



UPDATE: Friends of Somersall Park Group



Since our meeting at the Rose and Crown is now a month or two ago, we would like to update you all with what has been happening! There has certainly been lots of activity.

Also - to make you all aware that **the next full meeting will be held at The Rose and Crown pub on Sunday 19th October at 7.30pm. All welcome!**

Allissa Charlesworth and Katie Spelman have been raising the profile of the group through their PR campaign. We now have a facebook group of over 400 people, and a smaller 'action group' of people of around 30 who have expressed an interest in helping with lobbying, funding applications, events, networking, publicity and basically anything they can to help the cause! **Please let us know if you would like to be added to this smaller group!**

We are working on links to local schools and youth groups, and several local businesses have offered their support with some of our sundry expenses.

We have in the pipeline an offer of some tree planting and along with this a possibility of some bulb planting displays in the park. We are in touch with Derbyshire Wildlife Trust - looking into creating some wild flower meadow areas as well. Which would look fantastic, and encourage wildlife too.

We have a litter pick planned by one of the local Cub and Beaver groups, and hopefully an event in the park later in the year. This would be a really easy way for others to get involved too, so if you have a group (however small) and want to do some litter picking please please go for it - and perhaps post on the face book group to let the wider community know. What a great example to set to the kids (and to the council) if they see us out there helping ourselves.

We had a small article in the S40 magazine last month, and an offer of continued support there too. We have been in touch with the Walton Dam Friends Group and established a link with them.

The council have also agreed to look at the bins provision in the park as well as the frequency of emptying - to see if we can make improvements here.

We are hoping to have a Christmas tree in the St Thomas' Christmas tree festival.

All this is aimed at raising the group's profile and getting the community behind the project as much as possible. Of course, we also need to make sure that people with concerns have access to the opportunity to air their views too.

Anti-social behaviour has been a key concern and we are keen to encourage local people to feel a sense of ownership of the park (it is after all public owned, managed by the council) so that they will not want to damage it in any way! Our particular focus here are our teenage park users and we are hoping that by forming links with Brookfield School we can encourage this feeling of ownership.

The local police have agreed to include the 'Youth Shelter' more frequently in their beat and have asked that we report any issues to them on the non-emergency number. They have also been into Brookfield School to discuss these issues with the Headmaster there - and the Head Boy and Girl are going to be raising awareness amongst the pupils about what we are trying to do.

We are in the process of finalising the bank account necessary to start applying for funding grants. We have established a couple of possible avenues for funding already – with some local 'friends of' groups pointing us in the right direction.

Rebecca Robinson, our Chairperson, has drafted a suggested constitution for the group, which will be forwarded to you all shortly..

We would love to hold community events in the park if we can get the help to make this possible. In particular some form of Carol singing, or even a Christmas fair – just an idea! If you have an idea please let us know.

We were invited to attend a small 'Friends of' forum on Thursday at the Town Hall – where we got to chat with other friends groups and also had the ear of some of our council parks managers. We took a lot away from this – but also felt mildly overwhelmed by the amount of time and hard work this is going to take on our part if it is to be successful!

Which brings me to our next point! The more people we have working together the easier this will be!

The next step needs to be to establish a fairly small formal core group. **So, if you are interested in being a co-optive member of the committee and having a more active role please email back with your details. This would basically involve attending the smaller committee meetings and being willing to give up a bit of your time to help with the funding applications, event organisation and administration involved.** We know there is a huge amount of support and skill out there and are keen to engage with everyone who would like to help. A couple of people are not going to be able to make this happen, it most definitely needs a group effort!

Maybe, you don't really want to be on the committee as such, but are happy to offer help and support when you can, that's fantastic too – we will keep in touch with the whole of the contact list in this way regardless of whether you step forward to the core group.

Some may even just want to keep up to date with what is happening – also absolutely fine.

The facebook page and (possibly soon to be) website are a great easy way to be in touch with people. So if you are on facebook please join us and post that you would like to join the action group if this is your wish.

As most of our communication has been online we are struggling to engage sometimes with the older generation, but are extremely keen to do so. So if you know anyone who might be interested please put us in touch. So finally,

- **Can you or anyone you know help?**
- **Would you like to be on the committee?**
- **Do you know of any local businesses that would like to support our efforts in return for some publicity?**

We will keep you posted with any news, and of course, when we manage to get all the right people together for the next full meeting.

Many thanks and look forward to seeing you all soon!

