



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

Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) SC045955

## **NEWSLETTER 65**

**Autumn 2023**

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### **Playgrounds**

#### **Background**

Over five years ago I realised that there was a lack of play equipment for younger children (2-6) throughout the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links and as project manager for FoMBL, I set about organising the installation of new play equipment at the existing three playgrounds. With the support of council officials five pieces of such equipment have now been installed.

#### **New toddler playground at South Links now open**



#### **New playground at SW Links (adjoining Muriel Spark Walk)**

I realised that there was a lack of play equipment serving families who live around the South area of the Links and after consultation with local families I raised sufficient funds to install two simple pieces of wooden equipment in the form of a covered log house and a wooden train on a special safety mat.

The site chosen was considered ideal as it is a completely fenced area with one access gate thus minimising dog entry and toddler escape! There is also a FoMBL wildflower meadow which we hope can be used by the children to plant their own bulbs and seeds.

We have provided wood chip access paths to prevent damage to seeded soil as well as muddy feet!

Funds were provided by a generous donation by nearby Forbes nursery, CEC community fund, the Scottish Government and FoMBL. Contractor (Landcare Solutions) organisation was by Alan Grevers of CEC.

*Neil Roger*



## Community build with Tooligans



We were adopted by the Tooligans for a community build, and they came in September. The plan was to build an arch for climbers, and two benches for our circle. We spent happy hours preparing the wood, using their amazing tools, and then the magical moment when it all came together! Many thanks to our friends in the Tool Library for a wonderful day. This is run by 'Meadows Greening our Street', not FoMBL.

*Sarah Tolley*

## Muriel Spark wildflower meadow at SW Link



A great team of volunteers on a sunny autumn day cleared grass which had swamped the meadow. Thanks to Amanda for organising the event including delicious refreshments, tea and hot chocolate.

*Neil Roger*



## Bird enclave

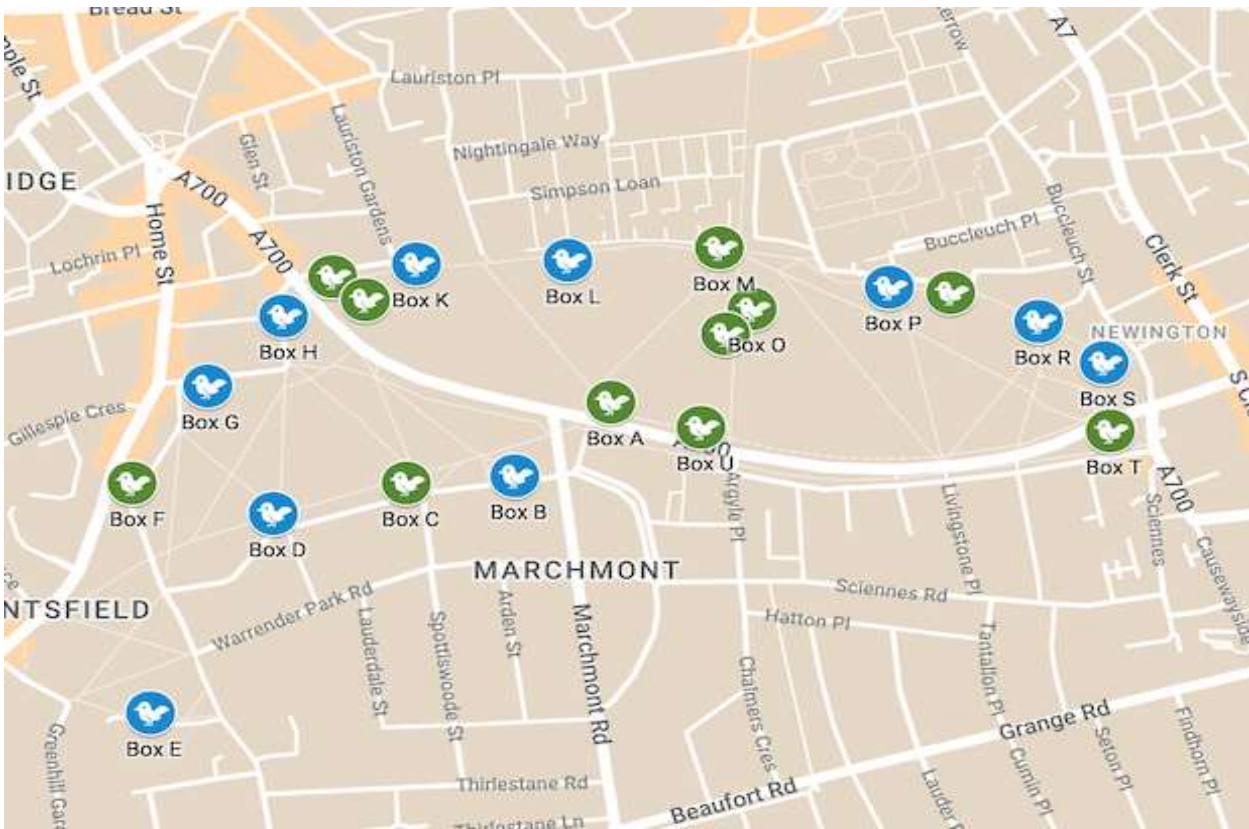


FoMBL Tree Group has been very busy during November planting hundreds of berry producing bushes and trees within the Northern area of the mid-Meadows toddlers' play park. The range of bushes and trees include wild rose, hazel, hawthorn, blackthorn, crab apple, holly, downy birch, rowan.

## News from the Tree Group

The tree group has been active during the summer watering of the trees planted last year on the Meadows and Links. We started planting this autumn's trees a few weeks ago, concentrating on the Meadows area. The trees are quite small but are caged and should grow quickly. Tree species are generally native, such as oak, hawthorn, silver birch, rowan and elm. All these trees are good for wildlife and should improve the biodiversity of the park. We currently have six members and we normally meet Friday afternoon. So if you enjoy practical work please join us.

*Martin Howorth*



*Left* BIRD BOX maintenance by Keith Gifford and helpers in November 2023

*Above*

21 boxes A to U.

A to L have been taken down, sorted out and put back up, K to U taken down and in process of drying out after being cleaned. Some sorting out to be done! Stats to be transferred onto updated spreadsheet in due course.

Map left (2022) green birds: success, blue: no birds.

## **FoMBL project update 21 October 2023**

### **History/information panels for Meadows and Bruntsfield Links Project**

Silke Schneider has been appointed from Edinburgh World Heritage to complete the project, although there is no firm date for completion yet.

### **Playgrounds**

There is a new log playhouse and train at South Links. Neil Roger will meet the Playground Officer to discuss new equipment proposed for East Meadows and Links Playground.

### **Benches – FoMBL Bench Project**



A FoMBL member has offered to fund the restoration of another wooden bench at the toddlers' playground. FoMBL have restored three wooden benches and provided two more (CEC community grant).

### **Tree Group**

Tree planting in the autumn – seven new trees to complete a new avenue from Warrender Park Road. Funding has been allocated for new trees to be planted along Melville Drive, awaiting approval from CEC forestry. Approval has not been given so these trees will have to be planted in the early spring after cable detectors have cleared the site.

Replacement of dead trees – approval given to replace many young trees which died due to lack of watering. Tree group has planted over 10 smaller trees to replace dead trees and will continue this planting programme throughout 2023-24.

Tree watering – over 40 trees planted at South Links and the Meadows regularly watered by FoMBL Tree Group. Thanks to regular waterers Benet Haughton, Martin Howorth and Alastair Philp with help from Mihaela, Anka Bremer, Keith Gifford, Amanda Lake, Felix Lake, Oliver Roger, Mr and Mrs Braunholtz.

Post restoration – FoMBL Tree Group have reclaimed over 100 posts which have rotted at the soil ends, by removing rot, sharpening and applying preservative, saving CEC a large sum of money!

Water bowsers – FoMBL have purchased a second bowser which we hope can be stored in a new store at the Bruntsfield public toilets. We hope to install a second store at the East public toilets giving us water facilities at three locations.

### **Wildflower Meadows**

Links fenced area – volunteers have been tending the wildflower meadow regularly over the summer – lots of oxeye daisy, red and white campion, yellow rattle, self heal, wood betony, knapweed, vetch, cornflower, etc. Big thanks to Amanda Lake for organising a clearing of nettles and thistles along the perimeter railings to avoid being sprayed with glyphosate by CEC parks (now banned). Meadows areas were cut by CEC parks at the end of October and raked by volunteers.

Leamington Walk wildflower meadow – Tim Duffy acquired hundreds of plugs, planted on 29 July.

### **Volunteers**

Alison Carr leads volunteers on the last Saturday of the month, but more volunteers are needed. Work includes clearing benches of weeds and undergrowth, collecting litter, and other tasks. A big thank you to Alison Carr for leading the teams.

### **Relaxed mowing/biodiversity**

David Kyles' (CEC) agreement with mowers to reduce mowing areas led to a large increase in unmown areas making a significant difference to insect habitat and increase in low level flowering.

### **Bird Enclaves/hedgerow/copse planting**

FoMBL have now had agreement to establish two new bird enclaves at the toddlers' playground next to tennis courts and at the fenced Links wildflower meadow. Low bushes including hazel, hawthorn, blackthorn, juniper and dog rose have been ordered for autumn planting. David Kyles has now linked with James Gillespie's school to involve children to help with planting areas near the school. Funding by Million Trees project.

### **Future Projects**

Table tennis table for South Links

Tree planting in autumn and spring

Bird enclave in autumn

Wooden bench restoration

New stores at Bruntsfield toilets and East Meadows toilets

New exercise equipment

*Neil Roger October 2023*

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*Apologies to our readers for the late arrival of this newsletter which was due to technical problems*

## **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.

29 December 2023 Torchlight Procession Unique Assembly with Social Bite  
(They will be 'on site' on 28 December)

## **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](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) email: [kathy.evans@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto: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*

**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).

**Treasurer:** email: [fombltreas@fombl.org.uk](mailto:fombltreas@fombl.org.uk)

**Membership Secretary:** Alison Service, email: [membership@fombl.org.uk](mailto:membership@fombl.org.uk).

**Project Manager:** Neil Roger, email: [projects@fombl.org.uk](mailto:projects@fombl.org.uk)

**Newsletter Editor:** Maureen Parnell, email: [newsletter@fombl.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@fombl.org.uk)

**Martin Howorth,** email: [howorthmartin2@gmail.com](mailto:howorthmartin2@gmail.com)

**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)

**Volunteer Co-ordinator:** Alison Carr, email: [volunteer@fombl.org.uk](mailto:volunteer@fombl.org.uk)

