

Welcome to another edition of the Friends of Windsor Open Space Newsletter.

Committee News

A new Spring begins, and along with the welcome change of seasons, there are a few changes to the Committee to announce including some new members, starting with a new Chair, as Dennis Pepper stands down to pursue other interests.

Although he is retiring from the organisational work involved, Dennis is very happy to assist in volunteering and arranging practical work on the Open Space for the necessary tasks needed in maintaining the tranquil nature of the Open Space.



It was proposed that Dennis, who had helped to set up FoWOS, should now become Honorary President, and Ann Pepper would become an Honorary Member.

We all thank Dennis and Ann for all the hard work and effort they have given to running FoWOS over the years.

The new Chair of the Committee is Ruth Geiger. Other positions are as follows:

Lilian Verner Bonds was happy to continue with Publicity and Recruitment, while Julia Daniels remains as Treasurer. New member Donald Lyven will be responsible for producing the Newsletter (all news contributions welcome) and has set up and will monitor the new [@FofWOS](#) Twitter account. He will also be Minute taker.

Other new members to the Committee are Bob Hollweg and Charlotte Chapman. Responsibility for Membership has still to be arranged.

There will be no membership fees due until October 2015 but we are relying on donations to carry us through until then. All donations please, to be sent to Julia Daniels, 25 Village Road, N3 1TL.

Work Matters by Dennis Pepper

Many changes are taking place not least in the way in which Barnet Council and its Greenspaces team works with voluntary organisations such as ours. Details have yet to be finalised but generally it looks as if new voluntary organizations will be set up, some quite large and many not directly connected with the green environment though what they want to do may well affect us.

Some funding will be available from the Council but larger voluntary groups wishing to undertake major projects will be expected to seek funding from outside the Council. The Council will help them to do this.

What will happen to Greenspaces is still uncertain.

However, some changes have already started. Last year the Council announced three 'Area Funds' (one for each parliamentary constituency). These were for modest Community enhancing projects, with no award exceeding £10,000.

FoWOS applied for £4,500 to do three things:

1. 'Gap up' the hedge at the Windsor Road turnaround and finish the bramble cutting and hedge improvement between Windsor Road and Village Road.
2. Create a wildflower meadow in the area between the footpath and the brook opposite the widest part of the Open Space. This would include removing some windblown trees and replacing them with four new trees.
3. And finishing the pond/scrape to take floodwater and excessive rain water away from the footpath.

To an extent these are all ongoing work that has been held up for various reasons; usually waiting for Greenspaces to do what they say they will do.

Bureaucracy proliferates and conditions are imposed, but on January 15th at a Finchley and Golders Green Area Committee, our application was approved by a panel of Councillors and we have diligently started work (though the grant has yet to appear). The Council's funding body doesn't seem to understand that spring will not wait; we needed to get things moving, whips planted etc., before the heat of summer.

You may have noticed that we have 'gapped up' the hedge at the end of Windsor Road and done a little new planting along the new hedge line. We have yet to start on removing the remaining brambles from this section, and keeping them down from now on.



The wildflower area has created its own problems. Greenspaces' assurances that they would prepare the land for us have not been realised and



we are now looking for alternative ways of doing this on highly compacted land. The seeds should be planted before the end of the month so things are beginning to look a little desperate. Application to remove the windblown trees has to go through a long process and it is unlikely they will be removed - even if we do get permission - before the summer.

We can't begin to work on the pond/scrape area while it is full of water, so that too is a summer job. The scrape area should be extended, the informal footpath restored, and the run-off channels should be redesigned. Log piles ('ecopiles') will be created and marginals that will flourish in these conditions will be planted. Here too we are to some extent dependent on Greenspaces, who promised to do the heavy digging' two years ago now.

As you all know, Windsor Open Space is both a very pleasant place to be and a site of borough importance for nature conservation. These projects will increase our enjoyment and enhance wildlife. BUT . . .

But the work has to be done, and that can't be left entirely to the Committee. I want to spend more of my time on these practical matters but we do need Friends who are willing to turn out from time to time and get their hands dirty helping to create these improvements - and others too.

I would like to be able to call on a dozen or so Friends who are willing to turn out from time to time on a Saturday or Sunday afternoon to be involved in this practical work. That does not mean every weekend, nor does it mean everybody comes along every time but I am asking for volunteers to help. - **Dennis**

Other matters

We have put up half-a-dozen bird nesting boxes and now look forward to seeing whether there are any takers, blue tits and great tits especially.



While we were putting up the boxes, at the end of February, we noticed a disturbance in the pond/scrape: a couple of dozen mating frogs were very active. By the afternoon they had gone, but there is now a lot of frogspawn.

A week ago Ruth bought a hundred snowdrops 'in the green' and these have now been planted on the brook side of the Open Space opposite the Children's Play Area. We are in the process of creating of a wildflower meadow just beyond the bridge at Holders Hill.



And on a less happy note, motor cyclists have been observed cutting across from Holders Hill Road to Hendon Avenue. If you see anyone do this, please try to take the registration number and report it to the police (non-emergency number is 101)

That's all for this edition. Please consider volunteering to help maintain this special place.
Donald Lyven - editor.

Events for the diary 2015:

Sunday 29th March 10am

Flower Walk with Mo Arora, meet at Holders Hill Bridge

Sunday 19th April 10am

Walk with Jeremy Galton, bring binoculars if you have them?

Meet at Holders Hill Bridge

Sunday 26th April 4.30am

Dawn Chorus with Jeremy Galton

Meet at Holders Hill Bridge

Saturday 13th June 8pm

Mid-Summer Gathering, Windsor Open Space, top of the hill

Wednesday 28th October 8-10pm

AGM at the Blue Beetle, Hendon Lane, N3

Please contact the editor Donald Lyven, on 0772 774 8209 or email donaldelyven@aol.com with any news or items for the newsletter.

