

# **MINUTES: FRIENDS OF BECKETT PARK EIGHTH AGM**

**9<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2024 (by zoom)**

<p><b><u>Attendees</u></b></p> <p>Margaret Crowe (Chair/Treasurer) Andrew Pomeroy (Vice Chair) Helen Kirk Martina Rosenberg Jemma Pendlebury Cllr Jools Heselwood Thuja Phillips (LCC Parks) Lewis Hemingway</p>	<p><b><u>Apologies</u></b></p> <p>Sadie Binns (Secretary) Cllr Emma Flint Cllr Izaak Wilson Helen Gee Paul Marchant</p>
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## **1. WELCOME TO OUR EIGHTH AGM**

Margaret welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave details of the apologies. The minutes from the last AGM were approved.

## **2. CHAIR'S REPORT**

Margaret gave her report, copy below:

Thank you for attending our AGM or indeed reading this report.

It has been a tricky time since the last AGM. Constant rain over the winter months meant that the Park was frequently waterlogged and certainly made some of our planting and other projects more difficult...see more in Andrew's Park Management Report....

We are lucky to have such a great green space, which we as Friends work hard to keep it at its best and it takes efforts from all quarters to achieve this...

So thanks:

- To our Councillors (past and present) for their support in all that we do
- To Parks and Countryside for their maintenance and support, especially as they continue to be so stretched
- To our volunteers...on work days...the maintenance team who meet so often...to the litter pickers
- To the Committee...small in numbers but the work that is done is huge and appreciated...
- To all that help with the annual concert and picnic, including the local churches who asked to be involved in 2019 and have offered their help and support since. We have a date for 2024 – 23rd June 2024 and we have Bassa Bassa again by popular demand. Thanks again to our Councillors for supporting this event.

Why not get involved?

We are actively looking to redevelop the skatepark and are looking at a possible kiddies cycle track. We have had interest from Residents and Park users to bring this to fruition. It has taken time to get suitable designs and funding and we are working hard to achieve this. The project was put on hold following Covid and the price escalations that followed. We are still pursuing this goal.....and talking of goals, we are

looking to provide some goal posts and netting for the younger children near to the play area. This should be an affordable project, we hope!!

We want more benches

We want to improve areas for Park users to chat and socialise.....

We would love to hear from you if you would like to be involved...either to join the Committee or just to be involved in specific projects such as the Saturday work parties or our picnic.

### 3. **TREASURER'S REPORT**

Margaret gave her Treasurer's Report

The Final Accounts may be viewed on our website at [www.beckettspark.org.uk/documents](http://www.beckettspark.org.uk/documents)

As there was no AGM last year the accounts show figures for two years.

As can be seen from the Financial Report, on 31 March 2024 we had cash at the bank of £2099.

Most of our income came from the summer picnics in 2022 and 2023, and sponsorship for trees, benches and nest boxes. Our Councillors paid us £340 and £150 from their MICE Monies, for bulbs and fencing for the pond.

Most of our expenditure went on trees, picnic costs, insurance, and website.

We continue to look into different funding opportunities and fundraising ideas to ensure that our fixed costs can be covered.

### 4. **APPROVAL OF THE ACCOUNTS**

The accounts were approved by Helen and seconded by Andrew.

### 5. **PARK MANAGEMENT REPORT**

Andrew gave his Park Management Report to the group. Extracts below, full report on our website at [www.beckettspark.org.uk/documents](http://www.beckettspark.org.uk/documents)

**COUNCIL FINANCES** Like other local authorities, the Council's resources are very stretched. In Beckett Park they cut the grass, empty litter bins, fell dangerous trees, and maintain the playground. For almost everything else – tree and bulb planting, bench provision, woodland management, path clearance, graffiti removal, litter picking, etc. – the Friends volunteer to do the work, raising funds as required.

**POND** We now have permission to create a pond in the copse north of the playground. Our Saturday team are constructing a 'dead hedge' and fence to limit unwanted access. We will then dig out a pond to attract amphibians and other wildlife. We're grateful to councillors Izaak Wilson, Emma Flint and Jools Heselwood for giving MICE money towards the cost of fencing. We hope to move on to the creation of a second pond on the north-west corner of the western copse.

**BULBS** The park is now a picture with all the daffodils and crocuses. Last Autumn we planted crocuses, snowdrops, native daffodils, and aconites, which are now emerging and should increase year by year. Many thanks to our Ward Councillors for funding the bulbs.

**CHERRY TREES** In the last few years we've planted many cherries and other ornamental trees along the main path. These are promising to provide a spectacular display in the coming weeks.

**BEE HOTELS** We've put up a cluster of bee hotels near the notice boards (see Google Earth image). These should be used by Red Mason bees (they're docile, short-lived and harmless!) in April and May.

**DYING TREES** Due to climate change and old age we've been losing more mature parkland trees. The latest was the huge 250-year-old beech at the top corner of the meadow which fell in October (see Google Earth image). As these mature trees die we always replace with young trees.

**NEW WOODLAND** The new woodland planted two winters near Queenswood Road ago is now beginning to get established.

**ORCHARD** We've planted a small orchard in the south-east corner of the meadow. When the apple trees are established they will provide fruit for anyone to pick. (Thuja offered to forward contact details for Alan from Fruitworks who are looking for suitable parks for new orchards).

**WET GROUND AND DRAINAGE** Winters are getting wetter, and water from springs and saturated ground flows across the main path and onto Queenswood Road, creating a hazard in frosty weather (see Google Earth image). We've asked the Council to look into solutions. (Thuja advised that the Flood Risk team have visited the park, and that Richard Hern may meet with us to discuss previous remedial work).

**SPONSORED TREES AND BENCHES** This year we have installed two sponsored memorial benches and planted one sponsored memorial tree.

**SATURDAY VOLUNTEERS** Our small group of volunteers meet most Saturday mornings to construct benches, plant trees, and generally keep the park in good order. We need more volunteers, as we have only four or five regulars, most of whom are getting old! We love being out in our beautiful park, and it's rewarding to see our work improve the park year by year. If you'd like to be added to the Saturday mailing list please let us know – there's no obligation to come every week.

## 6. ACTION PLAN 2024

We have various ongoing projects which we need to progress in the coming year(s).

**Funding** – Margaret to attend a Voluntary Action Leeds funding seminar, and she attends Leeds Inner North West Communities Committee which may present opportunities for funding. Jools Heselwood said she would sit down with us post-election to discuss our plans and funding, including the possibility of S.106 money.

**Skatepark /kiddies cycle track-** We are still considering the refurbishment of the skatepark, though the project is on ice due to rising costs since Covid. A parent has requested a kiddies' cycle track like that at Drury Fields in Horsforth, which might be accommodated round the skate park/tennis courts.

**MUGA** - We will continue to explore funding for a Multi-Use Games Area on the disused tennis court, though costs have risen since we first proposed this several years ago.

**Goal posts** - We aim to secure funding for small goal posts near the playground.

**Sculpture** - Margaret is in discussions with Shane, a chainsaw sculptor, who is making sculptures for Roundhay and Cross Flatts parks.

**Ponds** - Once the pond north of the playground is complete we hope to move on to the stream and wet area in the north-west corner of the western copse.

**Benches** - We have a request from a bereaved family to sponsor a bench. We are purchasing materials to construct two further benches.

**Tree planting** - We are still losing mature trees to old age, disease and storm damage. We aim to replace these and also add trees to the avenue along the central path.

**Information Boards** - We hope to find time to progress designs for information boards, and look for funding e.g. from Wades.

**Heritage walks** - Andrew will consider the possibility of conducting guided walks, either one-offs or as part of Heritage Open Days

## **7. APPOINTMENT OF THE COMMITTEE**

Margaret was re-elected as Chair of FOBP, Andrew as Vice Chair, Sadie as secretary and Helen and Jemma as committee members. Margaret will continue as Treasurer for the time being. Lewis said he is happy to help out with the picnic.

## **8. AOB**

None

## **9. DATE OF NEXT ORDINARY MEETING-TBA**