



Friends of Gedling Country Park

Chairman's Report for 2020 AGM

January 2021

Let me start by apologising for the delay in issuing this report, but I was hopeful that we may have been able to make some positive comments regarding 2021 but sadly the current Covid situation makes it look unlikely for some months to come.

This report is briefer than I would have hoped but it still reflects our determination to support Gedling Country Park through the activities of the Friends.

2020 has been a year in which we have had to halt all of our major activities as a result of the ongoing Covid pandemic. This has meant that from March 2020 we have not been able to carry out any organised volunteer activities within the park. We have still maintained contact with Gedling Council staff and have had regular meetings with them to help with suggestions as to what work could be done and to offer advice and support.

The work carried out by the Rangers, Rob and Michael has been successful in helping to maintain the Park environment during this troubled year and without their efforts, especially during the summer we would have lost a substantial number of trees.

Luckily we had managed to complete the Bee enclosure work in 2019 and so we had some colonies established for 2020, although we could not expand these further as we had hoped to. But with the support of the Council we have been able to ensure that the existing colonies have been maintained and we will hope to expand them in 2021.

Also we were able to continue with the planning of the Tree Trail and this is slowly nearing completion. Once again the impact of Covid on the work has seriously delayed this and we are hopeful that we will complete it and let the public enjoy it in 2021. This will be, as far as we are aware, a unique feature that no other park has, certainly in the East Midlands.

The Council completed the new car park and this together with the two viewing platforms and the completion of the outside area for Cafe 1899 added to the attractions available. Sadly the cafe has also suffered badly during lockdowns but our grateful thanks go to their staff for what they have been able to do under the limiting restrictions. We would have held the AGM in Cafe 1899 after last year's successful event but sadly this has been overtaken by Covid requirements.

We have been involved in discussions with the council with regard to their volunteer policy and how it impacts on our activities. To ensure that the members and volunteers of the Friends group are correctly represented we have taken legal advice on our position as a charitable entity.

Equally we, the Friends, continue with our policy of supporting the fact that no non-native species of plants are planted by us on the park. We would encourage other local groups and Councils to support similar initiatives to help protect our own native plants and trees.



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We have continued, as far as possible, to work on the lower lagoons and have managed to provide additional floating nesting islands in both lagoons. Equally we have worked with a local company to develop a better weir and drainage for the central lagoon, but the completion of this has been, like many projects, delayed by Covid.

Plans have been developed by the Friends for a Sand Martins nesting site by the lower lagoons and this is being taken forward by the Council and we hope to have more news in early 2021 on progress. It is hoped that this will be supported by funding from Severn Trent as part of their environmental support

Our grateful thanks also go to our local Co-ops and their members for the incredible support, over the past few years we have had support from the Gedling village store and the Mapperley area stores and this has allowed us to complete projects and fund the Tree Trail.

My personal thanks go out to my fellow trustees who have put up with my emails and calls over the last year (we have not had a face-to-face meeting since March). The treasurers report contains details of those individuals, groups and companies who have supported us financially over the last year and I add my thanks for their support.

A further thanks go to Carlton Rotary club who produced a calendar using photographs supplied by Phillip Orme – our FFP - *"Fantastic Friends Photographer"*. Philips daily photos have helped keep the park alive in peoples minds even when they have not been able to get there in person. Then in turn they have inspired many others and I cannot remember ever seeing so many excellent images of the park in previous years. 2020 has certainly set a high standard for photography in the Park and I am sure that 2021 will see a similar high standard.

There has been one project that has suffered badly and that is the Art Competition, we have already had to delay it by a year and it sadly looks like we may have to delay it further until the Covid situation is resolved. - We will let people know of the decision on this as and when we decide.

To those members who have stayed loyally with us I offer my thanks and appreciation for your support. Please continue and encourage friends to join us.

On Social Media we have now over 4200 followers on our Friends Page

So lets look forward to 2021 and hopefully, at some point, we an all return to normal activities.

In the Meantime:

Take Care, Stay Well and Stay Safe.

Terry Lock, Chairman, Friends of Gedling Country Park





Treasurer's Report – December 2020

The Friends of Gedling Country Park was formed on 29th September 2014 and this report is for our sixth financial year for the period from 1st January 2020 to 31st December 2020. We are a UK registered charity number: 1167205.

Key Events

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact upon the activities of the Friends of Gedling Country Park including its income and its expenditure, both of which have been significantly reduced compared to previous years. Despite this, the overall financial position of the charity remains healthy and membership income has held up well. Thanks must therefore be given to every member who has paid their annual fee this year and to every other person or organisation who has donated to us. The pandemic lockdown has resulted in extensive use of Gedling Country Park by our members and the wider public, who have all come to appreciate the benefits of this wonderful nature reserve.

Each member who joins us or renews their membership has the option to confirm that they are a UK taxpayer, which enables us to claim gift aid on their membership fee. Many members have chosen to do so and as a result, we were able to claim from HMRC a total of £340 for the past 3 years of membership fees (comprising of £840 received this year, £1,005 in 2019 and £765 in 2018).

The generous donations made from the Co-op Local Community Fund in 2019 are intended to be used to implement a new nature 'Tree Trail' and artwork in the country park, provide new educational booklets and for contributing towards the cost of other landscaping improvements and planting. We had planned to have completed this during 2020, but progress has unfortunately been slow because of the pandemic, although we have been able to purchase the tree trail posts and some initial trees.

Gedling Borough Council has this year set-up the Gedling Lotto (<https://www.gedlinglotto.co.uk/>), which is an exciting weekly lottery that raises money for good causes, including for the Friends of Gedling Country Park and many other local community groups and charities. Those who play the Gedling Lotto can choose their good cause and a big thank you goes out to those who have chosen us. So far, we have received donations of £159.

We also kindly received a grant from Gedling Borough Council of £522 to allow us to produce a further print run of the educational Nature Trail booklet, once the current stocks run low.

Here is the list of organisations who have generously supported the Group this year (in alphabetical order):

- Gedling Borough Council and its Councillors
- Gedling Lotto
- Nottingham City Council Catering Services (who operates Cafe 1899 in the park and offers a 10% discount for all FGCP members)

And here is the list of individuals who have generously supported the Group this year (in alphabetical order):

- Councillor Julie Najuk
- R Douglas
- E&A Gorski
- D Moore



Income Received

The income received for the period from January 2020 to December 2020 (including the aforementioned donations and memberships) was as follows:

Category	Amount	Description
Membership Fees	£840	Membership fees taken for individual and family memberships.
HMRC Gift Aid	£340	Gif aid claimed from HMRC for the past 3 years of membership fees.
Grants	£522	£522 from Gedling Borough Council for the Nature Trail education booklets.
Donations	£404	Donations from various individuals and organisations listed above.
Fund Raising Events	£52	Monies raised from the wildlife walks we were able to hold in the park from January to March (before the COVID-19 pandemic), and the 2020 AGM raffle.
TOTAL	£2,158	

Expenditure

For the same period, expenditure was as follows:

	Amount	Description
Grounds Maintenance/Development	£2,266	Purchase of 25x tree trail posts and installation materials, installation of new kingfisher nests and maintenance of the lagoon nesting rafts.
Legal Advice	£900	Procurement of legal advice in relation to health and safety, volunteer policies and data protection for FGCP as a separate legal entity (a charitable incorporated organisation) and how this relates to Gedling Borough Council's volunteer and data protection policies.
Insurance	£428	Provision of public liability and volunteer personal accident insurance (also providing trustee, finance, libel and slander protection).
Marketing, Communications and Web	£203	Web site hosting, new membership cards, stamps and printing costs for membership forms, park history booklets and art competition photos.
Finance Charges	£111	Bank service charges from Unity Bank and transaction fees from PayPal.
Plants/Trees/Seeds	£86	Purchase of some initial trees for the tree trail and native primrose flowers.
Fund Raising and Volunteer Days	£11	Costs associated with the fund raising events and volunteer days, including refreshments.
TOTAL	£4,005	



Bank Reconciliation

The opening balance as of 1st January 2020 was £11,025.33 (comprising of £10,732.08 held at Unity bank, £293.25 held with PayPal, and no cash holdings).

Total income for 2020 was £2,158.48 and total expenditure was £4,005.37.

The closing balance as of 31st December 2020 was £9,178.44 (comprising of £8,429.94 held at Unity bank, £663.50 held with PayPal, £85.00 income not yet cleared at the bank, and no cash holdings).

Nick Benedek, Treasurer, Friends of Gedling Country Park
31st December 2020