



Friends of The Rising Sun Country Park

Minutes of the Meeting held on 13 September 2024

Present: Claire Partleton (Chair), Keith Taylor (Secretary), Jan Casson, Janet Weatherburn, Vivien Fenn-Webber, Amanda Williams, Martyn Huttly, Chris Tallack, (North Tyneside Council), Rev. Dr Rae Caro.

Apologies: Eric Styan (Treasurer); Pixie Phelan, Elaine Elliott, Stephen Gibbinson and Amanda Bennett (all NTC), ASDA Community Champions.

After the introductions and apologies, the Minutes of the August meeting were formally accepted.

The following Action Points were then discussed;

VODA Policies: We've been discussing the idea of introducing a Budget for several months now. Amanda will be meeting with Eric in October to agree on how we take this forward. **(AP 1).**

Water Butt for the barbeque area: This has now been installed. Thanks go to Eric for sorting this out.

Bulb Planting: The NTC bulb order has been submitted and the current plan is to do the planting in the October half-term period, as the NTC Education Team are looking to organise a public event where the Friends' group will be able to participate. **(AP 2).** Claire explained that the Woodland Trust are running a programme whereby they are offering free trees to schools and community groups. The Friends' Group meets the criteria, so we can consider an application when a suitable area can be identified by NTC park team. **(AP 3).** It's possible that they will go into the Plantation Wood (behind ASDA), as this area will shortly be cleared of fallen and dead trees. The Contractor appointed to carry out the storm damage and tree thinning works have also suggested they will be donating some new trees this area.

We will be discussing the **Wildlife Garden and the Sand-Pit area** at the October meeting, given that the NTC staff with responsibility were unable to attend this meeting. **(AP 4).** It was noted that some debris had got into the sand pit, as the cover had not been put in place.

It was agreed at the previous meeting that if the **plaque for the Anne Frank tree** could not be found, the Friends would purchase a replacement. We have a photo of the original plaque, so we can copy the appropriate wording, however before we proceed, Claire will speak to Stephen. **(AP 5).** It is hoped that we should have this in place in time for Holocaust Memorial Day (January). In view of current events, it was agreed that when the new plaque is acquired, installing it should be a low-key event.

Treasurer's Report

At the NTC Summer event, Linda from Zest Sports Massage had kindly donated £25.00. We've had donations of just over £53.00 from the duck food boxes and the allotment table, with

£21.97 spent on bird and duck food. Currently we have £4,540.56 in the bank and cash of £77.74.

Update from North Tyneside Council

The main topic of discussion was the Summer Event on 14 August. Elaine would like to thank everyone involved, who contributed to what was a successful day, which generated a lot of very positive feedback. A committee member was aware of some negative comments that had been made in the community; the advert for the NTC run events in the 'Our North Tyneside' magazine had stated that all NTC events were free, which was obviously not the case for the Rising Sun Festival. NTC Park staff reported being aware of the issue but were not involved with magazine contents; it is something to pre-empt before next year's event. The Nature books which were to have been available as prizes on the day were overlooked and can be used at future events.

Forthcoming Events:

The next **Nature Walk** is on 19 September, although we are not using Eventbrite this month. The next **Litter-Pick** is taking place on 30 September.

Plans are already under way for the **Christmas Fayre**, which is scheduled for Saturday 30 November, and, once again, volunteers will be sought. The Friends' Group has requested a small table to enable us to sell our calendars, and possibly our greetings cards. Please let Elaine know if you are available to help on the day.

Other Business

In order to try and take some of the pressure off Claire, and to ensure that we can function as a group when she is not available, Keith will sort out his Gmail address, to help speed up the distribution of meeting notes, and important messages. **(AP 6)**. Vivien kindly offered to assist, should this be necessary.

Claire had contacted the three new **Councillors** for Battle Hill ward last month, to make them aware of the Group. Julie Cruddas has been in touch to say she may be able to attend the October meeting. Responses are awaited from the other two.

Claire has been contacted by Lynn Elcoat, a Social Prescribing Mental Health and Wellbeing Coach, to make us aware of an initiative called **Green Social Prescribing**, which aims to help people with their mental wellbeing and physical health by guiding them towards nature-based activities. If we are interested, our Group can be added to their list. Claire will ask for more information and report back. **(AP 7)**. It was agreed that if we proceed, it would be useful for us to be given some general awareness of Mental Health issues, so that we might have a better understanding of potential issues.

Re-wilding is currently receiving quite a lot of attention and the Grow and Eat group are offering training. Claire, Amanda and Janet will make further enquiries and report back in due course. **(AP 8)**.

It has been suggested that we could have a **bee border** in the centre grounds, but in view of the amount of other work we are likely to be getting involved in, such as the Wildlife Garden, and the fact that the presence of bees anywhere near the café would be likely to annoy people eating outdoors, it was agreed that this was not something we could take forward at the moment.

It was agreed that we should continue using the **Planning Document** and this will become a regular item on the agenda, starting in October.

The tender for the **Rising Sun Farm** was re-advertised on 12 August; the deadline for submitting all relevant documents is 18 October.

The next meeting will take place on 11 October 2024.