



Friends of the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links

Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organization (SCIO) SC045955

NEWSLETTER 64

Summer 2023

FoMBL AGM Croquet Club, Tuesday 12 September 6.30-8.30
Graeme Cruickshank (local historian) will talk on the history of water (supply and drainage) in the Meadows over the centuries.

Wildflowers now blooming



Volunteers Amanda and Anke creating wood chip paths around planted areas, establishing the wildflower meadow at South Links.

Neil Roger



Here we have Martin and Alastair using the bowser to water a young lime during hot weather. By watering once a week our trees seem to be flourishing.

Neil Roger



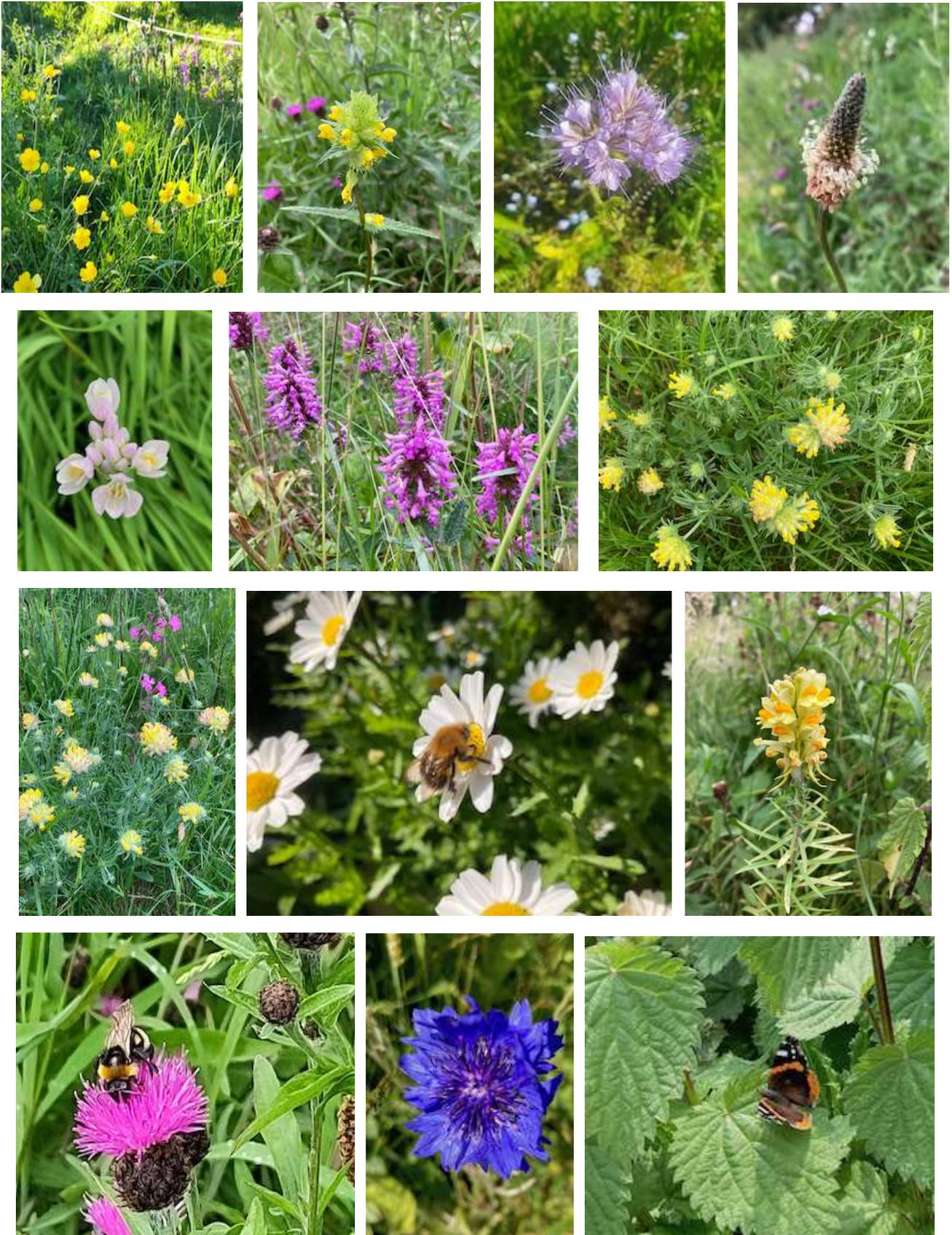
Left picture:
Verbascum and oxeye daisies



Middle:
Red Campion



Right:
Oxeye daisies and cornflowers



Key to flower names:

From top row left to right: buttercup; yellow rattle; blue tansy; plantago
 second top row l to r : bittercress; wood betony; kidney vetch
 third row : kidney vetch and red campion; oxeye daisy; toadflax
 fourth row: knapweed; cornflower; red admiral on nettle

photos taken by Neil Roger and Amanda Lake at South Links wildflower meadow

Temporary toilets

We are very pleased that Edinburgh City Council have installed temporary toilets in the Meadows on 20 June, until 27 October, open 10.00am–8.00pm. Further work was necessary to ensure these toilets are connected up to power, water, etc., and they are now operational. The council said 'the toilets will be regularly checked and maintained by our Public Conveniences team'.

It is very encouraging that this message from the council also says 'additionally, we are working on finding permanent solutions for each of these sites so we are not so reliant on temporary provision in the future. More details will be shared with you as the project develops'.

After a great many protests about the poor provision of toilets in the Meadows in recent years this is a very good result for the park users, and a relief for nearby residents.

Jawbones update

Report from meeting - Jim Orr:

'Graeme Cruikshank (historian), Iain Black, (community councillor) and I met Karl Chapman (council officer) and another officer today. It was very helpful.

So, a final decision will be taken at the 10th August Culture and Communities meeting. The papers will be published online (I think) 2 weeks before then and I plan for us to consult trustees and members with whatever options will be laid out in the papers. We can then pass on our views on the options through a personal deputation to the committee (Graeme and/or me, I guess) or by email.

It's not clear now what the options will be and Karl will work on them in the coming months. The officers are not supportive of fibreglass replicas (they discolour and are easily damaged). The expensive bronze replicas remain an option but, as mentioned, the final decision has not been taken. I also passed on my own opinion that repairing the pavilion and/or building a new public toilet are the priorities of FoMBL and that a bronze replica might look gaudy and a waste of money next to a crumbling pavilion. Is a bronze replica really providing value for money? Will local people be proud of it?

It's not clear what options there are in terms of an alternative to the bronze replica. Karl plans to 'consult' in the period leading up to 10/08/23 by which he means contacting groups like community councils. I guess our meeting today was our one and only opportunity to have our say but if there are further thoughts for his consideration following this email then I can easily pass them on.

Important: the old jawbones are in storage and Karl says the council are moving towards disposal of them as storage has a cost and they can't really be displayed anywhere. Plus they are falling apart and would need a lot of support. They may however save a through section (ie a few inches of jawbone) for display somewhere. Perhaps in the meadows but more likely indoors somewhere.' *Jim Orr*

Further responses from other trustees suggested seasoned hardwood, or steel, as durable materials, which could even be shaped into a pleasing abstract shape, but also questioned whether the expense of this replacement is really necessary, and this was echoed by another response pointing out that a sculpture could be made to capture the essence of these mammals and our relationship to them. But it was pointed out that an information board would also be a useful option.

Get Well Soon Tony

Mornings on the North Meadows Walk alongside Lonsdale Terrace have not felt the same since Tony who played guitar and sang there has been absent. Tony has been bringing a smile and spreading joy with passers-by for many years, sharing Christmas cards in snowy December. Sadly, in June, a notice was posted on the lamp post near Tony's customary spot by a friend saying that Tony was in hospital following a bad fall. Messages of support soon appeared on the lamp post and a JustGiving page has been set up to collect messages and donations for Tony. The page was set up by Neil Millar who said 'Tony always made time to stop and chat and often sang you a personalised song. I really miss seeing him and I'd like him to know how much we miss him and wish him a speedy recovery'. Unfortunately, Neil has no contact details for Tony, so if you are in touch with Tony, please let Neil know at neilmillar@gmail.com. The JustGiving page is at https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/tony-who-sings-on-the-meadows?utm_term=2Bxwj2NXN

Below left: Two new benches installed opposite James Gillespies Primary School. Friends of the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links raised funds to purchase them. CEC Parks installed them in May 2023. They will be more comfortable than sitting on the railings!

Right: Volunteer Amanda collects nettles to use for culinary purposes.



We celebrated Refugee Festival at the Community Garden by painting and crocheting Hearts for Hope. All sorts of people joined in to make their hearts and show they care about refugees. We raised £12 in donations for Refugee Survival Trust.

Sarah Tolley



Left: Newly restored hardwood bench, installed 26 June 2023. This is the second one we have had restored by the carpenter Richard Ryrko. Location is adjacent to Muriel Spark Way.

Neil Roger

Volunteers to plant wildflower plugs at Leamington Walk wildflower meadow on 29th July



In issue 62 Autumn 2022, we bade farewell to our volunteer and friend Alec Mann and the time has now come, the 200 plug plants are now ready, to plant the replacement wildflowers in the 'Meadow Beside the Meadows' in his name. This will be done next volunteer day Saturday 29th July starting from 10 a.m. Two hundred plug plants is a lot and we must use spades to clear ground to plant them in as the grass is of course up, so please can people make a special effort to come, the more volunteers (I am bringing 2 plus me!) the sooner the task will be completed. Bring spades/trowels if you have them. FoMBL can provide many tools and we hope to have the FoMBL water bowser up and filled as we must water thoroughly after planting. Looking forward to a nice day on the meadow.

Tim Duffy



It is important to fence off the wildflower planting areas to protect them from accidental mowing while they are growing, or later on while they are seeding.



above:
a young member of the FoMBL wildflower group enjoys the plants

FoMBL project update (1 July 2023)

1. History/information panels for Meadows and Bruntsfield Link Project

After NR contacted Edinburgh World Heritage director in April, Silke Schneider was appointed to complete the panel project and NR/GC provided her with a complete update. So far she has been very thorough and Graeme and I are pleased with how the project has started to get going again. There are no firm dates for completion but we hope to learn more soon.

2. Playgrounds

Installation date is July for new log playhouse and train at S.Links (Alan Grevers)
NR still to meet playground officer to discuss new equipment proposed for East and Links
Playgrounds due to old equipment deemed unsafe. Archimedes screw water feature still to be repaired.

3. FoMBL Bench project

Beautifully restored hardwood bench at South Links fenced area installed on Monday 26 June by carpenter Richard Ryrko. Two new wooden benches installed opposite James Gillespie's school .
These have proved to be very popular.

4. Tree Group

Twenty-two trees planted at South Links have now been watered almost every week by FoMBL TREE GROUP. Particular thanks to Alistair Philp who has pulled the water bowser up to the Links almost every Friday since April. Thanks too to regular waterers Benet Haughton, Martin Howorth with help from Mihaela, Anka Bremer, Keith Gifford, Amanda Lake, Felix Lake, Oliver Roger, Mr and Mrs Braunholtz.

Many other newly planted trees on the Meadows have also been regularly watered.
We have had a lot of support and donations from the public.

5. Wildflower meadows – Links fenced area

Volunteers have been tending to the wildflower meadow regularly over the last two months and we now have a good showing of oxeye daisy, red and white campion, yellow rattle, self heal, wood betony, knapweed, vetch, cornflower etc.

Big thanks to Amanda Lake for organising a clearing of nettles and thistles along the perimeter railings to avoid the whole length being sprayed with glyosphate by CEC parks.

New notices to advertise our work still proposed.

Leamington Walk wildflower meadow

Tim Duffy has acquired hundreds of plugs for planting on 29th July.

6. Volunteers

Alison Carr has continued to lead the volunteers on last Saturday of the month but more volunteers are needed. Volunteers have managed to clear many benches of weeds and undergrowth, collected a large amount of litter and carried out many worthwhile tasks. A big thank you to Alison Carr for leading the teams.

7. Relaxed mowing/biodiversity

Following David Kyles agreement with with mowers to reduce mowing areas there has been a large increase in unmown areas which has made a significant difference to insect habitat.

8. Bird enclaves

FoMBL have now had agreement to establish two new bird enclaves at toddlers' playground next to tennis courts and at the fenced Links wildflower meadow.

9. FUTURE PROJECTS

table-tennis table for South Links.

tree planting in autumn

bird enclave in autumn

Neil Roger

Forthcoming Events

Volunteers are always needed for work in the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links on the last Saturday of the month – the nature of the work depending on the season. We meet at the Cricket Pavilion at 10.00am, and any necessary tools can be provided.

29 July	REP Your Flag 3, African Caribbean Society Scotland	2.00pm–7.00pm
3 September	Central Church Family Picnic	11.00am–5.00pm

Useful Contacts

David Kyles: Parks and Greenspace Officer South East (Edinburgh Council). Tel: 0131 529 5126 or email: David.Kyles@edinburgh.gov.uk.

Police: To report a crime: 101 (costing a flat rate of 15p per call); emergency 999; or (anonymously) to Crimestoppers: 0800 555 111.

Police Service of Scotland website is <http://www.scotland.police.uk>.

Anti-social behaviour (Edinburgh Council): Tel. 0131 529 7050;

Environmental services: 0131 200 2000;

South Office: 0131 529 5051 **Litter:** 0131 608 1100

Defective lamp-post lighting: note number and notify on the City of Edinburgh Council website

Forestry Service: email: forestry.service@edinburgh.gov.uk. Tel. 0131 311 7079

Road repairs and development: Alan Dunlop, Senior Transport Team Leader: Tel. 0131 529 3719; email: alan.dunlop@edinburgh.gov.uk

Task Force Manager (responsible for street cleaning and grounds maintenance) Rab Farquhar. Email: rab.farquhar@edinburgh.gov.uk, Tel: 0131 664 8330 for recycling.

Graffiti: report to 0131 200 2000 or Police 101 if persistent

Family and household support service manager (tackling anti-social behaviour and joint working with the police) email: kathy.evans@edinburgh.gov.uk, Tel. 0131 529 5106

Environmental Warden team leader: Paul Baxter, Tel. 0131 529 5204; or 608 1100

People Against Litter (PAL): *please contact* <http://www.peopleagainstlitter.org/>

FoMBL Trustees

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Tollcross Community Council: Iain Black, **Southside CC:** Joan Carter,

Merchiston CC: Bridget Stevens, **Marchmont and Sciennes CC:** Alison Service

Other FoMBL Contacts:

Webmaster: Philip McDowell, Website: www.fombl.org.uk

Volunteer Co-ordinator: Alison Carr, email: volunteer@fombl.org.uk

