

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE FRIENDS OF GEDLING  
COUNTRY PARK HELD ON MONDAY 21<sup>st</sup> JANUARY 2019 AT 7.30 PM IN THE  
MAPPERLEY SPORTS & SOCIAL CLUB, PLAINS ROAD, NOTTINGHAM**

The record of attendance showed that 34 members were present at the Annual General Meeting. See Appendix I Page 5

**1. WELCOME**

Terry welcomed everyone to the fourth Annual General Meeting of the Friends of Gedling Country Park and introduced the current Trustees.

On 31<sup>st</sup> October 2018 Gedling Country Park had been award Local Nature Reserve Status. This was good news and would safeguard the Country Park for the future.

Terry introduced Alistair Glenn, the new Park Ranger who would be working four days at the Country Park.

**2. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from: Elizabeth Cwilewicz; Ashley Dilks; Jenny Hollingsworth; Diane and Peter Moore; Helen and Dallas Simpson; Joyce Smith; Matt and Bekki Wilson.

**3. MINUTES OF THE LAST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

The minutes of the FGCP Annual General Meeting held on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2018 were passed as a true record.

Proposed: Rick Wilson

Seconded: Bob Collis

**4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE LAST AGM**

**NUM/UDM Sponsorship** – Graham had spoken to Peter Barnes about this, but he had heard nothing more.

**5. CHAIR'S REPORT**

See Appendix II Page 6

Terry gave details of the work that the Gedling Heritage Project had achieved and on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2019 there will be a public launch at Café 1899.

Philip Orme has taken many photographs of the Country Park over the year and is the FGCP official photographer. Terry thanked him for letting us use his photographs and for putting them on the FGCP Facebook.

Graham Tavner would not be standing for re-election as a Trustee. He is having problems with his health. He will be greatly missed as he has contributed a lot of information and help to the FGCP. Terry thanked him on behalf of all the Trustees and Members for what he has done. There was a spontaneous round of applause.

Liz Middleton asked how one became a Trustee she had heard that someone had been blocked from becoming a Trustee and felt that they would have been barred from even attending the AGM. Terry explained that the FGCP had never turned anyone away from an AGM and we were desperate for new Trustees and would not refuse anyone who was interested providing there was room on the committee for them (the constitution of the FGCP allows 15 elected Trustees and 2 nominated Trustees).

Bobbie Norris asked if there were any pictures of the site as it used to look when it was a colliery and tip. She was new to the area and had no idea of what it used to look like. Terry said there were some pictures on various information boards around the Country Park. (At the end of the meeting Jenny gave Bobbie a copy of the updated 'Park History' which contained a photograph of Gedling Colliery.)

Liz Middleton asked about the 'Dog Zones' which had been introduced in the Country Park (the dog zone boundary marks had been installed recently). Terry explained that the FGCP did not make decisions on what happened in the Country Park Gedling Borough Council did this and she should contact the Council with her concerns. Alastair was at this meeting and she would talk to him at the end about dogs and litter.

## **6. TREASURER'S REPORT**

See Appendix II Page 9

Nick explained what sponsorship, grants and donations we had received and how this money was spent.

We had received a lot of support from the local Co-Operative Societies over the past two years and we had been chosen as one of their charities for 2019 too.

If anyone uses Amazon please nominate us as your chosen charity as we would get 1%. To date we had not received any payments from Amazon.

A member suggested that we should put a notice in the FGCP Notice Board about shopping in the local Co-Operatives who support us. Jenny explained that our Notice Board was not very large, and we had to juggle the notices which were put in.

Sarah Benedek spent a lot of time preparing the forms for applying for sponsorship and grants and Terry thanked her on behalf of the Trustee and members.

The FGCP Annual Treasurer's Report was accepted as a true record.

Proposed: Tony Keyworth

Seconded: Graham Tavner

Agreed Unanimously

## **7. ENVIRONMENT REPORT**

See Appendix IV Page 12

Brian gave details of the surveys/reports which the FGCP volunteers carry out and asked for more people to come forward. You didn't need to be an expert and Brian would train you.

Brian spoke about the work he has done with VIA (Gedling Access Road).

Trent University allow Brian to use their labs and the University Students carry out various investigations on the Country Park. If anyone has any ideas of what the students could work on could they please let Brian know. Brian thanked them for the work they do.

Liz Middleton asked if there would be a fence erected to keep dogs out of the lagoons. Brian said there would be.

Councillor Collis asked if we had any problems with Knotweed. Brian explained that we were clear of it and Himalayan Balsam was cleared in the first two years. We have volunteered to help the Ooze Dyke volunteers to clear the dyke which has a major problem with Himalayan Balsam.

Bobbie Norris asked if there were any plans to remove the plastic tree guards. Alastair said that this was planned.

The Annual Reports were accepted as a true record.

Proposed: Dave Marson

Seconded: Bob Collis

Agreed Unanimously

## 8. ELECTION OF TRUSTEES

Jenny explained that according to our Constitution each year a proportion of the Trustees should stand down, they are eligible to stand for re-election for a period of three years. The Trustees standing down at this AGM are: Rick Wilson and Graham Tavner. Graham is not standing again.

Rick Wilson has been nominated to stand again:

Rick Wilson

Proposed: Jenny Fillingham

Seconded: David Marson

Two members had come forward to be Trustees:

Daniel Green

Proposed: Rod Fillingham

Seconded: Brian Osborne

Daniel Leigh

Proposed: Bobbie Norris

Seconded: Philip Orme

Carried Unanimously

Jenny asked if any other member would like to become a Trustee. No one came forward.

## 9. GEDLING BOROUGH COUNCIL – PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

**New Car Park Extension** – This should be in place by the Autumn. Concern was expressed about the amount of traffic coming out of the Country Park. Brian explained that the Highways Department must have given permission for this extension before the plan could go ahead. The proposed area (coach turn around section near entrance on Spring Lane) has been checked environmentally and the oaks are being protected.

**Café 1899 Covered Area and Dogs** – It is proposed to install a covered area outside the café. This will provide protection for dogs and dog owners. A question was asked why dogs were not allowed in the café when it was empty. This was a question which needed to go to GBC.

**Gedling Access Road** – Nick explained that this time next year the work on the GAR will have been started. When completed this will open up new entrances to the Country Park. We will lose a bit of the Country Park but will gain more.

**Stand Pipe** – This has been a long-standing problem since the café has opened. It is planned to be sorted quite soon.

**Honesty Boxes** – All monies put in these boxes goes towards the Country Park. It may have to be made compulsory in the future. A discussion took place on the problem that this could cause especially with people parking on Spring Lane and nearby roads.

## 10. FRIENDS – PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

**Nature Trail** – It is proposed to install a second Nature Trail.

**Bees** – We have now identified a new area for the bees which will give them shelter from the fierce winds and stormy weather. We have funding to erect a fence around the bee enclosure and erect a small shed. It is hoped to have the bees installed during Spring 2019.

**Lower Lagoons** – Tony gave details of the work that is proposed to be carried out on the lower lagoons: Tern Island; Mallard Nests.

**Central Lagoon** – Clearance work was carried out in 2018 but more work is needed. It is proposed to bring a contractor in to clear more reeds. We need more open water. Building a bird hide overlooking this lagoon.

**Bore Hole to Maintain Water Level** – Tony is speaking to experts about this.

**Glades** – Work to be done on the fencing of the pathways to and through the glades.

## 11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

**Band Stand** – Graham Tavner gave members details of a proposed Band Stand he would like to donate so that there could be Brass Band Concerts on a Sunday afternoon. He had been told by Jane Richardson, GBC, that there was no room for it on the parks in Conway Road, Jubilee Park and suggested Gedling Country Park. The site that had been chosen was the WI area. Graham asked members what they thought of this. The following comments were made: We are a Country Park not a municipal park; problem with parking; WI Area has been planted with wild flowers and orchids. It was agreed that more clarification was needed from GBC. It would be discussed at the FGCP Trustee Meeting.

**Concerns** – Brian was concerned about the fact that GBC had no qualified Environmentalist and they made decisions without getting qualified advice; they had back-tracked on planting native trees only and removing invasive species (lupins). We wanted to make this the best Country Park in the region and were hampered by what GBC did.

## 12. DATE OF NEXT ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The next FGCP Annual General Meeting would be held on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2020.

The meeting closed at 9.10 pm.

**APPENDIX I**

**FRIENDS OF GEDLING COUNTRY PARK**  
**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
**MONDAY 21<sup>st</sup> JANUARY 2019**

**ATTENDANCE LIST**

Helen Aplin	Trustee	David Marson	Trustee
Nick Benedek	Trustee	Brian Osborne	Trustee
Jenny Fillingham	Trustee	Graham Tavner	Trustee
Rod Fillingham	Trustee	Lynne Taylor	Trustee
Tony Keyworth	Trustee	Rick Wilson	Trustee
Terry Lock	Trustee		

Councillor Bob Collis

Alastair Glenn, GBC Park Ranger

Marion Blake  
Grant Everitt  
Daniel Green  
Carol Henderson  
Patrick Henderson  
Marilyn Hewlett  
Neil Hewlett  
Joan Hodges  
Ron Hodges  
Daniel Leigh  
Francis Lock  
Anton Luckhurst  
Carolyn Luckhurst  
Liz Middleton  
R Norris  
Philip Orme  
Chris Parr  
Peter Smith  
Alex Staniforth  
Marian Staniforth  
Gary Youngs

## APPENDIX II

### CHAIR' ANNUAL REPORT TERRY LOCK

Another year has gone by and we have seen lots of activities, events and great work by the Friends and the hard-working volunteers.

Last year at the AGM we gained 3 new trustees, one elected to work as a co-opted, rather than a full trustee, and sadly has had to resign, for personal reasons, part way through the year. Our thanks go to them for their hard work in organising and running the photo competition.

Equally this year we will be saying farewell to Graham Tavner. Graham has been with us from the start and is a great supporter of our efforts but with his health in mind he is standing down as a trustee but will remain in contact – so on behalf of all our members I should like to thank Graham for his support and wish him well for the future.

We do need more trustees and details of the roles of a trustee can be obtained by contacting:

[chair@gedlingcountrypark.org.uk](mailto:chair@gedlingcountrypark.org.uk)

Trustees meet on a monthly basis for around 2 hours in an evening to manage the activities of the group. Currently we do need certain skill sets and so we are looking for individuals who can help out in several ways:

- Legal experience
- Planning and building experience
- Editorial and publishing backgrounds
- Website and photo-graphical experience
- Helping with and organising/running working days

#### **Volunteers:**

A great big thank you to all those who have volunteered (both Members, supporters and organisations) over the past year. We have achieved a considerable amount of work. That is not to say that there is still not lots to do in the future.

We have been well supported both financially and with volunteers by local companies and so I pass our thanks onto them, but especially to the Co-Op, who, over the last few years have helped us greatly. But this year we have been amazed by the generosity of our Gedling Village Co-Op and members who have raised just under £3000 for our funds.

We have had approx. 50-man days of work from local companies and this together with my estimate of over 150 days (equivalent) by volunteers (based on Sundays and midweek days) shows how committed our supporters are to ensure that this park is Simply the Best. We are also pleased that over the last year and future years we have been helping the Duke of Edinburgh participants in gaining their badges. Their work with us has been very helpful and added to our volunteer work.

We have also been pleased to host activities from local Brownies and Cubs and are always pleased to be able to promote the Park to groups such as these. The table below shows some of the work done over the last year and also some planned for next year.

In addition to this we have done hours of planting, clearing/weeding, watering, repairing, ecological surveys, building bird tables and nesting boxes and more.

Description.	Funding Source.	Delivery Date
Weir in Central Lagoon		Completed 24 November 2017
Construction of raised flower beds in memorial garden	FGCP	Completed 31 January 2018
Drainage in woods	FGCP	Completed 29 June 2018
Bird hide - floor and seat	FGCP	Completed November 2018
Building weir in Western Lagoon	FGCP	Completed November 2018
Forming island in Eastern Lagoon	FGCP	Completed October 2018
Repair of Weir - Eastern Lagoon	FGCP	Completed 9 November 2018
Seal pipe under lagoon	FGCP	Completed November 2018
Floating nesting platform	FGCP	Already made - need water - before Spring 2019
Floating nesting platform for arctic tern platform	FGCP	To be built - before late spring
Duck tubes (2)	FGCP	To be built - before spring 

### Gedling Borough Council

Adam, the Park Ranger moved on from the Council at the end of August and the work he had done both for the council and with ourselves was greatly appreciated. His replacement is Alastair and we look forward to continuing the excellent relationship with him.

Green Flag status was awarded again, and we also now have final 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 used on the park.

The cows have been back and have again proved a great attraction for all, this has been due to ensuring that water is available in the areas for them. (Apart from idiots damaging the water containers.)

The Council together with ourselves supported a local landscape gardener with his plans for a show garden at the RHS show at Tatton. The end result was that although he was unsuccessful in their competition the park was given the show garden and whilst there is still some work to be done it has been installed and next year, we should see the full benefits to all.

Gedling Heritage Project has been running since March and the park is a central point for a lot of the information and so we still have some new (information) display boards to go onto the park, Mosaics at the café entrance and features to be installed in the café to promote Gedling Heritage Groups across the entire borough.

### **Finally**

If you know of any organisations, groups or individuals who are interested in helping us out then please pass their details onto me or ask them to get in touch with myself.

This year we have seen significant contributions from:

- Nottinghamshire County Council
- Gedling Borough Councillors
- Gedling Village Co-Op
- Castle Rock Brewery and the Willowbrook
- Bloor homes gave us £250 worth of materials for the bird nesting platforms and also have provided £1500 for trees as compensations for the damaged hedge.

We also continued work on raising funds to support our activities for future developments. As you will see from the Treasurer's report, I feel that we have been extremely successful in this – but this is just the start of our efforts in raising funds to allow the development of the park. At this point I should like to express the thanks of the Trustees and Friends to all those organisations and businesses who have helped us both financially and materially.

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 – still need lots more volunteers please.....**

**Terry Lock, Chairman, Friends of Gedling Country Park**

## **APPENDIX III**

### **TREASURER'S ANNUAL REPORT**

#### **NICK BENEDEK**

The Friends of Gedling Country Park was formed on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2014 and this report is for our fourth financial year for the period from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018.

We are a UK registered charity number: 1167205.

#### **Key Events**

The group has had many fantastic donations and grants received during this year and a full list is included below. Most recently, we have been awarded a grant of £5,000 from the OneFamily Foundation for the enhancement of bird nesting and other wildlife habitats in the country park. This will be allocated to us as we incur the relevant expenditure, with £978 awarded to us so far and remainder during the first half of 2019.

Following on from the generous donations made from Co-op Local Community Fund in 2017, we have continued to receive further donations in 2018. The recipients of this fund are voted for by local members of the Co-op in Mapperley and Gedling and for 2018, we have received donations totalling £2,932, for which we are very grateful to both the Co-op and its members. This has been used to implement a new Nature Trail in the country park as well as contributing towards the cost of two new memorial garden benches (along with contributions from Gedling Borough Council).

In 2017, we were awarded a £18,425 grant from Nottinghamshire County Council from its Supporting Local Communities Fund and working in partnership with Gedling Borough Council in 2018, we used this grant to commission and install a piece of memorial artwork in the Gedling Country Park Memorial Garden to commemorate the many miners and others who lost their lives at the former Gedling Colliery.

#### **Trustee Thanks**

The ability to complete and pay memberships online via our web site<sup>1</sup> has resulted in not only regular memberships and renewals, but also a significant number of donations from both individuals and organisations. For these, the Trustees are grateful and would like to thank those involved – as well as all the other people and organisations who have contributed towards the success of the Friends group.

Here is the list of organisations who have generously supported the Group this year (in alphabetical order):

- Bloor Homes (donation of multiple trees for planting in the park and fittings for nesting platforms)
- Brownies (2nd Arnold, St. Marys)
- Co-operative Group Limited
- The Embroiderers' Guild Nottinghamshire Branch
- Gedling Borough Council and its Councillors
- Nottingham City Council Catering Services (who operates Cafe 1899 in the park and offers a 10% discount for all FGCP members)
- Nottinghamshire County Council
- Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gedlingcountrypark.org.uk/donate-or-join.html>

- OneFamily Foundation

And here is the list of individuals who have also generously supported the Group this year (in alphabetical order):

- Bob and Ann Douglas
- Councillor Gary Gregory
- Councillor Michael Payne
- Ian Sturgess
- David Williams

We would also like to thank those people who ticked the Gift Aid box when making membership payments or donations. This will allow us to claim from HMRC an extra 25% on these amounts.

### Income Received

The income received for the period from January 2018 to December 2018 (including the aforementioned donations and memberships) was as follows:

Category	Amount	Description
<b>Donations</b>	£3,596	Donations from various individuals and organisations listed above, and £72 in cash collection buckets in the park.
<b>Grants</b>	£19,403	£18,425 grant from Nottinghamshire County Council's Supporting Local Communities Fund for the installation of the memorial garden artwork. The first payment of £978 from the OneFamily Foundation for the enhancement of bird nesting habitats.
<b>Membership Fees</b>	£765	Membership fees taken for individual and family membership.
<b>Sale of Honey</b>	£188	Sales of honey from FGCP bee hives.
<b>Fund Raising Events</b>	£104	Monies raised from various fund-raising activities, including the sale of event mugs (£75) and multiple wildlife walks we held in the park.
<b>Calendar Sales</b>	£43	Residual sales of the FGCP 2018 calendar (containing photos from our 2017 photography competition).
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£24,099</b>	

### Expenditure

For the same period, expenditure was as follows:

	Amount	Description
<b>Grounds Maintenance/Development</b>	£25,554	Use of the grants and donations from Nottinghamshire County Council's Supporting Local Communities Fund and the Co-op Local Community Fund and others to purchase and install (in partnership with Gedling Borough Council), the memorial garden artwork, two memorial garden benches and interpretation board, and the memorial garden beds, flowers, trees and shrubs. The installation of new bird feeders, the creation of a new lagoon bird nesting island, and repairs to the lagoon overflow weir and outlet pipes. Also, in partnership with Gedling Borough Council, the installation of a new nature trail.

<b>Plants/Trees/Seeds</b>	£769	In addition to the installation of the memorial garden and its trees, flowers and shrubs included above, we planted various semi-mature trees around the park and collections of wild flower seeds.
<b>Equipment</b>	£473	The purchase of a bee hive vaporiser, and various gardening equipment.
<b>Marketing, Communications and Web</b>	£327	Web site hosting and domain charge, new membership cards, stamps and printing costs for membership forms, photo competition posters, laminate survey and walk posters.
<b>Insurance</b>	£235	Provision of public liability and personal accident insurance (replaced mid-year with new policy providing trustee, finance, libel and slander protection).
<b>Travel/Delivery Costs</b>	£118	Delivery costs for collection of trees and attendance at various council and heritage meetings plus mini-bus hire for memorial garden opening event.
<b>Finance Charges</b>	£106	Bank service charges from Unity Bank and transaction fees from PayPal.
<b>Fund Raising and Volunteer Days</b>	£49	Costs associated with the fund-raising events and volunteer days, including refreshments.
<b>Forums and Event Attendance</b>	£40	Membership fee for Greenwood Community Forum and stand cost at Gedling Gala (July 2018).
<b>Honey Making Costs</b>	£27	Maintenance of underfloor bee hive entrance.
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£27,698</b>	

### Bank Reconciliation

The opening balance as of 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018 was £9,001.30 (comprising of £8,708.98 held at Unity bank, £50.32 held with PayPal and £242.00 of cash holdings).

Total income for 2018 was £24,098.66 and total expenditure was £27,698.14.

The closing balance as of 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018 was £5,401.82 (comprising of £4,994.29 held at Unity bank, £407.53 held with PayPal and no cash holdings).

**Nick Benedek, Treasurer, Friends of Gedling Country Park 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018**

## APPENDIX IV

### ENVIRONMENT ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2018 BRIAN OSBORNE

I have adopted a slightly different format for our third yearly report and would like to commence with a request for help. We have received help from new volunteers for 2018, mainly in the recording of the Park Butterflies and many thanks are offered to them, however we desperately require assistance for the recording and management of the Environmental Aspects of the Park. Please volunteer if you can assist with the collating of data, observational work, recording, monitoring etc.

Unfortunately, the Trustees work is more and more taken up with various issues facing the Park's environment and continuously monitoring any threats to habitats requires help. No previous knowledge is required just a commitment to the Country Parks varied wildlife habitats. If you can help in any manner, please contact The Friends of Gedling Country Park Website.

Well what a year 2018 has been, completely out of synchronization with normal seasonality and changes to a more Mediterranean like climate from late spring onwards. This has resulted in some interesting observations and potential changes to the Country Parks flora and fauna. Thanks to Gedling Borough Council the Country Park at last received Local Nature Reserve (LNR) status. LNR's are places with wildlife or geological reserves that are of special interest locally and offer people opportunities to observe, study and enjoy wildlife whilst at the same time protecting it from damage or disturbance. Restricted public access can be applied to areas if visitors could cause damage to the environment. Hopefully this will make people more aware of the environmental value of our Country Park.

#### **THE LAGOONS**

Survey work on the Parks Lagoons by Nottingham Trent University and The Friends Group Volunteers has now been collated and written up as a student dissertation. Some interesting information was collected, and a summary will be made available to the members in early 2019.

Work commenced on the refurbishment of the Country Park's lagoons during 2018 and as to date the majority of the planned works have been successfully completed. Water is critically important to wildlife within the Country Park and this has been markedly obvious during the drought periods of this year, with many areas completely drying. Gedling Country Park (GCP) contains six lagoons of various sizes and water holding capacity. Currently the nomenclature for these lagoons is as follows:- Lagoon 1 is situated at the centre of the park and north of the stone recording the paths opening. Lagoon 2 is west of the Memorial Garden and at present only has water during short, mainly winter, periods. Lagoon 3 is the western of the two lagoons alongside the southern boundary. Lagoon 4 is the eastern of the two lagoons alongside the southern and the largest by area. Lagoon 5 is in the main valley near to the parks western end and regularly dries during the summer. Lagoon 6 is in the north –eastern corner of the park, quite small and very steep sided and dangerous! The Friends Group have surveyed and monitored lagoons 1 – 5 and have formulated plans for their preservation and for improvements for wildlife preservation. Aside from the invasion of the New Zealand Pigmy Weed (*Crassula helmsii*) and seasonal drying the major threat to all the lagoons is the Common Reed *Phragmites australis* and Bulrush *Typha latifolia* both of these are quite aggressive plants that invade shallow water causing it to silt up. Whilst both are important aspects of the environment if they are not managed all the lagoons will silt up, and contain little if any water, within the next five years. With GBC we experimented with a trial in 2017 to control the spread of both species by raising water levels. This was registered successful and this year we have installed weirs to raise the levels of Lagoons 3 & 4. These at first appeared simple projects but became set with problems and difficulties ranging from seeking permissions, negotiating with the Gedling Access Road constructors, finding an unrecorded drainage pipe leaking water from Lagoon 4 and having to seal and secure this and then no rain for months to fill them both and test the works success. An island was also created within Lagoon 4 and its total, hopefully permanent, water area increased by

approximately 50%. The purpose of the island is to provide more protected nesting sites for the aquatic birds. We have also purchased two Tern Rafts for lagoons 3 & 4, these will be installed early 2019 and hopefully will encourage these birds to nest within GCP. Rafts for Ducks/Moorhens/Coots etc and duck pole nests will also be installed during early 2019. At present (14<sup>th</sup> December) Lagoon 4 has filled, the island now showing, and Lagoon 3 is nearing total planned levels. More reed removal needs to be carried out this winter in Lagoon 1 and we have to find the cause of leakage from Lagoon 2 and seal it to prevent water loss. Lagoon 5 is a shallow temporary Lagoon and of interest as it acts as a major Smooth Newt *Triturus vulgaris* breeding site. In 2017 it dried completely during the summer, however small newts and larvae were recorded at all times when water was present leading to the question did they bury in the mud or were they part of an unusually late breeding? During 2018 the lagoon dried for over 4 months and we will be carrying out some pond sweeps this winter to record any fauna present (results will be forwarded to Members). Also, during 2018, due to drying out, we were able to remove all the invasive Bullrushes *Typha latifolia* from this lagoon. For the future we are currently costing and asking advice regarding suitable locations to construct a Sand Martin *Riparia riparia* nesting site with viewing hide near the Lagoons within the Country Park.

**Mammals:-** No new mammal species have been recorded within the Park during 2018. Unfortunately, the Rabbit *Oryctolagus cuniculus* population has shown symptoms of Mixomatosis a highly contagious and usually fatal disease. Luckily the species can show a resistance to the virus as they are a major food source to buzzards *Buteo buteo*, foxes *Vulpes vulpes*, stoats *Mustela erminea* (all present within the Park) and other predators.

**Butterflies and Moths:-** Luckily we have had some new volunteers to carry out butterfly surveys for 2018 the results of which have yet to be analysed but indications are of a strong sustained Country Park population. We have lost one small Dingy Skipper *Erynnis tages* site, at the extreme south-eastern corner of the Park, due to work on the Gedling Access Road. Hopefully we will have a reclaimed larger site available for this species at the road's completion. Nationally it has been reported that the Speckled Wood *Pararge aegeria* has decreased throughout the UK during 2018, the Country Park shows no significant decline in this species.

**Birds:-** Mark Tyler has thankfully kept records of bird sighting throughout the Country Park during 2018. Hopefully we are reaching the stage where we can analyse these records for the last few years and determine more accurately the state of the Avifauna within the Park on a yearly basis. It was pleasing to note a return of the Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus* during this year. With the co-operation of GBC, it has been arranged for scrub clearance to be initiated throughout the grassland during 2019 this will considerably enhance the environment for ground nesting birds.

**Trees:-** A very stressful year! Due to the un-predictable summer dry spell we lost some of the trees we planted along the Northern Country Park boundary in early Spring, as a result we now have adopted the policy of only planting trees in the Autumn months (November, December). Many species, notably Silver Birch *Betula pendula* and Alder *Alnus glutinosa* showed signs of extreme stress during the summer and looked to be dying in many cases. These however are extremely resilient species and almost certainly will recover with few if any dying, in fact many showed leaf re-emergence later in the Autumn. We have successfully planted some Hornbeam *Carpinus betulus* throughout the Country Park during 2018 including some fastigiated forms of the species. More plantings of the shrubs Purging Buckthorn *Rhamnus cathartica* an excellent food for Brimstone *Gonepteryx rhamni* butterflies and Common Hazel *Corylus avellana* food for many mammals (including humans) and birds.

**Amphibians and Reptiles:-** Common Frogs *Rana temporaria* and Common Toads *Bufo bufo* reproduced in great numbers in 2018 it will be interesting to record any indications of the survival rate due to the long dry Summer. We have left piles of rotting vegetation at waterside sites within the Country Park to encourage Grass Snake *Natrix Helvetica* to breed.

**Bees:-** The current policy on beekeeping within the Country Park is to create a more sheltered secure site as hives within the Solar Farm suffer from detrimental weather conditions. Hopefully a solution will be found for 2019.

We would like to thank Councillors John Clarke, Leader of the Council; Michael Payne, Deputy Leader; Gary Gregory, Responsible for Community Development and Jenny Hollingsworth, Responsible for Growth and Regeneration for their support throughout the year.

In conclusion we wish to thank all our volunteers from 2018 and hopefully wish you will continue to support us in 2019. Thanks to both L'Oréal and Price Waterhouse for arranging company work days. We really value your contribution and hope your staff will visit us this winter to see the now visible results of their work. We wish everyone a very merry and enjoyable Christmas, a happy New Year and all health, happiness and fitness for more work in 2019!

Brian Osborne  
Trustee  
Friends of Gedling Country Park

DRAFT