

August
2023

Friends of Colwick Woods

Issue #02

Latest news and bulletin update

It hardly seems like six months ago since the last newsletter, how time flies when you're having fun and working hard to support the woods that we love.

We want to start with a huge thank you for your continued support, engagement, and input; together we really are making a difference.



The Friends of Colwick Woods started 2023 on a strong footing, working with Nottingham City Council to organise a tree planting event in early February that was one of the best attended events in our long history. In just over an hour, 250 new trees were planted in the woods and our efforts so impressed NCC that they agreed to go ahead and plant another 250 more.

February was a record year for tree planting in Nottingham and we're proud to say that a third of all the trees planted in partnership with Nottingham City Council during that month were planted in Colwick Woods.

This has left us with a very strong relationship and reputation with the council who have agreed to provide even more trees for new planting programs in 2024. Nottingham City Council are currently installing information boards at strategic locations around the woods and have agreed to include our logo and information to attract new members and inform the public of the work we do.

February also saw the continuation of Ellie Poole's brilliant wildlife wellness walks that allow us to take a moment to enjoy the woods and the nature they support. These continued through the year, and we look forward to the next one on Saturday 19th August.

In March we broke ground literally and figuratively on the first pond project for Colwick Woods. In a carefully selected location, several members spent the morning installing and filling a 350litre pond to act as a rain catching area and natural water source for surrounding wildlife.

This pond features a built-in escape ramp to prevent any small animals becoming trapped and has gradually filled thanks to efforts of our members and the very wet weather we have had. We have already seen many animal tracks, feathers from where birds of prey have visited and disturbed a not best pleased badger early one morning when she came down for a drink.



With the success of this project only three months on, we will be seeking further sites to install ponds in an effort ensure year-round water sources in what can be an area of water scarcity.

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Supplementing these ponds, several smaller watering holes have also been installed at various points in the woods that can be easily filled from a bottle of water or ambient rain fall. These provide additional sites for water access and have been frequented by small birds and mammals in the short time they have been in place.

We also held our first members' meeting of 2023 in March which was well attended and enabled us to discuss our plans for the year and get vital feedback.



The Friends of Colwick Woods monthly litter picks have continued to grow in popularity and provide a vital service in keeping the woods clean and safe for wildlife. We are happy to report that month on month, despite having plenty of attendees, we are finding less and less litter, so the tide is turning. We can do this together and we cannot thank those that attend enough for the work they put in.

In May we hosted the first of our Co-op funded talks with the Nottinghamshire Bat Group. This was again well attended and very interesting, enabling us to understand what we as a group can do to support the bat population of Colwick Woods. This talk attracted a

lot of positive attention for the Friends of Colwick Woods and resulted in several new member sign ups. We will be working with the Nottinghamshire Bat Group to install specialised bat boxes in Colwick Woods to provide vital roosting spaces for our bats during the winter months.

The Nottinghamshire Bat Group will be visiting us again on the 1st of September to conduct a guided bat walk through the woods which we are very excited to take part in.

2023 also saw a significant environmental win for Colwick Woods as the diesel generator that spewed smoke and noise near the telecoms mast was finally removed. This was the result of an entire year of hard work from our Wildlife Coordinator Ellie Poole and we are pleased to say that the new battery powered generator is much quieter with no emissions. This has had a massively positive impact on the immediate area around the mast and we are very grateful for the many hours of work that went into this.

Further developments were made with the Nottinghamshire fire service who have worked closely with the Friends of Colwick woods to develop a colour-coded system that enables their dispatch staff to quickly determine the nearest entrance point should a fire be reported.

We are supporting this colour coded system, used in conjunction with what3words if available, by installing bird boxes painted with the corresponding colour of their respective zone.



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If calling 999 to report a fire, the dispatcher may ask if you have seen or can see a bird box nearby and what colour it is. They will then use this to identify which entrance the fire service should use to get to the fire or emergency as quickly as possible.

There are currently 12 colour-coded bird boxes in the woods with a further 12 to be installed in the coming month. This will be an ongoing project for the Friends of Colwick Woods and, while we hope the need never arises, we are confident that it will make a difference should an emergency occur. At the very least, we are providing 24 additional bird homes to our feathered residents.

In early June, our Chair JD met with KT Smith from the Wildlife Trust and discussed a variety of ways that both the Friends of Colwick Woods and the Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust can work together to support and develop the wild spaces in our area. This will be another ongoing project that we look forwards to seeing develop.

Online, our social media presence continues to grow with regular positive feedback being received. We recently captured several 'Mindful Moments' of birdsong in Colwick Woods, taking inspiration from BBC's Spring Watch, which proved to be very popular.

Our AGM was held at BANCA on the 19th of June, details below.

AGM

The AGM took place at BANCA on the 19th of June and covered the following points:

- No new nominations for Elected Organising Committee.
- All Elected Committee members to retain their position for the next 12 months.
- Alex elected to the Committee to support with Nature Conservation and photography.
- New constitution implemented by unanimous vote. Main changes including moving to agreement by majority vote, quarterly membership meetings, increased collaborating with other groups and bodies and slight reduction in number of committee members needed to form quorum. Hard copies of the new constitution were available at the AGM and electronic copies are available upon request.
- Membership fee to be replaced by voluntary donations on ad hoc basis with focus on funding for specific projects.
- FOCW finance summary provided by Glenn, FOCW Treasurer. FOCW finances improved by 31% on previous year thanks primarily to CoOp funding secured by Glynda and Helen Hill.
- General discussion with positive feedback received. No causes for concern received.



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Memorial Walk Completion: The Memorial Walk restoration project, started in 2022, is nearing completion and the area is already teeming with new plant life. We have two small stumps to remove and then the walkway will be clear and safe for the foreseeable future.

FOCW member Hannah has volunteered to hand paint a sign that will hang between two trees on the route commemorating the work and providing a small amount of information regarding its purpose.

The Memorial Walk will be one of the areas impacted by the FOCW Native Plant Project taking place this coming Autumn.

Nature Reserve Visits: In the coming months we will be looking at organising short trips to local nature reserves to learn and take inspiration from other sites that will help us support Colwick Woods. The dates for these trips will be posted far in advance on both social media and via email to the mailing list.



Animal Homes: Following on from the success of the previous bird boxes installed in the woods, we have agreed to invest in a further twelve bird boxes, two owl boxes, one kestrel box and several bat boxes. These are being purchased from charities where possible and will be installed in late summer, early autumn to support with hibernation and spring nesting.

FOCW Native Plant Project: Additional investments will be made to support the plant and pollinator biodiversity in Colwick Woods. We will be setting up a funding project to purchase several sets of native plant species that we will be planting across the entire site with the aim of increasing food for pollinating insects and enhancing existing flora. This will be a community event with the dates being posted on both social media and via email to the mailing list.

Guest Talk, Tom Huggon: We will be scheduling a talk with Tom Huggon covering the history of Sneinton, Colwick and Bakersfield potentially taking place at Green's Windmill in September. This will be a free, evening event and the date once confirmed will be posted on both social media and via email to the mailing list.

Regular Litter Picks: It has been agreed that the **Second Saturday** of each month will be set as the Friends of Colwick Woods litter pick to enable members to plan this time in. These events are a great opportunity to meet with other members, share updates and provide practical support to Colwick Woods.

The dates of upcoming litter picks are:

2023: 12th of August, 9th of September, 14th of October, 11th of November, 9th of December

2024: 13th of January, 10th of February, 9th of March, 13th of April, 11th of May, 8th of June.

As always, these dates are subject to weather and will be posted on both social media and via email to the mailing list.

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Bird Seed Giveaway: We will be creating bird seed packets ahead of winter to provide to the public, free of charge, in an effort to encourage engagement with nature. These will be of minimal cost to FOCW however will include our details on the package and the information to make a voluntary donation. We believe this could generate new members and donations for FOCW while allowing us to work with local businesses to spread awareness of what we do. Confirmation of when this goes live and the locations the seeds are available will be posted on both social media and via email to the mailing list.

Summary: We'd once again like to thank everyone who has supported Friends of Colwick Woods over the years and encourage you all to get in touch, join the meetings or litter picks and let us know what we can do to better make the woods a haven for people and wildlife.

Dates for your Diaries

Wellness Walk

10am, Saturday 19th August 2023

Meeting at the Coffee Stop

Litter Picks

Always meeting at the Coffee Stop:

2023

12th August

9th September

14th October

11th November

9th December

2024

13th January

10th February

9th March

13th April

11th May

Contact Details

Email

focw.enquiries@gmail.com

Facebook

www.facebook.com/focwlhr

Website

www.friendsofcolwickwoods.co.uk

Bat Walk

Friday 1st September, specific time to be confirmed

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