



The Friends of Pocklington Green Spaces

Annual General Meeting

10 am, Thursday, January 19th 2017

Council Offices, George Street

Chair's Report

Thanks to :

Phil Wilson, ex-Chair and retiring Tools Officer

Phil has been a great asset to the group turning up to almost all tasks with the tools for the job except when we gave him permission to go on holiday and the odd day sick leave – all the more credit when it is borne in mind that Phil, until recently, lived in Elvington! Phil is now moving to York and out of our area and can no longer undertake the tasks as he used to, so he is taking the opportunity to retire from the trials and tribulations of the FoPGS, festooned as it were, with victory laurels!

Pat Black, Secretary

For her loyal appearances at almost all tasks and her role as secretary, committee hostess, eloquent fund-raiser from the Town council and general nudger of the recalcitrant Chair!

Karen Spruyt, Task Coordinator

For her brilliantly reliable and continuing coordination of the weekly tasks despite the fact that she is unable to attend in person.

Eddy McCabe, Treasurer

Although another 'backroom boy', and despite onerous calls upon his time to attend various folk festival in nightmare locations like the Algarve, for his willingness to organise fund-raising quizzes on behalf of the group – some of which myself and other officers have actually attended and been bemused by!

Other stalwarts on the task front have been:

Barry, Peter, Mervyn, Rob and Norman not forgetting Joyce especially for supplying cold drinks!

Work sessions:

approximately four per month at 10am Fridays on each of the four major sites. 8 hours per month – roughly 12 months. At least 3 people on almost all tasks $8 \times 3 \times 12 =$ at least 288 hours of voluntary work completed. Also thanks to our site coordinators, Ian Murphy, Richard Wood and latterly Gordon Scaife, Droljang, and Lucy Dockray as well as John Bielby, the Town Council handyman.

Where we have worked:

Burnby Hall Gardens (Ian Murphy, Estate Manager)

<http://www.burnbyhallgardens.com/>

Summary of Work – Bed clearing of old plants, mulching (a lot of mulching!), shrub pruning, tulip bulb planting and removal, weeding in the Stumpery

Future Developments: Ian has agreed that the group's tools may be stored at Burnby Hall Gardens, initially in the large shed but later in the lockable container kindly donated by Mervyn but also currently stored at the Gardens, awaiting re-assembly.

A grant of over half a million pounds to redevelop the gardens was awarded by the Heritage Lottery Fund over two years including draining and sealing ponds and reconfiguring heather beds. FoPGS hopes to be involved in the planning and/or implementing process see the note from BHG below.



Figure 1 The Lake at BHG

ROCK GARDEN RESTORATION

The next stage of the Heritage Lottery Fund project began in December 2016 with work on restoring the Rock Garden. Old overgrown plants and shrubs will be removed, the rock garden left fallow for 12 months to restore the soil, and the autumn of 2017 will see volunteers re-planting the entire area using the original planting plans that the original designers used. 2018 will also see improved access to this garden being created.

Pocklington Town Council (Town Clerk, Richard Wood and later, Gordon Scaife)

<http://www.pocklington.gov.uk>

Summary of Work: Planters in town also churchyard bed, bus station, memorial gardens – flower planting and clearing. Landscaping the skate park and path maintenance at West Green. Tree-planting and path clearing were carried out in Primrose Wood and beside the Beck and tidying at Love Lane.

Future Developments: Gordon Scaife has agreed that we should contact an ecologist (recommended by the Secretary of the Friends of Hagg Wood, a sister-organisation of volunteers) to see if we can/should update the Primrose Wood



Figure 2 Melvyn, Pat & Barry in the Memorial Gardens!

Management Plan originally written by the Woodland Trust and later updated by Gordon Scaife as a town councillor.

Gordon Scaife's list of possible tasks for the next 12 months.

Primrose Wood

There is work to be undertaken in Primrose Wood. This will include undertaking some species surveying in the Spring to help with the development of a new management plan for the wood. There is a concern that the woodland plants are in decline and a monitoring system needs to be introduced. The species which require monitoring are the primroses and bluebells. A number of areas have been planted with new trees in the wood but establishment has been a problem and this needs to be investigated.

The Council hopes that the Friends of Pocklington Green Spaces can undertake work to help us develop a new management plan that includes an access and interpretation plan. The footpaths in the wood require regular cutting in the spring/summer to maintain access. The boundaries will require attention this year particularly the boundary to the football fields.

Planters and Borders

The Council is responsible for a number of planters and flower beds in the town. In the coming year the Council are looking to start a replacement programme for the planters. The trees in the old planters will require re-planting at West Green either in the Spring or Autumn of 2017. The flower beds in the town are being gradually changed from annuals to perennials which will reduce costs and maintenance.

Pocklington Beck

The Council are writing to the land owners, who are both volume house builders, about their land holdings in West Green. Miller Homes own the section between Cemetery Lane and West Green Drive. Taylor Wimpey own the section from West Green Drive to Amos Drive. There may be an opportunity to create a footpath and allow public access to these spaces.

Jubilee Gardens – London Street.

There will be maintenance in this area in the summer/autumn to ensure the stream channel is maintained. There is also work on the Beck that has been agreed with the Environment Agency to do in the vicinity of the Churchyard and the back of Betterton Court up to London Street.

Pocklington Cemetery

There may some small scale works to do in the cemetery.

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Kilnwick Percy Hall (Droljang, Buddhist nun)

<http://www.madhyamaka.org/historic-building-and-grounds/>

Summary of Work: Decking - stabilisation of some of the decks, replacement of rotting cross-pieces in the decks, bridge-consolidation, removal and/or consolidation of tree-guards, tree-planting, ditch-digging and ditch edge clearance (gloriously muddy!), indefatigable attempts to hack back the undergrowth round the chapel revealing long-hidden graves.



Figure 3 The Chapel at KP Hall

Future Developments: We would expect to proactively maintain the decking and review the progress of the trees we have planted round the lake and elsewhere. We may be asked to continue maintenance of the churchyard.

Melbourne Arm of Pocklington Canal - Canal & Rivers Trust - Lucy Dockray

<https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/news-and-views/blogs/pocklington-canal/dredging-on-the-pocklington-canal>

Summary of Work: Himalayan Balsam bashing, hedge-planting, removal of dead wood and other pruning, path-clearing, as well as a noble but ill-fated attempt to plant wildflowers!

Future Developments: The plan for the redevelopment of the site is on hold following resignation of Rachel Walker the previous Project Officer as well as the general sentiment that the plan implied over-development.. We have now established links with Lizzie Dealey, the new Project Officer, who, funded by a Heritage Lottery Fund grant, is setting up a two-year project for community involvement in canal maintenance work including bridge brickwork repointing coordinated by Pocklington Canal Amenity Society (PCAS) and modification of the nearby swing-bridge to restore its original appearance etc. PCAS are also attempting to raise £250.000 to restore two more locks.

An Open Afternoon outlining the volunteering opportunities was run by Lizzie at Melbourne Village Hall was attended by Pat and myself.

Lucy Dockray's Update:

C&RT have a draft management plan for the pond area now, below is a list of suggested improvements, some will be subject to resources we have, (timber for creating benches etc.) but we can talk in more detail at the next session. Lizzie may have some more tasks she needs help with as well over the coming months.

- Pond clearance
- Balsam removal
- Grassland management (raking arisings)
- Wildflower planting
- Hedge laying
- Path maintenance
- Install seating/activity area

More immediately, FoPGS may also be involved in the campaign <http://fortheLoveof.org.uk/show-the-love-overview/> to get some pictures of places we love and that we want to protect from climate change which we can share on the campaign day (Valentine's day).

Other Highlights

In March, we supported the WI in the 'Clean for the Queen' litter-picking effort mainly on the West Green road – some publicity was achieved with a picture in the Pocklington Post



Figure 4 Lizzie Dealey at the Canal



A donation of £100 from the Lions was received and allowed us to acquire four slashers – for clearing undergrowth! . A photo opportunity was arranged at the Pocklington Beck

A heroic attempt to plant wild flower seeds at Pocklington Community Junior School was undertaken (thanks, Phil!)

I have taken part in regular conservation work parties run by the Friends of Hagg Wood and Rob attended one of their lectures on Alien Species'

One fifth (spare!) Friday was used as a tools day led by Phil.

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/FoPGS/>



Current: Pat has nobly kept the Facebook page up-to date

Future Developments: We probably need to spend more time on it and/or on the website – if we can! Possibly something for a fifth Friday activity otherwise undesignated for a regular task.

Website <http://friendsofpocklingtongreenspaces.co.uk/>

Current: Our thanks to Steve Whitaker, one of our members, who has done a good job in setting up an outline website

Future: it remains a work in progress. As Steve is now involved in a teacher training course, we need a volunteer to further populate the site with information and photos

Recruitment and Potential Transfer to U3A

We need new pamphlets and to refresh the A-board. However, the board is probably only useful at central council sites and perhaps at Burnby Hall Gardens as passers-by do not feature much at the Canal or at Kilnwick Percy Hall!

insurance issues have been clarified with the U3A Chief Executive but this may need detailed written confirmation of scope. As agreed, possible integration of the group into Pocklington and District U3A is being actively pursued to allow presentation at the March U3A committee to be followed up by a circular to all members to confirm a sufficient level of interest.

Gerry Hutchinson

Chair,

Friends of Pocklington Green Spaces

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January, 2017