

## **FOMBL PROJECT UPDATE - FEBRUARY 2025**

### **1. HISTORY/INFORMATION PANELS FOR MEADOWS**

The project is largely in the hands of Edinburgh World Heritage but further lengthy meetings are anticipated before finalisation of the project. FoMBL still holds funds of **£3763** allocated to the project.

### **2. PLAYGROUNDS**

**The new log house at South Links** 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 organising the design of the sign but we are funding it through the communities grant (£300)

**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.

#### **Replacement slide at S.Links playground**

NR managed to get the playground officer and Bob McAlister (senior official) to order the new slide but only after intervention by Cllr. Munro. Both councillors Ross and Parker gave us support regarding this action.

Note : Playground budget is healthy but there appears to be a severe shortage of playground staff. Concern by NR over lack of health and safety checks —ie broken roundabout, loose screws on swings and large holes in playground surface

### **3. TREE GROUP**

The Tree Group continues to meet most Fridays although severe winter weather sometimes results in cancellation.

#### **PRESENTATION TO CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE on 28th April**

Considerable effort was made by members of the tree group (especially Alistair Cant) to prepare a presentation to committee outlining our work ( mainly relating to biodiversity) as well as proposals for future years.

We have been supported by David Kyles, local councillors, Gillespie's staff and the new CEC project officer, Clair Watson.

Teachers from JGS organised a survey carried out by secondary pupils to compile a list of comments on the recent copse planting on the Links. This resulted in over 90% support by 70 park users who were interviewed.

A revised date for the committee presentation has now been set for April 28th 2025.

## **4 WILDFLOWER MEADOWS**

### **4.1 South Links (Muriel Spark Walk meadow)**

A large quantity of yellow rattle seed was sown at the end of last year and we hope to see successful growth in the Spring. Yellow rattle helps to suppress grass which can dominate wildflowers

Charles McQueen (local ecologist) has many wildflower plugs ready to plant in the early spring. He has also fixed a rope to stakes around the meadow to hopefully protect some of the delicate wildflowers which were planted last autumn as well as future planting.



### **4.2 LEAMINGTON WALK WILDFLOWER MEADOW**

It is understood that David Kyles with Tim Duffy has agreed with Scottish Water to extend the present meadow by 4000 sq.m. into the area which will be vacated by Scottish Water in the spring. Apparently SW have purchased 14kg of pollinator seed for that project. It is not clear who will carry out the preparation and seeding which may occur in March depending on whether SW have finished the work.

## **5. VOLUNTEERS**

### **5.1 Saturday volunteers**

Alison Carr runs the volunteer group every month although the January work party had to be cancelled due to bad weather. Thanks to all the regular volunteers who turn up as well a group of students who appear to be very enthusiastic.

### **5.2 Tree Group volunteers**

**The tree group** work most Fridays from 1.30 pm, as well as on other days, when available. We have around 7 active members who carry out maintenance work and planting especially at the South Links but also around the Meadows. In addition secondary pupils from James Gillespie's have been helping out on most Fridays during term time.

### **5.3. School children and bulb planting**

At the end of the year Claire Watson (CEC project worker) organised groups of primary school children who belong to the after school club 'Earth Calling' to plant hundreds of bulbs around the Bruntsfield toilets and at the edge of the copse planting in some very cold weather. They were helped by FoMBL tree group members.



## 6. NEW TOILETS AT THE MEADOWS

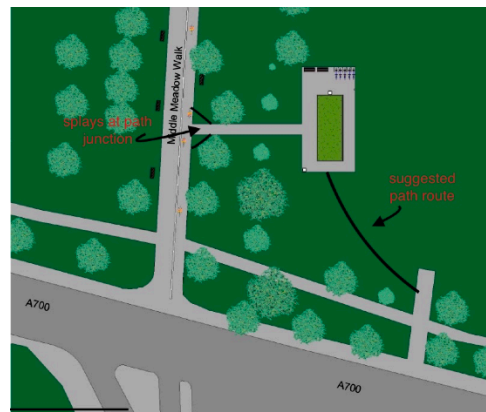
Proposed new toilets are clearly welcomed. FoMBL has taken part in many meetings throughout the year with the **Thriving Green Spaces** team who have chosen a location at the south end of Middle Meadow Walk. (Not considered as ideal by many park users but there appear to be many constraints to consider.)

The TGS team have recently decided on a layout for the toilets which now omit all but one of the previously proposed access paths. There is now one path at right angles to Middle Meadow Walk. We have requested consideration to put in another path as well as splayed corners at the right angled path entrance.

Concern has been expressed at the lack of any nearby disabled parking bays for those using the changing places facility and parking on the main road is not that safe.

A lockable external tap was not included in the final design as requested, so after intervention by a local councillor a stand alone tap is now proposed.

Due partly to the revisions made to the original plans the toilets may not now open until the summer.



Plan of final toilet site with FoMBL path suggestions



#### **9.0 MISCELLANEOUS**

9.1. FoMBL (NR) has requested David Kyles organise the spreading of bark chips over many muddy paths and so far he has done a great job of improving walking conditions including on South Meadow Walk west of the Pavilion.

#### **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 any practical work needed 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.
12. Design and install (method to be agreed) tree name plaques on rarer specimens.
13. Design and fix new notice for monthly volunteers.
14. Organise refurbishment of wooden benches and installation of new ones where agreed with CEC.
15. When time permits organise the installation of additional play and exercise equipment subject to CEC approval.
16. Examine the possibility of installing a bandstand.

Neil Roger. 27/01/2025