

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE FRIENDS OF GEDLING
COUNTRY PARK HELD ON MONDAY 20th JANUARY 2020 AT 7.30 PM IN CAFÉ 1899
GEDLING COUNTRY PARK**

The record of attendance showed that 51 members were present at the Annual General Meeting. See Appendix I Page 5

1. WELCOME

Terry welcomed everyone to the fifth Annual General Meeting of the Friends of Gedling Country Park (the first one was held on 25th January 2016).

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from: Nick Benedek; John & Cathy Charles-Jones; John Clarke; Jean Fell; Susan Page; Mrs Joyce Smith; Eleonor Wilson; Steve Wright

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (21st January 2019)

The minutes of the FGCP Annual General Meeting held on Monday 21st January 2019 were passed as a true record.

Proposed: Rick Wilson

Seconded: Phil Orme

4. MATTER ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

None

5. CHAIR'S REPORT

See Appendix II

Terry pointed out the huge amount of financial support we had received and the amount of time we had received from our volunteers which equalled 283 full man days in 2019. 60 days had been contributed by the Duke of Edinburgh students.

Terry thanked Phil Orme for the time he spent taking photographs of the country park this time was not included in the volunteer hours. The photographs were put on the FGCP Facebook regularly.

Terry thanked Michael Proctor, Park Ranger, for his assistance with the projects the FGCP were working on.

We now had a new Park Ranger, Rob Hale. He will be working with Michael Proctor whilst he settles in. We are looking forward to working with him.

We are looking forward to the completion of the car park extension; dog area outside Café 1899, and the erection of the viewing platforms.

Terry also thanked the GBC Councillors who had donated money to the country park out of their budget.

Thanks, were given to Café 1899 who had opened specially for us to hold the AGM tonight.

6. TREASURER'S REPORT

See Appendix III

Terry explained that Nick Benedek had been unable to attend this AGM due to work commitments in Plymouth. Terry would be able to answer any questions.

Tony Keyworth proposed a vote of thanks for the work that Nick did as Treasurer and for his wife, Sarah, for putting up with it. This was passed unanimously.

The Treasurer's Annual Statement was approved without change.

7. ENVIRONMENT REPORT

See Appendix IV

Brian thanked Mark Tyler and Brian Cluff for the Wildlife Walks which were held on the first Saturday of the month in the Country Park. These walks would be continuing the first Saturday of the month in 2020.

Brian is in negotiations with the Hedgehog Society and it is hoped that we will be getting some hedgehogs in the Spring.

Work is being done on providing a tree walk which is for everyone not just children.

We have planted some wood anemone, bluebells and cowslips in the woodland.

A discussion took place about a free app for recording plants/insects on the park. This would be very Useful for recording species on the country park.

Brian explained that Via had agreed to cut down the large willow which was in the swan's flight path. We were trying to encourage the swans to fly away from the GAR.

Brian also explained that we have to cut down some trees. He will let the members know which these trees were.

Decisions were made by a team of environmentalists not FGCP.

Mark Tyler asked if we were going to plant some native shrubs. There is plenty on the country park already. Brian to send a list out. We are hoping to attract more swans.

We have lost some wader birds since we have lost the scrapes. These will be dug out again this Spring.

A discussion took place on what had happened to the Lapwings. Lapwings nested in the Solar Farm in 2019.

Brian explained that the cows had been introduced to protect the grass land from being invaded by trees and scrub. The Volunteers had cleared a lot of the scrub. Grass land is extremely rare in Nottinghamshire and needs to be protected.

Brian explained that FGCP were involved with rewriting the Management Plan for the next five years.

A question was asked about birds of prey. There has been only one short eared owl seen and there did not appear to be as many kestrels. Mark Tyler reported that a bird box had fallen in the Solar Farm. Brian said he would let them know.

Brian would be arranging a demonstration of bird ringing in the Spring. This would only be open to members and details would be sent to members.

8. ELECTION OF TRUSTEES

Jenny explained that according to our Constitution each year a proportion of the Trustees should stand down, they are able to stand for re-election for a period of three years. The Trustees standing down at this AGM are: Nick Benedek; Terry Lock; Brian Osborne.

Nick, Terry and Brian have been nominated to stand again:

Nick Benedek	Proposed:	Jenny Fillingham	Seconded:	Rod Fillingham
Terry Lock	Proposed:	Dave Marson	Seconded;	Helen Aplin
Brian Osborne	Proposed:	Dave Marson	Seconded;	Helen Aplin

Carried Unanimously

Terry asked if anyone else would like to become a Trustee. We needed someone to look after the website. If anyone knew of anyone who would be interested in doing this would they let Terry know. We have 3,000 followers on Facebook.

This marked the end of the formal business

Terry asked Councillor Peter Barnes, Portfolio Holder for the Country Park, if he would like to say anything.

Peter thanked the FGCP for what they are doing and said that he had paid the 'men in sheds' to build some more substantial bird nest boxes for the country park.

Emma, Café 1899, explained to members the problem they were experiencing of members of the public parking in the allocated staff parking bays. They only had three bays and the café was very busy and they couldn't serve customers if they were looking for a parking spot.

Mark Tyler highlighted the problem of dogs jumping on you from the back. The Dog Warden has been walking in the country park recently.

Tony Keyworth talked about the proposal to build a Sand martin Bank. He was taking advice on where to site it.

If anyone has any thoughts or ideas about what they would like to see on the country park would they please the FGCP know.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

10.1 Raffle

The raffle was drawn. The raffle prizes had been donated and the raffle raised £43.00

10.2 Venue

It had been difficult to hear at the back of the room. We would investigate a pa system for the next AGM.

11. DATE OF NEXT AGM

The next FGCP Annual General Meeting would be held on Monday 18th January 2021.

The meeting closed at 8.40 pm.

DRAFT

APPENDIX I

FRIENDS OF GEDLING COUNTRY PARK ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MONDAY 20th JANUARY 2020

ATTENDANCE LIST

Helen Aplin	Trustee	Brian Osborne	Trustee
Jenny Fillingham	Trustee	Daniel Green	Trustee
Rod Fillingham	Trustee	Lynne Taylor	Trustee
Tony Keyworth	Trustee	Dave Marson	Trustee
Terry Lock	Trustee	Rick Wilson	Trustee

Councillor Peter Barnes
Councillor Sandra Barnes
Councillor Helen Greensmith
Councillor Sam Smith

Robert Beech	Philip Orme
Marion Blake	Chris Parr
Bran Cluff	Julie Pajuk
Robert F Collis	Jason Pound
Grant Everitt	Evan Price
Rob Everitt	Philip Price
Marilyn Hewlett	Angela Shelton
Neil Hewlett	David Shelton
Joan Hodges	Elaine Shelton
Ron Hodges	Dallas Simpson
Jenny Hollingsworth	Helen Simpson
Ken Hollingsworth	Peter Smith
Chris Jones	Alex Staniforth
Frances Lock	Marian Staniforth
Paul Martin	Jean Taylor
Tracy Martin	Rosalind Taylor
Dianne Moore	Mark Tyler
Peter Moore	David Wilkinson
Bobbie Norris (Roberta)	

The persons attending this meeting consented to their name being published.

APPENDIX II

Chairman's Report – December 2019

It's hard to believe that we, the Friends of Gedling Country Park, were formally set up in September 2014 and in March 2015 the park was formally opened. So, on March 28th next year, appropriately on a Saturday, the park will be 5 years old.

The changes we have seen in the last years, not only to, the infrastructure but also to the environment have been astounding. By the time of the AGM we will have car parking capacity for approx. 200 cars – compared with the 50 spaces when we opened.

The children's play area continues to be as popular as expected and is always busy.

Cafe1889 continues to be enjoyed by all and will soon be seeing changes in the outdoor area to provide shelter for those hardy outdoor souls and dog owners also.

We are delighted to be hosting this year's AGM there and thank them for their support, especially the 10% discount for members.

Green Flag status was awarded again, and we have had confirmation of the park being designated a Local nature Reserve.

Equally we, the Friends, continue with our policy of supporting the fact that no non-native species of plants are planted by us on the park. We would encourage other groups and the council to support similar initiatives to help protect our own native plants and trees.

The cows have been back again and have been enjoyed by all.

Thanks go to Gedling Borough Council, especially the Parks department, for their continued support. Over the past few weeks we have been working with the parks team (ably led by Michael Proctor) in planting lots of mature trees, around the Memorial garden and down toward the bottom end where we have been creating an avenue of Hornbeam trees.

A new ranger will be with us in January and we look forward to meeting and working with them to further promote the park.

This year saw us complete our planned work on the lower lagoons by raising the level in the Western lagoon to help clear the excessive reed growth and also repairing the damaged sill on the Eastern one and clearing reeds to create an island which has been enjoyed by wildlife and visitors.

We have also put in place floating and fixed nesting platforms for ducks and terns (Still available to rent – so if you know any Terns let them know!!)

Community workdays had working parties to work and help which allowed us to make significant inroads into some areas we were working on. So, a huge thank you goes out to them and hopefully next year we will see even more such community involvement from local businesses.

Our estimate, which will be covered in more details in the Environment report, is that we have had several thousand hours of volunteer work during the year and this has enabled us to have work sessions almost every weekend and during the week.

At the end of 2018 we received a grant from the OneFamily foundation, and this allowed us to create the floating platforms and more importantly create a new site for the bees. Having lost them in the previous winter we needed to move to a more protected site and with GBC approval we have created a safe enclosed area for future development of colonies.

Our grateful thanks also go to our local Co-ops for the incredible support, over the past few years we have had support from the Gedling village store and the Mapperley area stores. But this year's donation was stunning. We have recently started work on new nature trails which will feature native British trees, explanation of why we do some of the work we do, further development around the Butterfly walk area and a book covering all aspects of the park environment. This work is funded by the donation from the Co-op.

Over the previous year the trustees, volunteers and others have done an incredible amount of work on the park and the following table shows the numbers of sessions worked and the total days involved. By any standards it represents an amazing contribution to the success and continued growth of the park.

sessions worked		Days
Trustees	224	73
Volunteers	201	73
DOE	201	60
DOE Parents	73	57
Other	8	21
Total	707	283

The support and help from the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme (DOE) has contributed greatly to helping us in our work.

One member does deserve our thanks for his excellent work in recording the pictorial life and scenes of the park on a daily basis. Philip Orme has produced some stunning photos as it has to be said have many others, but I think Philip deserves a great round of thanks for his perseverance in covering the park so well.

So, to bring this report to a close I should like to offer my personal thanks to all our members, our hard-working volunteers, my fellow trustees and most importantly of all the staff and councillors of Gedling Borough Council

**Oh yes – the usual plea!!
still need lots more volunteers please.....**

Terry Lock, Chairman, Friends of Gedling Country Park

Finally, a reminder of 2 of our best-known residents.



DRAFT

APPENDIX IV

FRIENDS OF GEDLING COUNTRY PARK ENVIRONMENT REPORT 2019

Firstly, a great many thanks to all our volunteers, the Gedling Country Park (GCP) cannot function without your assistance and hard work and you should all be proud of the work completed during 2019. We always require more volunteers and we will appreciate any help offered no matter how small, if you are interested contact The Friends of Gedling Country Park (FGCP) website.

Again, this year turned out to be unpredictable weather wise, the highest ever rainfall records during November, causing delays to many of our projects. We are now desperately trying to complete tree/shrub planting before the Christmas break resulting in mid-week volunteer days as well as our usual Sunday operations. Volunteer days left for 2019 are December 4th, 8th, 11th, and 15th, 10.30 am onwards, come and go as you please and contribute something to your park.

The Gedling Access Road (GAR) project commenced this year and has resulted in some disturbances and some small loss of parkland in the lower regions of the Park. Land compensation will be implemented as a result of these works. The GAR was requested by the inhabitants of Gedling as a means of relieving the traffic through the village. Due to the route of the road we as a group will need to fell some of the trees surrounding the lower lagoons to enable a suitable flight path for swans and larger aquatic birds. Two new lagoons will be created outside the southern boundary of the park and no runoff from the roads will enter our lagoons. As a result of our negotiations we will be allowed access to the lagoons for comparative environment studies.

A new environmental recording scheme, Bird Ringing, has been introduced to GCP during 2019 with the records being provided to the FGCP, Nottinghamshire Birders and the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO). Demonstration ringing sessions will be held during 2020 with preferential places for volunteers, schools and members of the Friends group. As a result of the first short recording session in November the following species were ringed – Redwing, Blackbird, Bullfinch, Great Tit, Blue Tit and Wren. An interesting problem arose regarding the recording, the BTO require named areas with a known boundary for their records and unfortunately few if any small habitat areas within the park are named, probably due to the recent creation of the land area and usage. As a result the volunteers decided on the title of Spring Lane Copse for their recording area, this is an area of the woodland running from the Park entrance east alongside Spring Lane, specifically the area where the coppice woodland is being created, and we will keep this title for future records. Naming areas of the Park, as well as grid references, is important for recording purposes and we are suggesting you send in sample names for such, for example currently the lagoons are labelled simply 1,2,3,4,5, and 6 and would be better with titles. Consultations are in progress with Nottinghamshire Birders as to the most suitable sites for Owl boxes within the park and they will ring and record any occupants when we install the boxes - training and licences are required for these activities.

The improvements to the lagoons carried out in 2018 has resulted in mixed success. In all the lagoons water levels have been high throughout the year due to extraordinary rainfall levels and this has definitely resulted in far less Bulrush *Typha latifolia* growth within all the sites. The western lower lagoon (lagoon 3) currently has a leak which we, and numerous advisors, cannot source and we can only find a little of the leakage. During 2020 we will endeavour to resolve this problem. Unfortunately, no nesting birds occupied the Tern raft on

lagoon 3 during 2019. It has been suggested we add decoy birds to the raft to encourage occupancy and we are analysing this as a possible solution to zero nesting. The floating nesting rafts on lagoons 3 and 4 have been highly successful with many Ducks raising offspring throughout the year, one pair with a brood of eight through to maturity. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said of the pole nets as these collapsed due to the fact, we used too flexible wire support, these will be rebuilt with more suitable materials during 2020. However, the poles were of some use as the Herons regularly used them as perching stations. The island created in lagoon 4 during 2018 was used regularly as a retreat by wildfowl throughout the year but resulted in no nests, probably due to lack of cover at this early stage. Due to workings for the GAR the island was temporarily flooded during Autumn 2019 and as a result the contractors have kindly promised to excavate the lagoon further and create a larger, higher island during 2020. We are hoping that the Swans occupying this lagoon will nest on the island. During this autumn GBC employed registered contractors to excavate and remove reeds from the Central Lagoon (Lagoon 1) to make available a clear open water habitat within the lagoon as required by the Park Management Plans. This is the first of the required lagoons dredging operations and will be continued at suitable times during 2020. The removed excavated material has, by law, to remain on site and the pile will be spread along the Lagoon's eastern bank and possibly act as a nesting site for grass snakes.

The Badgers and Rabbit populations within the park have suffered from illegal baiting during 2019 and we are carrying out the utmost vigilance to prevent such activity. Should you observe or have information of any such suspicious activity please immediately call the Police who are aware of this activity, all information will remain confidential. The decrease in the rabbit population has definitely detrimentally affected some floral habitats within the park leading to a decrease in Orchid populations and effecting our Butterfly species. We are in negotiations with Hedgehog Rescue and hopefully will receive some animals to release into the park during 2020, we will inform the FGCP as and when.

With the assistance of GBC, we have spent a considerable amount of volunteer time restoring and creating habitat for the locally rare Dingy Skipper butterfly and will do similar works this winter on the only recorded site of the Silver-washed Fritillary within the park. Due to illness and pressure of other activities no formal butterfly/moth survey work was carried out in 2019. We desperately require volunteers for this work during 2020, please contact via our website. The creation of the Coppiced area within the Spring Lane Copse has considerably improved the butterfly habitat in this area, particularly for woodland species.

During this year we have raised a considerable sum of money from the local CO-OP's for a new nature walk. This has been designed as a Tree Trail through two routes within the park, one shorter easy route and one longer with more challenging pathways, both routes will support the same trees but only the longer one will contain the demonstration coppiced area. A guide to the trees within the trails and a more comprehensive booklet on the trees of GCP will be published. The creation of the Tree Trails has involved considerable research and physical work by the Trustees and our volunteers and hopefully upon completion will contain growing examples of every native British tree. This list has been researched and compiled by the Trustees from all available up to date data on British tree species. Thanks also must be made for the considerable help from GBC for funding for trees and assistance in their planting during this Autumn (this work is still ongoing and we would appreciate any assistance you could provide on volunteer days)The FGCP have from the outset adhered to a strictly native only planting scheme for GCP and with sourcing from as locally grown as possible plants have religiously kept to this policy. It is interesting to note that it is now the

adopted policy of the majority of Environmental Organisations within the UK and also by a group of cross-party politicians. During 2020 we will be attempting to convert as many Nottingham Councils and organisations as possible to a similar policy to protect our threatened environment. As yet we have been unable to identify any park or arboretum containing all the registered native British trees and although this is our intention, making GCP a first in the field, we still have a way to go to obtain specimens of known provenance of the last few rare species. Hopefully 2020 should see us succeed, providing Gedling, Nottingham and the East Midlands with a valuable leisure and teaching asset.

We have been creating a coppice area within the park over the last two years and this is continuing into 2020. The idea is to provide examples of woodland management from the past and to provide material for woodland crafts in the future. Coppicing is a fascinating woodland management technique and is carbon neutral in its practice. Examples of suitable native coppicing species have been planted as well as woodland habitat plants and bulbs. Unfortunately, the one major coppice craft of charcoal burning cannot be carried out due to fire risk from methane escaping from the coal waste tip. As previously stated, this area will be included in the longer Tree Trail and a full description of coppicing and its benefits will be included in the Park Tree Guide.

During the late summer GBC organised scrub clearance and eradication from areas of the southern grassland an extremely important volunteer project which will continue over the next few years.

We have assisted GBC in planting an avenue of Hornbeam trees down the western side of the lower lagoon access road, hopefully this will shield the park from proposed developments within this area and they are important trees for native wildlife (155 species of plant feeding invertebrates use the species).

GBC's provision of a new lower carpark, now under construction, will ease the blockages and illegal parking on Spring Lane. This is on an area of minimal environmental value and extra tree planting and habitat amelioration will take place throughout the area. Important trees growing in this area have been protected.

During this year we raised funding to move the bee apiary from the summit of the park, the solar farm, to a secure site in a warmer more sheltered spot on the northern park boundary. We hope this will improve bee survival during the winter months and assist in increasing pollination and honey production within the Park. A storage shed for spare hives has also been funded and erected on site.

More planting has taken place in the Miners Memorial Garden, decorative native trees, shrubs and flowers and improvements will be continued through into 2020.

The Bee Garden, from Tatton Park Flower Show, has undergone some improvements and these will continue with more decorative bee friendly plants during 2020.

Mark Tyler and Brian Clough have generously continued their very popular nature walks held on the first Saturday of each month. Very many thanks for both Mark and Brian's efforts as well as Jenny and Rod, your Trustees who oversee the walks for safety and insurance purposes.

The list of people to thank for their efforts for sustaining and improving the Parks environment and wildlife habitats is numerous, however the following must be mentioned for their help this year: -

Gedling Borough Council for the provision of materials and manpower for the projects to improve the Park especially for work on the Tree Trails and the Lagoons.

Nottingham Trent University for advice and assistance with environmental issues, monitoring and student volunteers.

Mark Tyler for his unstinting efforts to record wildlife in the park and his provision of records for our use and for the better management of the park.

Ian and his family for the use of their cattle to graze the park grassland with no charges.

Chris Pike of Branch nurseries for his advice and help in supplying locally grown trees.

The Environment Agency for advice and guidance.

Via for help and advice regarding the new GAR.

Local Scout, Guide and Duke of Edinburgh's Award volunteers for assisting us with projects in the park.

Boots' and L'Oréal's volunteers for work projects in the park.

Nottinghamshire Birders for ringing and recording in the park

And finally, again thanks to our weekly volunteers who provide unstinting support for our projects and without who's help GCP would not be such a wonderful wildlife haven and leisure facility for all - keep up the good work!

Brian Osborne
December 2019