**CHAIR’S REPORT**

**AGM of FRIENDS OF PARK WOOD**

**22nd Feb 2017**

Introduction

This is the fourth Chairs Report that I have given. It continues to be a great pleasure to be FoPW's Chair.

It has been another good year for Friends of Park Wood. We have held six work parties, four educational events, one social event and six meetings.

We continue to work on the new path around the landslip.

Achievements

The Work Party has collected 51 bags of rubbish and all sorts of miscellaneous large stuff like duvets, furniture, car tyres, etc.. We have marked out the route for the new path around the landslip and started laying aggregate.

On 31st March and 15th May Mark Doveston from Dove Nature conducted two Dawn Chorus Bird Walks.

On 24th April yours truly gave a Tree ID tour.

On 9th October Archie McAdam conducted a Fungus Foray. 43 different species of fungi were found. The information gathered goes into a database covering the whole mid-Yorkshire region.

On 22nd and 24th January Chris Atkinson from Pennine Prospects led two Woodland Heritage Surveys in Park Wood. We found evidence of buildings, a charcoal burner, ancient paths, traditional woodland management techniques and quarrying.

On 7th August the storyteller Clive Nutton was the main attraction at our Family Day that took place at the picnic area within the wood. Under a parachute tent people of all ages enjoyed stories, campfire and cake. BANDAG were extremely gracious that day.

We have held six meetings at Long Lee Village Hall. Everyone is welcome to these. We usually go to Dickie Bird's pub afterwards for Any Other Beer.

This year we are proud to have been associated with events run by Get Out More, Big Local, Cliffe Castle Park Conservation Group and Green Spaces Network.

Get Out More runs its Outdoor Adventure Clubs for 9-15 year olds on the first Saturday of the month in Park Wood. I cannot recommend Get Out More highly enough for its values and professionalism.

Big Local organised a Winter Celebration in Park Wood on 18th December. Archery, campfires, crafts and wild cooking all took place in different parts of the wood.

Cliffe Castle Park Conservation Group in conjunction with Green Spaces Network on 12th June organised a walk that showcased four of Keighley's most scenic and historic features including Park Wood (the other three were Redcar Tarn, Cliffe Castle and East Riddlesden Hall).

Challenges

We have a number of challenges to look forward to this coming year.

The Work Party needs to finish laying aggregate on the new path and we need quality signage to say why we are doing as well as what we are doing. Remember: the old path could subside all the way down the cliff to the rifle range at any minute, especially after prolonged rain.

We need to put up our eight new bird-boxes (which we will have to clean out every year).

We need to divvy out our tools so that no one person is left with the problem of storing them all.

Last but not least, we need to keep up our good humour in the face of vandalism and litter.

FoPW needs to help Long Lee Village Hall through its financial crisis in any way we can. We need to keep to our offers to pay an increased hire charge for our use of the Hall, to support any 'Save our Hall' campaign, and to share any ideas we may have that could help. For example, the local post office is closing so could the Hall become the post office for two days a week? If the worst comes to the worst, where else could FoPW go to have our meetings that is anywhere near as good?

My pet idea: I would love for people to be able to refer to locations in the wood, landmarks, by a name that is in common currency. How can we find out what names people use already? If we have to invent a new name, e.g. for the new glade we have created, how can we root its name in the past and in the landscape so that it 'takes'. How can we come up with new names without killing each other? Will alcohol help or hinder the process?

Thank you

First of all I would like to thank the Committee: France-Leigh, Richard, Liz, Evelyn, Ken and Nina for jobs they do and the responsibilities they carry. Secondly I would like to thank our members, especially the 'usual suspects' who turn out regularly for our work parties and meetings. We are collectively a positive bunch of people who I like to be with. Thirdly I would like to thank non-members, our 'invisible friends', who take an interest in us through visiting our website and facebook page - we are encouraged by your interest!

Thank you to Colin Whitfield and the Trees and Woodlands section of the Council. All our collected rubbish is taken away promptly. Fences for the purpose of Public Health are erected. Equipment and materials are given to us. Dangerous branches are sawed down. Gifts are passed on to us. Advice is given. All these are performed by Colin and the Trees and Woodlands Section of the Council.

Thank you to Axial Pest Control for their gift of eight well-made bird boxes to suit woodpecker, great tits, blue tits and robins.

Thank you to Get Out More for their donations. It is a privilege to share the wood with people like you.

Conclusion

As I say it has been another good year for us. I look forward to the coming year.

Eric Yaffey

Chair

20/02/2017