



# Friends of Ashby Bath Grounds

NEWSLETTER December 2022

## Dear Friend of Ashby Bath Grounds,

As we come to the end of 2022, the committee of the Friends group wanted to send you a final Newsletter to remind you of some key highlights and give a preview of what 2023 will bring.

It has been quite a year for the Friends group, we have seen membership reach record levels, participated in numerous meetings and consultations with the Town council, undertaken maintenance work on some of the Bath Grounds best features and played a key part in retaining the Green Flag award.

We have also kept in close contact with our members through regular bulletins and newsletters, held two very successful general meetings with members and of course represented our group at the fabulous Jim's tractor run event.

Following the AGM and the re-election of the committee, we very much look forward to taking the group forward again in 2023, but as ever we need the support of our members and we are now asking you to please renew your membership. Your £5 helps ensure we can keep doing all the good work that is so important to protecting and improving the Bath Grounds.

Thank you again for your contribution, enjoy this newsletter and we wish you and your friends and family the very best for the festive break.

*From all your Committee Members.*

## Wildlife Walk

The wildlife walk running from Prior Park Road to the Cattle Arch is one of the summer highlights of the Bath Grounds. A lot of effort has been spent over recent years to clear the undergrowth and plant wildflower seed. A mulch cut has recently been completed to allow the wildflower seed to rejuvenate in the Spring.



However, the strips of land bordering the path are not registered at the Land Registry or obviously owned by anybody. Consequently, we have been working with those responsible for maintenance of the adjacent land – Ashby Town Council and East Midlands Homes – to agree ongoing maintenance arrangements.

Ashby Town Council are mowing the grass to the West of the path and have accepted responsibility for the trees on that side. East Midlands Housing will be trimming some of the larger bushes on the Eastern boundary. They will also be commissioning a survey of the trees on that side.

As mentioned, the Friends have recently paid for a mulch cut of the wildflower area and we will be seeking advice from the Heart of England Hedge Laying Group on the future maintenance of the hedge on that side. In the New Year, it is likely that we will be arranging

a volunteer working party to tidy-up the hedge and remove pervasive weeds from the wildflower area.

We are also exploring the possibility of formally transferring the land bordering either side of the path to Ashby Town Council. If this can be done it will greatly help with clarifying responsibilities.

## Royal Hotel – Latest Position

We are still awaiting a decision to be made on the planning application for 17 houses either side of the Royal Hotel – on the car park and Hastings Gardens. The developer's stated intention is to use the profit from the houses, together with the sale of the Bath Grounds to the Town Council, to help fund the redevelopment of the Royal Hotel.

The District Council have commissioned planning consultants to determine whether the funds will be sufficient to make the redevelopment of the Royal Hotel a viable scheme. This is expected to report in the new year.

In the meantime, we have submitted comments on the enabling planning application. The main concerns were:

1. Reduction in the number of parking spaces adjacent to the Cricket Club.
2. The loss of 81 trees.
3. The height of the houses being the same as the Royal Hotel.
4. The number of parking spaces for the hotel.
5. Additional pedestrians crossing at the bottom of South Street.

If these concerns can be overcome and the finances stack up, then we can look forward to 2023 being the year when an agreed viable plan is in place to return the Royal Hotel to its former glory.

## De-culverting Gilwiskaw Brook

As mentioned in the last Newsletter, the Trent Rivers Trust has prepared a feasibility report on a project to 'daylight' the Gilwiskaw Brook in the Bath Grounds. The scheme would open up the culvert in the Bath Grounds which currently takes the Brook underneath the town from Hood Park, emerging south of Ashby before joining the river Mease.

The report was discussed at our Annual General Meeting when lots of different views were expressed. All the comments we received from members and the public, by email and on Facebook, have been passed to the Trent Rivers Trust and the Town Council.

Because of the strength of concerns, the Trent Rivers Trust has commissioned further work on assessing the flood risk associated with the proposal. Once this has been completed, Trent Rivers Trust and the Town Council will be carrying out a period of further public consultation. We will be actively engaged with the consultation and encouraging members to make their views known.

## Membership Subscriptions

Membership subscriptions for 2023 are now due - £5 per member. If you have set up a standing order, thank you very much.

Otherwise, you can pay your subscription by:

**Bank Transfer** - sort code 77-15-13 account 30039268 name 'Friends of Ashby Bath Grounds'. Please use full name as the reference.

**Cheque** payable to 'Friends of Ashby Bath Grounds' - name on back of cheque please.

**Cash** - in envelope with your name on.

Cheques and cash to our Treasurer, SJ Statham, 2 Cotswold Way, Ashby LE65 1ET.

For new members, a membership form is available from [www.bathgroundsfriends.com](http://www.bathgroundsfriends.com) or our Treasurer.