

Friends of Sharphill Wood

First Annual Report

May 2009

This is the first annual report of the Friends of Sharphill Wood Group founded at an inaugural meeting on 22 January 2008.

Since the inaugural meeting the Group met 14 times. At April 2009 there were 47 Friends.

The first Annual General Meeting on 13 May 2008 elected Kate Troy (Chair), Stuart Cooke (Vice Chair), Chrissie Wells (Treasurer) and Bill Logan (Secretary). Ruth Walker was appointed Working Party Coordinator.

Key decisions during the year were the adoption of a Group Constitution and Management Plan. Contacts have been made with local schools and other children's organisations for future involvement in activities.

Major developments were the designation of the site as a Nature Reserve (Pending) and the creation of rights of way to access the wood. Guy Roberts developed the Group's website www.sharphillwood.org. A Facebook site had also been set up. Ruth Walker prepared a leaflet for distribution describing the objectives of the Group, which has now gone to the printers.

Less encouraging developments have been the re-submission for planning permission around the wood, which had gone to a Planning Appeal to which the Group made objections. There was also an increase in the use of the wood for biking and other anti-social activities, which are damaging the environment and which the Group are seeking help from Rushcliffe Borough Council to discourage.

There have been seven work parties since September; over twenty members of the Group have attended one or more work party. Work on the wood has included erecting three ladder board signs at the entrances to the wood, planting around 1000 whips along the eastern and western hedgerows to start to shore up gaps, coppicing sycamores, repairing paths and spreading wood chip along particularly muddy areas, erecting 29 bird boxes (built by Richard Steer and Guy Roberts), removing old wire fencing and litter picking. In addition, bird and butterfly surveys were carried out last spring / summer, a fungi survey was carried out in September, a winter tree ID session was held in December, a bird song ID session was held this April and a further bird survey is being carried out this spring / summer.

During the year generous donations were received with much thanks from Collins Cash & Carry (£500 via Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust), Rushcliffe Borough Council (£250), Councillor Rod Jones (£180 Community Fund) and John Butler £50. Grants were also received from BCTV (£120, The Chestnut Fund) and The South Notts Group (£152.62). With these funds the Group was able to cover our administration costs and purchase a bat detector and tool trolley leaving a balance of £357.05. The Group made a start to prioritise what actions it wants to take, and investigate how that can be funded sustainably and this will be pursued at future meetings.

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

Kate Troy (Chair), Chrissie Wells (Treasurer), Ruth Walker (Working Party Coordinator) and Bill Logan (Secretary)