

Friends of Gilcrest Wood and Meadow Activity report 2016/17

Friends of Gilcrest Wood and Meadow (FoGwaM) was constituted at a public meeting on April 17th 2013 with the aim “to offer sympathetic care, conserve and encourage natural flora and fauna and generally improve the wild space of Gilcrest Wood and Meadow that lies between Crimicar Lane, Castlewood Road/Drive and Canterbury Crescent and Hallamshire Drive. In 2014 the Meadow area was recognised as an Urban Nature Park.

On site Activity:

Over 11 work days a family day and 4 events an estimated 320 people participated; mix of ages including aprox 15% children, over 50% women The work days were ably lead by Sheffield City Council ranger Chris Roberts.

Activity Highlights:

1. Activity days took place on 3rd April, 1st May 5th June, 10th July, 11 September Sunday 2nd October, Sunday 13th November. Saturday 11^h December.8 January 5th February 5th March
2. planting 200 donated shrubs by OVO energy Free Trees for All (in the rain)
40xwayfairing,
40xGuelder Rose,
40x Spindleberry,
40xDogwood,
40x Goat willow
3. Effectively representing the needs of the woods in relation to drainage proposals for a new neighbouring housing scheme
4. Completion of further access activity: redefined path through boggy meadow area and completion of foot path steps near Nursery.
5. 4 family events and 1 public meetings:
 - Picnic featuring a Tree-sure Hunt and Seed Planting,
 - a BBQ social event including harvesting of fruit from the wood and food sharing,
 - “Jolly Holly” Wreath and Bird feeder making,
 - the launch of “Story of the Woods” archive material collecting and the AGM. Each involving 20-40 people between ages 8 and 70 with 5-10 young people below 18 years (accompanied by parents or carers). 50% female,
6. Ongoing litter clearance
7. encouraging diversity by clearing Holly and Leylandi beyond the ‘lagoon’ and the top of the nursery steps.
8. Dry stone wall maintenance ongoing
9. Japanese Knotweed monitoring
10. monitoring and campaigning for repair of collapsed boundary wall
11. 11 bird boxes were checked, with 7 nested.

Organisation activity:

Management plans: The initiating Public Meeting in April 2013 identified a list of 15 items of possible activity. These were reviewed at the AGM of 30th April 2014 and a Management Plan adopted. Over the year these have been considered either in relation to the management proposals, through liaison on site with Council ranger and through meetings with the officer with overall responsibility for the site John Gilpin (SCC Woodlands Officer) and in accordance with the Biodiversity survey.

Fundraising: FoGwaM were successful in raising £397.26 from the SCC Community Ward Pot to fund insurance costs, contribute to seeds, plug plants and printing.

We continue to developed the FOGWAM web site <http://www.fogwam.org/>

Other activity:

FoGWaM has monitored site activity for planning application 13/00155/FUI submitted by Syvil's to develop 14 houses on Canterbury Crescent backing onto the site, to ensure that that the development does not have any negative short or long-term impact on the Wood and Meadow.

- monitoring current TPOs
- agreeing solutions for drainage of surface water: responded to planning Officer and SUDs (Sustainable Urban Drainage) officer regarding proposals for an alternative approach using swales to guide flow through the woods to the conduit below

Particular thanks and appreciation goes to Council Ranger Chris Roberts for his leadership on workdays, to all those who have been involved over the year in such enjoyable and valuable activity and finally my appreciation to the members of the management Committee for making progress of FoGWaM possible.

Next events:

May Sunday 11th June

Teo Greenstreet, Chair

May 17th 2017