

2. PLAYGROUNDS

The new log house continues to be a big success with plenty of local appreciation and use. The required signage still to be finalised and fixed to railings. David Kyles is providing the sign.

The archimedes screw water feature is still to be installed at the East Meadows playground after breaking down over 8 years ago. The lack of action is partly due to limited staff availability. NR trying to get this fixed via local councillors.

New equipment at the sand area has been installed to replace unsafe units. Alan Grevers (CEC playgrounds) asked us to come up with ideas for a replacement for the slide at Links playground, which was removed in the spring. NR proposed several options after public consultation. NR met Cllr Munro on site with Alan Grevers who agreed to order a slide but stated it could not be installed for 6 months.

The Links playground has been severely neglected and NR offered to find volunteers to clear the grass growth. So far Alison Carr has cleared a good amount with the Saturday volunteers. At present CEC do not have the resources to clear growth around railings etc. Joan Carter also helped to organise a group of students to help clear the remainder of the grass. Neil Roger



LINKS PLAYGROUND before

LINKS PLAYGROUND after



3 TREE GROUP

The Tree Group, which has been formed into a FoMBL sub-committee, has met every Friday throughout the year. Full approval to be sought at FoMBL trustee meeting on 4/11/24. Work has included watering, clearing growth from under young trees and mulching.

The new hedgerow planting at the Links and North Meadow Walk, completed at the beginning of the year, requires about 400 trees/bushes to replace dead ones. Trees have been ordered from the Woodland Trust and planting took place in **November** with the help of local school children and teachers. Further similar hedgerow planting has been put on hold whilst the new **Meadows and Bruntsfield Links management plan** is being updated.

Watering has been a long term problem due to a lack of integrated maintenance after planting new trees. Recently Parks staff have managed to water some young trees using funding approved after requested by councillor Ben Parker. FoMBL tree group watered new trees during critical periods with the use of bowsers and hoses.

FoMBL tree group recently met with D.Kyles and Cllr.B.Parker to discuss the watering plan for next year.



4 WILDFLOWER MEADOWS

South Links (Muriel Spark Walk meadow)

We have been very pleased with the excellent spread of wildflowers and grasses growing at the South Links Wildflower Meadow (Muriel Spark Walk), due partly to abundant rain in May which is usually a very dry month. Regular volunteers, including Alastair Philp, Neil Roger, Martin Howarth, Mihaela Crisan, Amy Constable, Alistair Cant, Clive Kempe, Charles McQueen and Amanda and have been active carrying out removal of invasive plants such as nettles, docks and rosebay willow herb and many more tasks.

The ongoing work will include watering and removal of invasive plants as well as planting additional wildflowers and sowing seeds with support from CEC Parks.

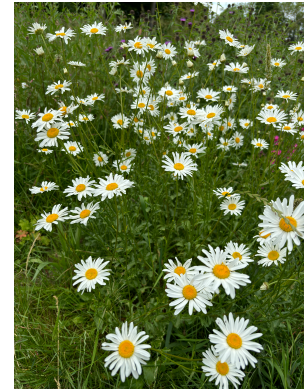
Recently large areas of nettle and creeping thistle roots have been dug out from the side of the path railing. This will enable us to plant wildflowers as well as flowering bushes to increase the diversity of pollinating plants for insects and birds.

Charlie McQueen (ecologist) has joined our team and has cut and cleared the wildflower meadow as well as providing wildflower plugs which he helped to plant recently.

Leamington Walk Meadow (managed by Tim Duffy)

This meadow has recently been cut and raked and hopefully extended next year into a portion of the adjacent area vacated (eventually) by Scottish Water.





5 MOWING

There has been an abundance of wildflowers growing where mowers would normally have cut in the summer. We hope that in future mowing will be more limited to central areas, although grass still should be cut at the correct time. So far we have not been able to agree a detailed mowing plan, despite a big effort by David Kyles to persuade mowers to plan for future cuts. It is hoped further discussions can be held with mowing managers and park staff. There are still examples of mowers cutting down planted hedges etc.



Unmown grass at the Links with cat's ear.

6 VOLUNTEERS

6.1 Saturday volunteers

Alison Carr has run the volunteer group every month and they have cleared huge amounts of litter, leaves and 'weeds' as well as removed graffiti and other worthwhile tasks including clearing grass inside the Links playground and removing weeds from the base of the Prince Albert sundial. It is hoped that a new sign to invite more volunteers will be placed at the Cricket Pavilion.

6.2 Tree Group volunteers

The tree group has worked every Friday from 1.30 pm, as well as on other days, when available. We now have 7 active members who have done a huge amount of work including planting, clearing growth under trees and mulching. Many local children, teachers and volunteers have helped with planting and maintenance. We work closely with CEC Parks who have been very supportive.

Due to the demands of planning tree planting/maintenance it was agreed to set up a FoMBL sub-committee which would meet when required to deal with volunteers and forward planning.



7. TABLE TENNIS TABLE at Eric Liddell Way

A CEC community grant was applied for to install a new table tennis table near to existing exercise units adjacent to Eric Liddell Way. This proposal has been welcomed by the community, especially after the success of the table installed near the East Meadows playground. Donations have been given by the Black Ivy Hotel and the JR Group. Unfortunately the grant panel did not select our application. FoMBL will try again next year.



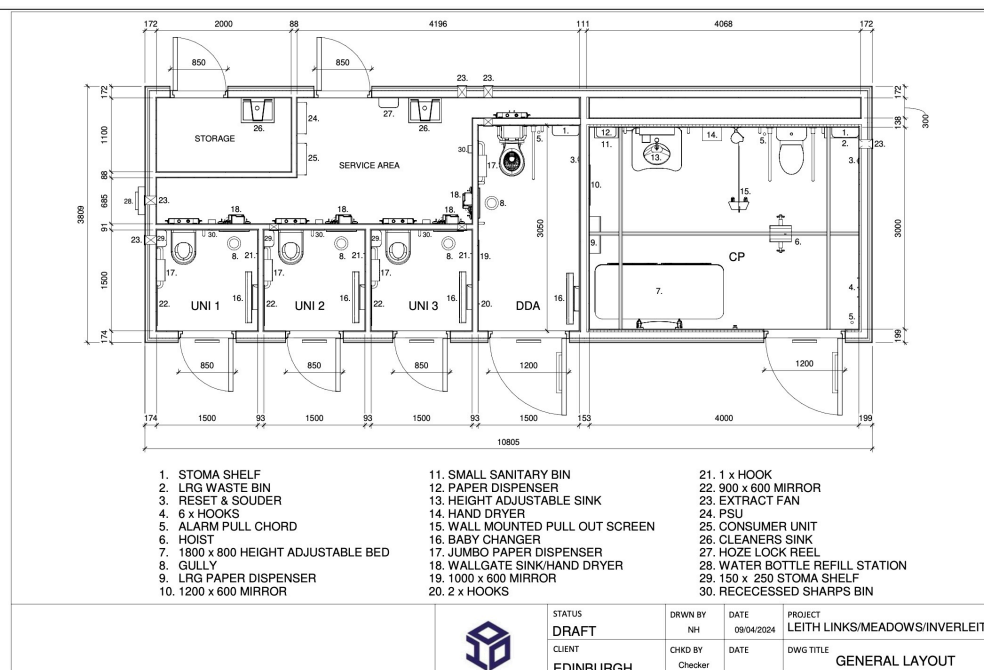
Location for proposed table-tennis table

8. NEW TOILETS AT THE MEADOWS

Proposed new toilets are clearly welcomed. FoMBL has taken part in many meetings throughout the year with the Thriving Green Spaces team who have now chosen a location at the south end of Middle Meadow Walk. (Not considered as ideal by many park users) Unfortunately the original installation date of June 2024 has now been put forward to spring/summer next year. This was partly due to a lack of knowledge by the TGS team regarding the restrictions of the Confirmation Act which prohibits most new building on the Meadows. Whilst toilets are permitted, a refreshment kiosk had been erroneously included in the design and this has now been omitted.

The original plans included 3 urinals but these have been omitted. There seems to be no further opportunity to comment on the design as it has been stated that full planning permission is not required. Final revised plans have now been provided showing a much smaller store and only 3 cubicles, one disabled toilet and one changing place. No outside tap has been included as previously agreed. FoMBL were not consulted on this layout.

There remain concerns regarding suitability of the location of the changing places facility as well as workable vehicular access.



Plan of final toilet layout

9 BARCLAY CORNER/ GLENGYLE TERRACE.

Heather Goodare (FoMBL past convenor) has donated £1000 towards improving the worn corner at Glengyle Terrace. At a meeting with Heather, it was agreed to fill the muddy hollows with fine whin dust which makes a smooth compact surface and should improve the condition of this long worn corner considerably. All are keen to complete this project which started in 2012.

This work has now been largely completed including a wood chip surface along the whole length of the path. Missing bollards have been reinstated



PLANNED AND PROPOSED FUTURE PROJECTS

1. Prepare a long term plan in conjunction with D.Kyles to show proposed areas of hedgerow/copse planting throughout the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links.
2. Prepare a plan to show areas of reduced mowing and agree with David Kyles
3. Assist in practical work at Cricket Pavilion and await decisions on lease.
4. Continue to maintain and plant new trees including watering
5. Install a new sign at the Links play area to acknowledge FoMBL and Forbes nursery.
6. Organise and prepare for spring planting with assistance from David Kyles and Callum Maclellan
7. Propose new play equipment.
8. Add more exercise equipment to augment existing
9. Augment and increase the areas of wildflower areas depending on volunteer resources and overall approved management plan.
10. Work with D.Kyles on production of new management plan.
11. re-submit funding application for table-tennis table.

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 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) (*new contact to be confirmed*)

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

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**

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