

New benches on the Bath Grounds



One of our goals and visions for the Bath Grounds has been to increase the number of benches, given feedback from our members and the public. Last year we started to

share this vision and were thrilled that we were approached by local people, groups and businesses who wished to support this goal. We created a plan to install three new benches. Annie Ingram, a Committee member of the Friends said 'it has been such a positive and collaborative project and so rewarding'

The Sponsors, Fabricator (Artisan of Ashby Ltd) and the Friends have worked together to ensure a really creative and valuable outcome; something unique for the grounds.



We would like to thank particularly the Sponsors, that include Ashfield, The Civic Society, Friends and Family of John White and neighbours of the Bath Grounds. We love the quote chosen for

John White's bench, which we think not only sums John up wonderfully, but also this whole project. *'The greatest achievements are those that benefit others'.*

Anyone having ideas to support other projects we have, please do come and talk to us

As you probably are aware the newly sown wild flower bed on the Prior Park path, part of the Castle View Wildlife Walk Project, which was just about coming into flower, was mistakenly mown by the Town Council's grounds staff in June. Although we have had some regrowth this summer, the wildflowers are few and far between as taking them down to the soil so early in their growth, allowed nettles and dock weed to repopulate the walkway

Mr Fargher, the Town Clerk, carried out an investigation into the incident and established that it was human error. The Town Clerk has apologised on behalf of the ground staff.

A meeting was held between the Ashby Town council and the Friends on 7 July 2017 and we have agreed the following actions;

The Town Council will re-prepare including rotivating the full length of the flowerbed (from the railway archway to the Prior Park entrance approximately 150m x 3m) to eliminate weed growth, by the end of December 2017. The friends will then re-prepare the ground and reseed the wild flowers.

Although this now means that there will be a delay in the completion of the project – The Town Council and the friends will work together to ensure that the wildlife flowerbed is reinstated for 2018.



In the mean-time I think you would all agree that wildlife walk is starting to take shape and this year's colour is just a taste of better things to come!!

The Friends have informed the sponsors and we will carry on with the remaining parts of the project which are now to procure and install wildlife boxes.

The Friends will of course keep all our sponsors and the public up to date as the project continues

Recent Vandalism to the Bath Grounds

The Interpretation board – south street entrance

This was damaged on the Sunday of Jims Tractor Run at the end of July. The board was found the Bath Grounds. The board has now been returned to the manufacturer for repair and will be put back on site as soon as possible.



Cricket Club Vandalism

Damage to the Cricket Club has been significant over the last few months with equipment being stolen and the latest attack resulting in benches being ripped out from the front of the club house and put onto the roof and a bollard removed so that cars could drive onto the cricket ground. We ask that everyone remain as vigilant as possible.

Ivanhoe Mosaic

The Mosaic by the south street flowerbed was removed following severe vandalism in May, and is still undergoing repair. The Friends are looking into options for protecting the mosaic from future attacks before it is re-installed.

ASB & Maintenance Meetings

Quarterly maintenance meeting continue the following issues were highlighted

Issues still on the agenda and which the friends are still trying to improve include;

- Footpath potholes – which although were repaired in early spring this year are now as bad as they were last year
- Ongoing meetings with the Royal Hotel, the police, the cricket club, the District and Town Council to improve ASB around the Royal Hotel carpark and cricket Club. The most recent meeting discussed the pro-active approach being taken to address ASB particularly around the Royal Hotel car park area late at night, and the need to continue securing the gates at the Hastings garden entrance overnight.
- The friends continue to monitor the Japanese knotweed situation on the bath grounds – 2 main areas which have been fenced off for over a year now – treatment is still ongoing

Development of the Royal Hotel car park - 8th Sept deadline

The Friends would like to inform our followers that there is currently a Planning Application to develop the Royal Hotel and adjacent land. **Application Number 17/00761/FULM.** Development of the northern car park of The Royal Hotel to provide B1 office accommodation and 28 residential apartments alongside associated access, parking and amenity site.

All the information concerning this application is detailed on the North West Leicestershire District council website planning section/portal where you will need to register if you wish to make a comment or objection The end date to get your comment/ objection into the District Council Planning Dept is**8th September 2017.**

Representatives from the Friend's Committee attended the Town Council Planning Committee meeting earlier this summer where the proposal for this application was voted unanimously against by the Town Council , for the following reasons:

- The planned buildings do not complement or enhance the heritage assets in the immediate vicinity: The Royal Hotel, Rawdon Terrace, Bath Grounds, Loudon Memorial and Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church.
- The layout and density is unacceptable, leading to the over intensive development of the site.
- The buildings are overbearing for the properties on

Rawdon Terrace. Leading to their properties being overlooked and a loss of privacy.

- Loss of outlook from the historic Bath Grounds towards the Royal Hotel.
- Insufficient car parking provision which is contrary to the planning authority's policy on the provision of car parking.
- The £50,000 contribution for off- site affordable housing is unacceptable. This contribution is well below the £140,000 off-site contribution that should be provided if the Local Plan policy is adhered to.

The Friends feel that the development is 'over bearing' for its setting amongst the other heritage assets of the Ashby Conversation Area, particularly the Bath Grounds.

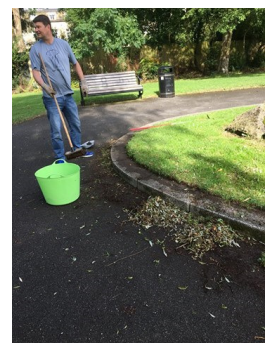
Many of our followers signed against the original applications in 2012 - 2014 plans, which at the time were one and two storey buildings. Application 17/00761/FULM is now proposing two and three storey buildings.

We also have concerns about the knock on effect of lack of allocated parking and that there has been no further public consultation since 2012. (Please note that there is another proposed building on the other side of the Hotel, Hastings Garden area at the back of the Cricket Club, next to the Hotel for additional conference/ accommodation – this building is not contained within this application).

This application, 17/00761/FULM, covers a residential three storey building overlooking the Bath Grounds in between the Royal Hotel and Rawdon Terrace, and a two storey commercial building at the front roadside end of the carpark, again, in between the Royal Hotel and Rawdon.

Saturday morning tidying!

The Friends are continuing to do tidying work on the Bath Grounds through the year. Last month - clearing of grass, cigarette ends, litter and moss from underneath south street benches and tidying around the flowerbed, cleaning graffiti off benches, weeding around trees on the wildlife walk and cleaning of interpretation boards!!



We will be doing more Saturday morning 'flash work' on the Bath Grounds this year - if you are interested in giving a helping hand please drop us an email or contact us via our Facebook or telephone numbers given below

Contact details:

J. Birch: Chair - Tel: 07958 232281
V. Mott: Secretary - Tel :07800 765744