



Friends of the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links

Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organization (SCIO) SC045955

NEWSLETTER 63

Spring 2023

PUBLIC EVENT

Graeme Cruickshank will give a talk on the history of water supply and draining through the ages (for Meadows and city wide) on 19 May at 7.00 pm at the Croquet Club. Some refreshments will be provided.

HIBS & HEARTS - EARLY GAMES ON THE MEADOWS 24 November 7pm in Barclay Viewforth Church



This was an evening of talks organised and presented by FoMBL, remembering the early history of the two oldest professional clubs in Edinburgh. Hibs and Hearts have a fierce rivalry that dates back to their foundation in the mid-1870s, making it one of the longest running rivalries in world football. The first match between the clubs was played on The Meadows on Christmas Day 1875. Our guest speakers, Hibs Club Historian Tom Wright, and David Allan of the Hearts FC Museum at Tynecastle, entertained the audience not just with facts and figures about the number of games played, goals scored, final results etc but also with off-the-record stories and anecdotes. The audience, which numbered around a hundred, were clearly football enthusiasts and during the Q&A part of the programme provided some lively dialogue with the two speakers. Barclay Viewforth's Mike Ellis provided the technical back-up and the event was chaired by FoMBL Chair, Jim Orr. Despite our event clashing with a major game in the FIFA World Cup in Qatar, it was judged to have been a huge success and we hope to organise further public talks on other topics which have a connection with The Meadows and/or Bruntsfield Links. If you have any suggestions, do please let us know!

Bridget Stevens

Speakers at the meeting



Hibs historian Tom Wright



Chair Jim Orr



Hearts historian Dave Allan

Tree planting and maintenance.



In January the tree group managed to break through solid frozen ground to plant nine new trees alongside Bruntsfield Place and Whitehouse Loan. Trees planted included Scots pine, oak and hornbeam. Posts are either reclaimed (cutting off rotten ends, sharpening and dipping in preservative) by the tree group, or provided by the million tree project.

A further batch of trees to be planted at South Links await scanning for underground cables. It is hoped nine trees will be planted before the end of March.

As well as tree planting the group has removed defective wire cages and rotten posts from over 30 younger trees and reinstated new wire cages and posts where necessary.

Due to last year's drought, three trees died along North Meadow Walk. Luckily the tree supplier provided replacement trees at no cost so we planted two replacement oaks and a hornbeam in February.

Neil Roger



Example of collapsing tree mesh and posts which have been removed by FoMBL tree group to prevent damage to tree bark and branches.



Tree planting at North Meadow Walk by FoMBL tree group

Change in park officers

Mike Shields - Parks and Greenspace Officer

Mike retired on 23 December 2022 after working for the council for 45 years. He started work as an apprentice gardener at Princes Street gardens in 1977 and eventually held the position of Parks and Greenspace Officer for South Edinburgh. He was always very supportive of FoMBL and always followed up requests for help and information, somehow managing to liaise across departments and smooth out any problems which often arose.



He will be sorely missed by all who benefited from his tireless enthusiasm and support over so many years.

David Kyles

David Kyles, who has worked for 19 years within the Parks and Greenspace service, has been appointed as an interim replacement for Mike Shields, until July 2023.

He held positions as Park Warden, Park Ranger, Countryside Ranger and of late was based in Hermitage House, Hermitage of Braid Local Nature Reserve, as part of the Natural Heritage Service and Pentland Hills Regional Park team.

It is a secondment whereby his substantive post as Natural Heritage Officer remains open for his return. This will depend on the outcome of a reorganisational review that is currently ongoing within the Council – senior manager posts above him are now being determined and a person and job matching process is underway. Over the next six months, this process will filter down to the grade he currently works at alongside other Parks and Greenspace service areas at this level and below. Hopefully longer term arrangements will become apparent towards the end of his secondment.

Mike at his leaving event at Princes Street Gardens gardener's cottage on 9 December 2022.

Neil Roger

Scottish Water flood alleviation project



Left: The work of Scottish Water going on at the corner of north Bruntsfield Links and Marchmont Road.

Below: The top-up tap put in near the Pavilion is now up and running. Scottish Water had an open/information day there on 9 March and gave away top-up bottles.



Future projects

1. Plant hedgerow type trees such as hazel, hawthorn and blackthorn to act as an understorey, below the mature trees somewhere on the Meadows. This would be very good for birdlife on the park and help absorb some of the air pollution from Melville Drive. It would also provide food for insects. It wouldn't interfere with people's use of the open spaces on the Meadows.
2. Table tennis table at Links, opposite James Gillespie's and also second one next to one at east play area.
3. New exercise equipment at South Links and beside community garden.
4. Hard surfacing at muddy path corners.
5. Establish new wildflower planting areas.
6. Painting rusty railings.
7. Tree planting and maintenance.
8. More wooden bench restoration.
9. Move some benches to safer locations (i.e. not facing onto fast cycle routes).
10. Identify areas for relaxed mowing and encourage more pollinator food sources.

Neil Roger

There is also a mushroom growing project at the Pavilion Garden - not FoMBL, but worth looking out for.

Members are encouraged to submit ideas for projects which could enhance the park.

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.

1 April	RHS Big Seed Sow morning at the community garden
16 April	Edinburgh's Grand Iftar (Mousa Taza)
19 May, 7.00pm	FoMBL talk by Graeme Cruickshank at Croquet Club
31 May–4 June 12.00–8.00pm	Meadows Annual Festival
11 June	Edinburgh Pretty Muddy (Cancer Research UK)

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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Other FoMBL Contacts:

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

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

