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Friends of Ponteland Park Newsletter

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We haven't been dormant all winter!



Snowdrops

On the afternoon of March 2nd, the committee members met with Kathleen Scott, Ponteland's expert on snowdrops who had kindly said she would walk through the park with us identifying suitable groups of snowdrops for splitting and suitable sites for their relocation. We took on board all Kathleen's advice. On March 31st we spent most of the morning lifting snowdrops in readiness for the great transplant the next morning. Saturday April 1st, what a day to choose!! Twelve members of F.O.P.P turned up and worked for about two hours. We successfully planted all the snowdrops into their new locations and we now eagerly await to see what happens next January. **Thank you Kathleen and ladies.**

Bird boxes

Friday April 14th saw Margaret and myself up the trees, well Michael was up the trees we stood around at the bottom, handing him the necessary equipment..(Notice no show without Jess!!) We now have 4 nest boxes in place, in various areas of the park. Move in feathered friends, whenever you like!

Stop Press May 17th Blue Tits in residence.

Autumn Tree Planting

We have applied to the Tree Council for a grant towards tree planting in November, and Sue has prepared a very detailed, time consuming, application which has gone forward and which we hope will be successful. Do look out for the tree planting weekend in November folks. We need all the help we can get. We also have a grand bulb planting weekend planned for the Autumn, so keep your eyes on the notice board.

Annual General Meeting

We had our first Annual General Meeting in March and I am pleased to report that 25 Friends arrived. It was a very successful meeting. There were one or two slight changes made to the committee. Sue who only agreed initially, to be treasurer whilst there was *no money* involved has become our Vice Chair and Alma has taken over the treasurer's position.

We have a notice Board.

In March we got the go ahead from the Parish to purchase a notice board. On Friday March 31st our stalwart Michael fixed it in place. We do not waste time. Sadly neither do the vandals, but it was pristine for twelve hours! Hopefully the C.C.T.V. camera now has it in view so this should help prevent mindless destruction. We can but hope!

A New Path.

Wood chippings (provided by **Green and Clean**), have been laid at the very muddy entrance to the Park on Fox Covert Lane. What a difference it makes too. Well done Alma, Brian and Margaret sorry about the aching backs.

By dint of persuasion, cajoling, threatening I have managed to extract articles from all the members of the committee as you will see overleaf. Have a good read.

See you in November. **Coral.**





NEW PATHS and FLOWER MEADOWS.

The creating of **Spring and Summer Meadows** has always been at the 'top of the jobs' list for the committee. We were most grateful when Andy Rutherford and Philip Minto from Castle Morpeth spent an afternoon with us in the park to see where the new paths could be cut to 'open up' more areas for walkers, at the same time locate possible flower meadow areas. Special machinery to cut and remove grass mowings should be in action by September to try to reduce the fertility of soil so that the flowers have less competition from the grasses. We then hope to plug plant later in the Autumn with 3-4 varieties of meadow flowers which are particularly popular with Butterflies and Bees;

Hardheads, Meadow Scabious, Meadow Cranesbill, Purple Clover..

N.B. A number of Comma butterflies were located near the Millennium Bridge by a visitor to the Party in the Park. Thank you to Paul Robins member of N.W.T. **Margaret.**(Chairperson)

WINTER TREE AND SHRUB PLANTING PROJECT.

Our proposals for two extensions to the perimeter woodland in the upper park have been blessed by the Parish Council and our application to the Tree Council for help with funding is awaiting a decision at their September meeting in London—fingers crossed.

Ponteland **Neighbourhood Watch** kindly gave us a generous donation hoping that it would be used in a project involving young people, encouraging them to work and care for the park. Catch them young and hopefully foster a life long interest in the natural world. This is an opportunity to do just that. We hope to involve as many local residents, especially young people, starting in **National Tree Week – November 22nd –December 3rd**. Watch out for details in the Notice Board. Local community groups cubs, beavers and scout leaders have already enthusiastically come on board. **Thank You.**

F.O.P.P. members have been busy preparing the lower site and **Green and Clean** will close cut the upper site for us in late autumn so that planting will be easier. To benefit wild life and prevent bank erosion 2 metre strips beside the river are being left uncut. We have exciting plans for increasing the wild flower spectacle in these areas in future years. Anyone who is interested in helping to grow plug plants for our wild flower projects please contact any of the committee members. Our new pathways will hopefully be cut every two weeks, weather permitting. I hope you were lucky enough to enjoy these when that fantastic display of cow parsley was out—sheer heaven! **Sue.**(Vice Chair)

F.O.P.P.'s THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

We were delighted to see so many Friends at the Party in the Park.

This has been a busy few months for F.O.P.P. membership now stands at 180 and rising! With future plans for the park, which include bulb and shrub planting, revenue is so important.

We are applying for sponsorship for **INFORMATION BOARDS** in the Park, a massive outlay for which we hope local and national grants could apply. Would you like to sponsor a **SEAT** in the Park? Please ask any of us for details.

The onslaught on **HIMALAYAN BALSAM** continues—each plant removed saves a further 800 in 2007—well worth the effort! We are delighted with your support so far on Tuesday evenings at 7pm. More are welcome Contact **01661 825129**.

Lastly but most importantly we are so grateful for sponsorship of this Newsletter from **Cowell's Garden Centre** and **Ponteland Print**. With a generous grant from Ponteland Parish Council we are lucky to have such brilliant community support and are much encouraged by their help.

Finally there are only four of us, **WE NEED YOUR HELP PLEASE!** Do contact any one of us, to be made most welcome. **Alma** (Treasurer)



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