



# **Friends of the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links**

Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) SC045955

## **NEWSLETTER 67 Summer 2024**

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### **October Public Meeting**

Talk and Q&A with David Kyles City of Edinburgh Council – Interim Parks and Greenspace Officer (south east)

Title 'The Parks Department of the City of Edinburgh Council and the future for the Meadows and Links.'

7pm on Tuesday 1st October at Barclay Viewforth Church.

### **Community hero award**



In May 2024 Ian Murray (Secretary of State for Scotland and local MP) awarded FoMBL trustee, Neil Roger, a community hero award for work done in the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links over the last 15 years.

Notable recent projects completed were the provision of new playground equipment and tree planting involving local schools. Neil planned the new Eric Liddell Way avenue, planting new trees, along with volunteers from the FoMBL Tree Group.

### **Obituary for Ken Goodare**

Ken Goodare, who died in April 2024 aged 95, was for some years a Trustee of FoMBL. He grew up in Wolverhampton, and was educated at Wolverhampton Grammar School and King's College, Cambridge. He followed a career working as an actuary in Sussex, and spent much of his spare time playing clarinet, violin and other instruments, with various ensembles. He and his wife Heather moved to Edinburgh in 2004.

*Julian Goodare*

## The kids' garden

With the new Edinburgh Futures Institute open a short while ago, we can now experience the sheer beauty of the old hospital, and roaming around the area has been such a treat.

With all that we had to adapt the kids' area behind our box in order to integrate with the new layout of Middle Meadow Walk north in a more harmonious way. We have now removed the tent which hosted so many community encounters for five years and are working in collaboration with the Pianodrome guys in order to create a kids' space like no other.



We have installed a tiny piano shed in the garden. The shed is made entirely from old reclaimed piano parts (even the screws) and it offers an open and tuned piano for everyone to play, a tiny spade for kids to do some light gardening, an open library, and a few other musical instruments. We have designed and built all the benches and chairs ourselves with reclaimed hard wood from south Lanarkshire supplied by Patrick Baxter from the Wood Place. We have connected the two old wooden water pipes and made a new display where Graeme Cruickshank explains the history of the Elm trunks used as water pipes in Edinburgh 300 years ago. There are also random pieces of bamboo scattered around the garden for kids to play with and build stuff.

There's also a massive display celebrating the history and importance of Scottish bandstands for all parks in the country. We hope this tiny garden can continue to offer a safe, welcoming and inspiring space for all the community.

Please come down to see us. It would be nice to have a chat and hear from you what you think.

*Fernando Andrade Miranda*



## PROPOSED NEW TOILETS

In February 2024 FoMBL were asked to join a working group, set up by CEC Thriving Green Spaces development team, to propose locations and designs for new toilets in three city parks.

The leader of the team, Marco Gallo, has held six meetings since then to present proposals and seek comment and views from FoMBL and others. FoMBL had a representative present at every meeting.

Comments made by FoMBL, MCC and other park users were positive for new toilets but not so keen on the chosen location which was considered to be too far from more heavily used more central areas such as the Cricket Pavilion, North Meadow Walk and the site of the present temporary toilets.

Marco's team, however, had to resolve many issues in order to decide on the best site and these are all given in detail in this link: <https://www.thrivinggreenspaces.scot/project> (see section on public toilets in Edinburgh parks.)

FoMBL had requested that a store be included for our use in order to keep tools and equipment used by us to maintain and water trees. Future use of our stores at the Cricket Pavilion is not certain. In addition, we asked for an external water tap and bicycle lock rails.

Initially a kiosk and store were included in the design but these have been removed after legal advice was taken regarding the restrictions of the use of new buildings in the Meadows.

Because of this, the plan has to be redesigned along with planning and building warrant submissions and so a completion date has yet to be confirmed.

*Neil Roger August 2024*



## Wildflower meadows and relaxed mowing



Thanks to relaxed mowing there has been a huge show of *Hypochaeris radicata* (cat's ear) to be enjoyed at South Links play area/wildflower meadow and elsewhere throughout the park. These support pollinators and should not be picked!

*Neil Roger*

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The Links Wildflower meadow has done quite well this summer with a good range of pollinators growing amongst tall grasses which in themselves are also valuable pollinators. So this year we have observed oxeye daisies, plantago, red and white campion, wood betony, toadflax, geranium, yellow rattle, rosebay willow herb, tansy, knapweed, meadow cranesbill.

*Neil Roger*

## Tree planting and maintenance - Good news!

Thanks to CEC David Kyles we now have an outside tap and store at the Bruntsfield Links toilets. Since hundreds of trees were planted in the Links and Meadows, the FoMBL tree group have worked hard every Friday to weed, mulch and water the young trees and bushes which were planted by local schoolchildren in the early spring.



As a number of trees/bushes have not survived we have ordered another 420 from the Woodland Trust and intend to plant them in November. We also plan to plant further areas of hedgerow alongside Whitehouse Loan probably in the spring 2025 again using local schoolchildren. This will be subject to support from CEC parks and schoolteachers.

*Neil Roger*

## Tree base clearing



Members of FoMBL Tree Group have cleared over 60 young tree bases of intrusive growth and mulched to conserve moisture and inhibit invasive grass. The first photo shows what happens when growth is left unchecked.

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*Neil Roger*

## **Planters**

Planters are planted and maintained at Eric Liddell Way by volunteer Alison Carr – included plants are canpanula, crocosmia and cat mint. I think you will agree it is a fine display.



## **Tree watering made easier**



New hose stretches far enough to reach the new trees.

## **New table tennis table on Links**

At the end of August convener Jim Orr applied for a £5,000 community grant from the council to part fund a table tennis table which we plan to erect near the existing exercise machines just off Eric Liddell Way (near JGPS).

The first table tennis table was sited near Summerhall in the east Meadows in 2021 and has been a great success. Such tables are available to anyone and there is no booking required. It will complement the existing exercise machines well and create a little 'sports corner'. FoMBL received £750 from the JR Group towards the project (they are the company which is developing the old Sick Kids Hospital) and we are very grateful to them. We are now awaiting the result from the council and will still have to gain planning permission if the money is received. All this will take several weeks. We would then order the table and concrete bed, and commission the works. As such we expect to complete the project in the early spring but we will do it before the year end if possible.

*Jim Orr*

**Below is an update of public comments on the proposed table tennis table: we now have had 1.5 thousand views and over 47 likes and over 20 positive comments – still rolling in – see latest below: Public comments on proposed table tennis table on Bruntsfield Links as of 26/08/24.**

The table tennis table which we helped to install at East Meadows in 2021 has been a great success and heavily used ever since. We have had many requests to install a similar one at South Links where there are a large number of children as well as students and adults. It will be sited adjacent to the already well used exercise equipment so will form a small area of outdoor facilities to promote exercise and group activity for young and old without impinging on the open green spaces around.

We have also had support from James Gillespies Primary School headteacher, Ben Horsburgh 'We would be delighted to support this initiative'. It is anticipated that schoolchildren will make full use of this facility.

On 23rd August I asked the Meadows/Bruntsfield community (FoMBL FB group) for comments on the proposal and have received 47 positive likes and 20 positive comments. Here is a selection:

'The table is great! Kids and I have used it many times. Another one would be ace as there is often a queue of people wanting to use it.'

'Love this and the idea of another one. Such a great outside activity'

'it's a great idea and another one in a more suitable location would be brilliant!'

'That would be brilliant! Have been meaning to go to the Meadows one, and just this week got a bag of ping pong balls and ordered some paddles. Links is much closer for us, so this would be much welcomed and we'd probably use it more often than the Meadows one.'

'Have used on numerous occasions with friends and family. Bat and balls can be purchased very reasonably. Great fun!' 'Also use one in Inch Park.'

'It's great how many people use this.'

'Think it would a great addition to the links.'

'We've played on it & see it from our window. It's an asset, very well used, and so far not been used by disposable barbecues!'

'Yes!'

'please install more'

'Excellent idea to have another one as they are very popular!!'

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.

Tree Group meets every Friday at 1.30pm, also at the Pavilion.

## **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:** <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](mailto: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](mailto:alan.dunlop@edinburgh.gov.uk)

**Task Force Manager:** (responsible for street cleaning and grounds maintenance) Rab Farquhar. Email: [rab.farquhar@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto: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) *(new contact to be confirmed)*

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

### ***FoMBL Trustees***

**Convener:** Jim Orr, email: [convener@fombl.org.uk](mailto:convener@fombl.org.uk)

**Secretary:** Neill Walker, email: [secretary@fombl.org.uk](mailto:secretary@fombl.org.uk)

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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](http://www.fombl.org.uk)

