

Friends of Sharphill Wood

Founded 22 January 2008, Third Annual Report

May 2011

This is the third annual report of the Friends of Sharphill Wood (FoSW) Group.

In 2010/11 the Group met 10 times. At April 2011 there were 68 Friends.

The third Annual General Meeting on 11 May 2010 elected Richard Steer (Chair), Ruth Walker (Vice Chair), Chrissie Wells (Treasurer) and Bill Logan (Secretary). Ruth Walker was appointed Working Party Coordinator.

The two most significant events during the year were the announcement that conditional planning permission for building on land surrounding Sharphill Wood had been granted and, on a far more positive note, Local Nature Reserve (LNR) status was bestowed on the wood by Rushcliffe Borough Council (RBC).

With planning permission granted, the building developers must begin construction no later than 5 July 2011. The Group considered the draft Green Infrastructure Biodiversity Management Plan (GIBMP) prepared as part of the mitigating proposals for the development and identified provision of a bike trail and allotments away from the wood, together with guarantees of protection of the community park from further development and extending the aims of FoSW to the community park as issues we want to pursue with the developers. Discussions with the developers' environmental consultants, fpcr, RBC and Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust (NWT) are expected later in 2010.

The Group were delighted Sharphill Wood was formally designated as a LNR on 28 January 2010. LNR status gives protection against damaging operations. It also has protection against development on and around it. Plans are under way to officially open the LNR in the summer of 2010 with events and activities for local children to the fore.

There have been (9) work parties during the year well supported by members of the Group. Work on the wood has included clearing out chicken wire, mapping out proposed nature trails, clearing sycamores, coppicing hawthorns and marking out the paths for wood chipping. Plans for a pond in the wood were abandoned in favour of re-routing the main path around standing water created by unauthorised digging. In addition members conducted fungi and bat surveys as well as visiting Sherwood Forest for ideas about marking out the nature trails and suitable signage.

Other notable activities included a meeting with RBC officers, facilitated by Councillor Rod Jones, to discuss the planning permission, the GIBMP, finance,

anti-social behaviour in the wood, a tree survey and vehicular access. These issues continue to be pursued with RBC. Leaflet holders, generously provided by Collins Cash & Carry, were installed on the entrance signs and have proved a popular means of distributing our leaflet. With thanks to Guy Roberts, work continues on developing the website and improving access.

This year we covered all our costs¹ and thanks are due, to: -

- S. Collins & Co Ltd. who funded 3 Perspex leaflet holders for the Wood and for 5,000 new leaflets
- Notts. County Council, whose Councillors agreed to pay for materials to carry out work on the paths
- Rushcliffe Borough Council who paid for our membership and insurance, and are also considering paying for the educational signage subject to acceptable quotes and available funds
- Rushcliffe Borough Councillors who paid for 3 Billhooks

A team led by Phil Miller attended the Radcliffe on Trent Cricket Club Car Boot sale twice and raised funds for the Group to form part of the reserves. Please see the monthly statements for individual sums donated. We started the year with a bank balance of £357.05 and as at 31st March we have disposable income of £175.27. There are several promising sources of funding for when the Group decides to apply for project funding, and several members have undergone training in funding organised by NWT and carried out by RBC. Another consideration is identifying what the Developers are prepared to fund to avoid duplication of effort.

The Group would once again like to thank The NWT, especially Gaynor Jones-Jenkins, Andy Lowe, Gary Cragg and Lynn Victor, Paul Phillips of Rushcliffe Borough Council and Gordon Dyne of the South Notts Group for their continued advice and support. We would also thank Su Collins for the use of her lounge for our regular meetings.

Richard Steer (Acting Chair), Chrissie Wells (Treasurer), Ruth Walker (Working Party Coordinator) and Bill Logan (Secretary)

¹ Please see monthly statements for details of amounts and donors