



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

Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) SC045955

## **NEWSLETTER 69 Spring 2025**



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

## **Sugar, Slaves and Links with South Edinburgh**



**Illustrated talk by Richard Blake, author of  
Sugar, Slaves and High Society, telling the  
story of the Grants of Kilgraston and  
exploring other local links to slavery and  
the legacies of wealthy benefactors.**

7.00 pm, 1st April, Barclay-Viewforth Church (east door)

All welcome

Refreshments provided - donations welcome from non-  
members



Aconites and crocuses - early signs of spring in the Meadows

## **FoMBL PROJECT UPDATE JANUARY 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 has now been finalised and will be fixed to railings. David Kyles has organised the design of the sign.

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

**Replacement slide at South 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.

UPDATE: We have now been informed that the slide installation has been delayed due to the decision to replace the large multi play unit which is unsafe. Note: Playground budget is healthy but there appears to be a severe shortage of playground staff.

**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 28 April** Considerable effort was made by members of the tree group (especially Alistair Cant) to prepare a presentation to the committee outlining our work (mainly relating to biodiversity) as well as proposals for future years. We have been supported by David Kyles, local councillors, James Gillespie's staff and the new CEC project officer, Claire Watson. A revised date has now been set for 28 April 2025.



#### **4. WILDFLOWER MEADOWS**

**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 planted a large quantity of wildflower plugs in March. 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 as the group of students who appear to be very enthusiastic. Recent work included leaf clearing, bulb planting and clearing unwanted growth at the edge of the playground and fences.

**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 seven 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 many Fridays during term time. Recently all dead trees/bushes have been replaced.

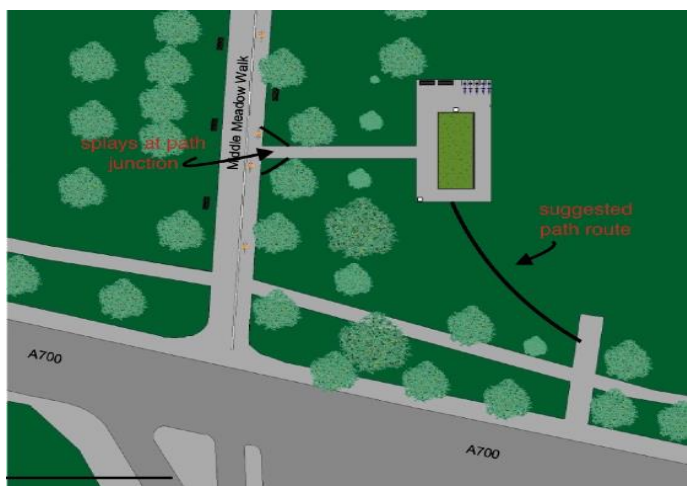
**5.3 School children and bulb planting.** At the end of the year Claire Watson (CEC project worker) organised groups of primary school children who belong to the after-school club 'Earth Calling' to plant hundreds of bulbs around the Bruntsfield toilets and at the edge of the copse planting in some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

5.4 This March Claire Watson has organised hedgerow and tree planting at JGHS which involved David Kyles, FoMBL member Alistair Cant and teacher Callum MacLennan with enthusiastic help from High School pupils.



6. **TABLE TENNIS TABLE at Eric Liddell Way** FoMBL intends to re-apply for a grant in April to fund the proposed table-tennis table at South Links as a previous application was turned down. A date for submission has not yet been decided.

7. **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 boardwalk 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.



Plan of final toilet site with path suggestions

The nearest disabled spaces have been stated as 400 yds away in the University Old College which does not seem practical. David Kyles is looking at much nearer spaces at the rear of the east pavilion.

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 to the plans the toilets may not now open until the summer. Work has started but now delayed by the discovery of 18th century drains below the foundations. The location of the toilets will now be moved east.

## **PLANNED AND PROPOSED FUTURE PROJECTS**

- 1. Prepare a long-term plan in conjunction with David 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 those existing.**
- 9. Augment and increase the areas of wildflower areas depending on volunteer resources and overall approved management plan.**
- 10. Work with David Kyles on production of new management plan.**
- 11. Re-submit funding application for table-tennis table.**

*Neil Roger. 27/01/2025*

## **Community Hero Award**

Alison Carr, the Volunteer Co-ordinator for FoMBL, has been chosen for this prestigious award. Ian Murray, local MP is presenting Alison with the award 'for contributing to the community in a number of different ways, including litter-picking and her work in local schools'.

For many years Alison has been organising a volunteer group on the last Saturday of every month, and she always generates enthusiasm among the volunteers for not just litter-picking, but weeding, planting seeds and bulbs, clearing paths and whatever work needs to be done, depending on the season.

Everyone in FoMBL is delighted that Alison will receive such well-deserved recognition.

## **New Bench**

The plan for the council to site a bench at the Al Dawayima stone passed in the council last week.

## **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.

28 March – 9.00-13.00 – Charity Fun Run – St Thomas of Aquins High School

5-9 June – 10.00-18.00 – Meadows Festival – Tom Beevers

13 June – 13.30-17.40 – The Edinburgh Arrow – The King's Body Guard for Scotland, Royal Company of Archers

22 June – 10.00-18.00 – Edinburgh Pretty Muddy – Cancer Research UK

4-13 July – 12.00-20.00 – Edinburgh Meadows Summer Funfair – David Taylor

28 July – 12.00-20.00 – Edinburgh Climate Festival – Edinburgh and Lothians Regional Equality Council

## **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

**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)

