG's Rushpool Liaison, and Matt Beresford of MBarcheology continued as Archaeological Adviser. On 6th May 2022 James (Jes) Healy stood down as a Trustee. After 6 years Jes' contribution to both the site and the Group cannot be measured. Jes has always been active in welcoming new FTNCG members, as well as being at the forefront of ensuring that the tools we've needed for our work sessions were transported to the site. We wish him well.

FTNCG is a member (or affiliate) of the following organisations:

- The Conservation Volunteers (TCV)
- Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust
- The Nottinghamshire Biodiversity Action Group (NottsBAG)
- WatersideCare
- FreshWater Watch
- Sherwood Water Catchment Partnership
- The Rainworth-Clipstone Landowners Group

3. Review of FTNCG Activities

Throughout the period 1st April 2021 - 31st March 2022 FTNCG Trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit. Over the year FTNCG undertook the following activities to further our charitable object:

- Holding work sessions and (virtual) meetings, open to the public without charge, to consider, plan and carry out the conservation, protection, and improvement of the physical and natural environment in and around Forest Town, with a particular focus on Spa Ponds.
- Maintaining both electronic and hard copy communications with Members and Supporters, providing ongoing updates and promoting activities of potential interest, via e-mail, our website and Facebook pages, and by sending printed copies to postal addresses (for those Members who do not have internet access).
- Working as a Group to deliver thousands of volunteer hours litter picking and conservation working in and around Forest Town, primarily at Spa Ponds.
- Contributing to a range of consultations, including making submissions as part of planning application consultation exercises.
- Supporting volunteer training, including tree and hedge surveying (identification and recording), hedgerow management (laying and gap planting), woodland management (dead hedging and crown raising), and first aid.
- Recording of wildlife sightings and sharing results. We record and encourage others to record sightings at Spa Ponds via the iRecord service, and in May 2022 we produced a step-by-step guide to downloading, installing, and using the iRecord mobile phone app.
- Contributing to the ongoing work of the Sherwood Water Catchment Partnership, and the Rainworth-Clipstone Landowners Group.
- Maintaining membership of and/or affiliation with charitable and other organisations and groups with similar objects to FTNCG (see list on Page 3, above).
- Working with other like-minded public benefit organisations and agencies, including: Forest Town Community Council (FTCC) and FTCC's Planning Sub-Committee; Forest Town Heritage Group; Nottinghamshire County Council (Public Rights of Way), and Via East Midlands; Forestry England (formerly known as the Forestry Commission); Environment Agency; Keep Britain Tidy; Mansfield District Council; Nottinghamshire Biodiversity Action Group (NottsBAG); the Nottinghamshire Amphibian & Reptile Group (NARG); Ecologic CIC; EMEC Ecology; the Woodland Trust; and Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust (NWT).

Throughout the period FTNCG Trustees met, both formally and informally. Minutes of the formal meetings are available from FTNCG's Minutes Archive at:

<http://www.foresttown.net/index.php/nature/ftnccg-minutes/>

4. Financial Review (including Reserves Policy)

Estimated basic running costs

Anticipated basic running costs for FTNCG during the next year (2022/23) amount to around **£700**, as follows:

£50 for Membership

- **£12** (was free in 2022) - The Conservation Volunteers (TCV)
- **£33** - Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust (NWT)

£200 for Insurance

- **£200** - Includes Public Liability and Personal Accident

£450 for Other General Running Costs

- **£200** - Sundry items for Spa Ponds (e.g. PPE, signs, tools, plants, seeds, etc.)
- **£100** - Education and training (including First Aid Training)
- **£150** - Printing, postage, etc.

Reserves policy for 2022/23

Running Costs (Reserved £700; target £1,400): To cover anticipated annual expenses that must be met (e.g. insurance, health & safety (PPE) equipment, training, volunteer expenses), Trustees set a reserve target equivalent to 2 years' basic running costs.

10% Fund (Match Funding) (Reserved £4,000; target £5,000): Funds set aside for FTNCG's contribution of 10% towards a Severn Trent Community Fund bid amounting to a total of around £50,000 for EMEC to carry out work on pipes, paths, and ponds at Spa Ponds. The intention is to submit a bid in August 2022, and the amount of funding we will be able to request will depend on the amount of money we have raised by then.

Delivery of the Spa Ponds Site Management Plan (Reserved £500; target £75,000): Trustees would like more funds to pay professionals such as EMEC and Ecologic for support implementing our Management Plans, including work to maintain our bridleway, enhance biodiversity, and improve water quality.

Conservation Volunteer Skills Training (Reserved £0; target £2,000): For professional on-site training and supervision. FTNCG secured an M2M grant on 30th March 2022, £900 of which is ring-fenced to pay Ecologic for on-site training and supervision.

Contingencies (Reserved £500; target £1,200): To cover unexpected expenses, particularly those associated with maintaining public safety at Spa Ponds.

The charity's principal sources of funds (including any fundraising)

INCOME FOR 2021/22

£3,637.00	Natural England (Keep the Forest Buzzing)
£2,700.00	M2M Habitat Species Improvement Grant
£2,172.20	Keep Britain Tidy (Spawn on the Maun)
£900.00	Friends of Outwood Field
£523.15	Donations from individuals, inc. membership
£430.55	Councillor Allowances (District & County Councils)
£429.00	Robin Hood Lottery
£400.00	Portland College / FTNCG Joint Fundraiser
£200.00	ASDA Foundation
£46.90	Amazon Smile
£11,438.80	TOTAL INCOME FOR 2021/22

Notes: The £2,700 amount from M2M is 90% of the total £3,000 grant. The final £300 is due to be received in the 2022/23 accounting year.

We are also awaiting a payment of £1,000 from the Rural Payments Agency due to FTNCG with regards to the production of a Woodland Management Plan for Spa Ponds which is expected in the 2022/23 accounting year.

There is also an outstanding claim for around £150 in Gift Aid which would bring FTNCG up to date with claiming all eligible Gift Aid through to 19th May 2022, and this £150 is expected in the 2022/23 accounting year.

How expenditure has supported the charity's key objectives

As set out below, expenses were incurred in relation to the Forest Town Nature Conservation Group undertaking or funding activities to carry out the charity's object 'to promote for the benefit of the public the conservation, protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment in and around Forest Town'.

EXPENDITURE FOR 2021/22

£6,328.70	Contracted Work on Spa Ponds
£3,050.99	Tools, seeds, PPE, etc.
£211.82	Membership & Insurance
£140.39	Printing & postage
£48.60	Training, education & volunteer expenses
£9,780.50	TOTAL EXPENDITURE FOR 2021/22

Liabilities

FTNCG has no outstanding debts to carry over into 2022/23.

5. Annual Statement of Accounts (2021/22)

Accounts for 1 April 2021 - 31 March 2022

Opening balance (Total)			
	Cash	£129.00	
	Bank	£2,657.61	£2,786.61
Total income			£11,438.80
Total expenditure			(£9,780.50)
Closing balance (Total)			
	Cash	£78.00	
	Bank	£4,366.91	£4,444.91

Accounts for 1 April 2020 - 31 March 2021

Opening balance (Total)			
	Cash	£5.00	
	Bank	£3,150.55	£3,155.55
Total income			£7,348.78
Total expenditure			(£7,717.72)
Closing balance (Total)			
	Cash	£129.00	
	Bank	£2,657.61	£2,786.61

<u>BALANCE SHEET AT 31 MARCH 2022</u>	£	£
<u>Assets and Liabilities</u>		
FIXED ASSETS		
<i>Tangible assets</i>		
Tools, Equipment, etc (Cost)	2,050.99	
Seeds retained for use in 2022/23 (Est. Value)	1,000.00	
FTNCG Mugs (£3.60 X 14)	50.40	
Tools, Equipment, etc (Tools/Equipment/etc Depreciation)	(2,050.99)	
Total fixed assets		1,050.40
CURRENT ASSETS		
<i>Cash at bank and in hand</i>		
Current Account - Coop Bank	4,366.91	
Petty Cash	78.00	
Total cash at bank and in hand	4,444.91	
Debtors (i.e. outstanding grant / RPA payments)	1,300.00	
Total current assets		5,744.91
LIABILITIES		
<i>Creditors due within one year</i>		(0.00)
NET CURRENT ASSETS	5,744.91	
Total net assets		6,795.31
<u>Represented by funds and assets</u>		
<i>Unrestricted funds</i>		
General Fund	4,444.91	
<i>Restricted Funds</i>		
<i>Other assets</i>		
Tangible assets	1,050.40	
Debtors	1,300.00	
Total funds		6,795.31

<u>BALANCE SHEET AT 31 MARCH 2021</u>	£	£
<u>Assets and Liabilities</u>		
FIXED ASSETS		
<i>Tangible assets</i>		
Tools, Equipment, etc (Cost)	99.23	
FTNCG Mugs (£3.60 X 14)	50.40	
Tools, Equipment, etc (Depreciation)	(99.23)	
Total fixed assets		50.40
CURRENT ASSETS		
<i>Cash at bank and in hand</i>		
Current Account - Coop Bank	2,657.61	
Petty Cash	129.00	
Total cash at bank and in hand	2,786.61	
Debtors	0.00	
Total current assets		2,786.61
LIABILITIES		
<i>Creditors due within one year</i>		(0.00)
NET CURRENT ASSETS	2,786.61	
Total net assets		2,837.01
<u>Represented by funds and assets</u>		
<i>Unrestricted funds</i>		
General Fund	2,786.61	
<i>Restricted Funds</i>		
<i>Other assets</i>		
Tangible assets	50.40	
Debtors	0.00	
Total funds		2,837.01

Notes: (1) Gift Aid income is attributed to the year in which it was paid by HMRC rather than the year of donation. (2) Unclaimed Gift Aid donations are not listed as an asset. (3) Money that has been fundraised is listed in the year when those funds are received by FTNCG. (4) FTNCG is the owner of Spa Ponds Nature Reserve, but it is not listed as an asset because the land is owned in the public interest and the deeds are held in trust by the Official Custodian for Charities.

6. Monthly Summary of Volunteer Hours

SUMMARY OF RECORDED VOLUNTEER HOURS (2021/22)

Month	Volunteer Hours	Example of activities carried out
April 2021	246	In addition to the usual litter picking carried out by our Spa Ponds Wardens, Barry and Alan, FTNCGG volunteers watered the seeds planted as part of the Keep the Forest Buzzing project, carried out tree and hedge surveying guided by Andy Hollis of Ecologic.
May	180	As part of Keep the Forest Buzzing volunteers removed stone from seed beds, repaired fencing, and cleared around elder saplings. Volunteers continued to survey trees and hedges with support from Andy, and Trustees met to plan the AGM and various projects.
June	286	Volunteers continued to survey trees and hedges with support from Andy, as well as pulling balsam, repairing fences, installing signs, and picking litter.
July	458	Held our Annual General Meeting (AGM). Cleared nettles and brambles from wildflower compartments, cleared sediment from stream, planted liquorice mint, translocated flag iris, and pulled balsam. We received woodland management advice from Forestry Commission. The final week of July was dedicated to delivering the Spawn on the Maun project.
August	141	A fairly quiet month, catching up with administrative tasks, reporting on project delivery and negotiating funds for future work. We also planted some bittersweet and wild garlic.
September	295	Veteran trees identified and some trees felled in Peel Wood. Wood anemone and English bluebells planted as part of Keep the Forest Buzzing. Brash bundled and installed in the River Maun (rusty shopping trolley removed). Some volunteers attended First aid training.
October	360	Compartments along Chestnut Walk cleared, with support from NWT M2M volunteers. Andy led two work sessions that included tree removal, pruning, and crown raising to let light in, and clearing bramble and young sycamore from along the Chestnut Walk.
November	187	Several Spa Ponds Work Sessions took place, all of which focussed on selective clearing and other habitat improvements in Peel Wood near Pond 4 (Management Plan Zone 7).
December	244	Work Sessions with Andy, creating new entrance, maintaining section of Chestnut Walk, dead hedging to create wildlife corridors and protect area to be sown in 2022.
January 2022	221	Andy headed up a series of improvements to the Chestnut Wood hedgerow. A wide range of volunteers helped rake and otherwise prepare for sowing acid grass and wildflower seed.
February	218	Further improvements to Chestnut Wood hedgerow, including Andy carrying out tree work (both around Chestnut Wood and elsewhere due to wind damage) and delivering training, including hedge laying. Volunteers continued to prepare for sowing, and on 19 th February a substantial area was sown with various acid grass and wildflower seed mixes.
March	274	Further hedgerow improvements and tree planting training with Andy. Planted saplings to fill hedgerow gaps, alongside more raking and seed sowing (including along both sides of the 100m length of the hedgerow) and bolstering dead hedges to protect seeded areas. Two evening toads counts took place at Spa Ponds, with more than 400 toads recorded.
TOTAL	3,110	

In the seven years since May 2015 when we started recording volunteer hours, FTNCGG volunteers (including our Wardens) have delivered **more than 19,800 volunteer hours**.