



THE BYTHAMS WOODLAND TRUST
(Registered Charity 1182600)
CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2019/20

Introduction

I am pleased to introduce the sixteenth Chairman's Report for the Bythams Woodland Trust (BWT). I can only cover a brief synopsis of all work that has gone on behind the scenes on our many working weekends during the past year and to welcome the continuing increase in visitors as one of the main success stories - until right at the end of the year, we had to close the site as our response to the Coronavirus pandemic.

Constitution

Our new governance structure as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) has worked well and no changes have been required.

Our annual returns to the Charity Commission were submitted on time. New Committee Advisors were made at the AGM in 2019 and all of these have made a positive contribution to the work of the Trust. The Management Committee met on six occasions, including the AGM.

Funding

While no major funding applications were made, we have received a number of small grants - from the Co-op Community Fund, the South Kesteven Lottery and our District Councillor. We were extremely grateful to be chosen as a key local charity for the year by the Bythams, Careby and Creeton (BCC) Sponsored Drive and Ride and we were bowled over by the level of award we received.

We always appreciate financial support from Bythams Music, the Castle Bytham Festival Committee, the Castle and Little Bytham Parish Councils and Careby Parish Meeting. These contributions are vital to help with the day to day running costs of the Spinney.

Our on-line text Just Giving continues to generate a regular amount of income with good potential for further development.

Site Works

The main focus of our work is to maintain the site in a good condition to ensure a continued enjoyable use by visitors. Our work schedule during the year is demanding in terms of general maintenance - mowing, strimming, leaf clearing and gleaning fallen branches, coppicing and general tidying, building new steps, repairing play equipment, planting and weeding the sensory garden by hand!

In particular, during the wettest early spring for decades, the site became very waterlogged and we had to create a whole new network of pathways using bark chippings in order that visitors could simply walk about without slipping over.

The Meadow is now beginning to look very much the wildflower site we have always wanted and our seed planting during the past couple of years has paid off with a wonderful sward of meadow flowers in the summer. We have ended the Farm Business Tenancy agreement with John and Guy Turner, and contracted with Gilbert Elson to trim and shape all the hedges in March.

We have planted a new wooded area within the Meadow with whips of a variety of species given by the Woodland Trust as part of their Charter for Trees project. It will be interesting to see how these grow in the coming years on what can be a dry site.

Events

A major disappointment was the cancellation of our Tree Dressing Day in November because of very wet weather. We had a full programme lined up, but it would have been very risky to have had 400-500 visitors on site at the same time. We are sorry to all our friends and partners whom we know put in a lot of preparation time. We had hoped to reschedule the event for March, but then the world turned upside down because of the Coronavirus pandemic.

To support the BCC Drive and Ride, several BWT members were able to help marshal at the week-end event in May and enjoy Grimsthorpe Park in glorious weather.

Publicity and Promotion

Judging by the numbers of people now visiting the Spinney, our publicity and promotion in all its forms is working extremely well. We are still getting lots of use not only from local people but also many who come in from much further afield. On some days the main car park and access road are completely full, so the overflow area on the meadow has proven to be invaluable.

Gavin Pye has updated our website at www.bythamspinney.co.uk, and he also took part in the Duke of Edinburgh open evening at the Stamford High Schools to offer bronze and silver opportunities to their students.

We are on Facebook (www.facebook.com/bythamsSpinney) and our 'likes' have reached well over 2500. We have investigated how best we might optimize voluntary donations through <http://www.charitygiving.co.uk/bythamswoodland>.

Health and Safety

This remains a key priority and a continuing requirement of our insurance arrangements. The Spinney is a natural wild woodland and there will always be an element of risk and adventure in what we do.

We had our annual ROSPA Play Area Safety Inspection Report in August and it is very pleasing to note that in all areas, there were no major issues. We have used the report to guide us as we carry out the repairs that were identified as needing remediation.

Future Plans

High quality, ongoing site maintenance and upkeep of the woodland will be critical to keep the site in good condition. We have discussed the need to make a substantial new grant application to one of the major charity funders to replace or upgrade the play equipment that was installed nearly 20 years ago and is nearing the end of its shelf life.

The BWT is always looking for more friends to help with what we are trying to achieve for local people. If you have some spare time, or know of someone who does, then please do come and join us!

And of course, while the adults are working, we want to encourage children to come to the site to take part in some of the most fantastic play experiences that nature can offer – adventurous, dirty, rough, creative, destructive, imaginative, active, physical, healthy – the sort of play opportunities many of us probably had twenty or so years ago but sadly do not seem so prevalent today. There is a strong national drive to compensate for what is called the 'nature deficit' for children who do not appreciate the wonders of the natural environment, but it is clear that there is no such deficit at the Spinney.

Thanks

There are so many people who deserve to be thanked for the tremendous time and effort that they have put into the Spinney. All the Trustees and Advisors use their different skills and experiences to ensure that the BWT is well managed to do what needs to be done. We have a really solid Saturday morning maintenance crew who put in the time week in, week out. Many thanks to Sam, Gavin, Simon G, Richard, Simon C, Tim, Luke, Gillian, James and Thomas

We have had another really good team of Duke of Edinburgh students this year who have worked incredibly hard to help shift barrowloads of bark to put under the play equipment and create new paths all over the site. Thanks to James, James, Oliver, Oscar and Harry.

We have received great support from FOBS and Richard Clarke, the Head Teacher at the Bythams School, while Jo Schofield continues to make some amazing woodland creations at our events. We are pleased that the site is used by the school as an outdoor classroom for 'forest school' teaching.

We are grateful for all the work done by John and Guy Turner on the woodland and meadow areas.

Thanks to the Castle Inn and Fox and Hounds for allowing us to use their premises for our meetings, the Police who keep an eye out for us, The Glenside News for regularly publishing our news and stories, our District Councillor, Chris Benn, Trevor Harris who services all our mechanical equipment, Tim Rasell who advises on plants and good horticulture tips and Aqualoos who provide the much needed toilets for our events.

We are also very appreciative of our funders – the local Parish Councils, the Castle Bytham Mid-summer Festival Committee, the Bythams Careby and Creeton Drive and Ride and all those individuals who have made very kind donations throughout the year. Their continued support is greatly valued.

Finally, our warmest thanks must go to the local community and especially the children who use the site for their play, adventure, learning or simple relaxation and without whom, the whole thing would simply not be worthwhile.

Dr Patrick Candler, Chairman of BWT
6.6.20



The Bythams Woodland Trust
Little Bytham
Grantham
Lincs

Charity
Ref 118 2600

Annual Accounts

1st April 2019 to 31st March 2020

Date	IN For	Amount	Date	Type	OUT For	Amount
	opening balance	£1,478.19				
2-Apr-19	Gatherwell lottery	£25.00	9-Jun-19	bacs	G Pye - Fuel	£16.50
25-Apr-19	CoOp	£360.98	12-Jun-19	bacs	S Adams AGM	£12.60
14-May-19	Gatherwell lottery	£33.50	17-Jun-19	bacs	G Pye - Timber	£40.09
4-Jun-19	Gatherwell lottery	£32.00	17-Jun-19	bacs	G Pye - Tea & Coffee	£8.03
18-Jun-19	Just Giving	£12.00	6-Aug-19	bacs	G Pye - Timber for swing	£161.78
24-Jun-19	CB Mid Summer Fair	£225.00	27-Aug-19	bacs	G Pye - screws	£3.75
2-Jul-19	Lottery SK	£30.50	23-Sep-18	bacs	Playsafety Ltd RSPA	£143.40
2-Jul-19	cash donations Grimsthorpe	£35.25	7-Oct-19	bacs	G Pye - Tape and tarmac	£35.27
22-Jul-19	Grimsthorpe Horse Trials	£925.00	14-Oct-19	bacs	G Pye - Whacker	£66.60
26-Jul-19	Just Giving	£10.00	25-Oct-19	bacs	G Pye - website fee	£17.98
7-Aug-19	Lottery SK	£35.50	12-Nov-19	bacs	P Candler - swing repairs	£23.95
28-Aug-19	LBPC	£350.00	2-Dec-19	bacs	Men In Sheds - bench	£140.00
10-Sep-19	Lottery SK	£26.00	11-Dec-19	bacs	G Pye - website fee	£10.87
25-Sep-19	Hermes	£500.00	6-Feb-19	bacs	Men in Sheds 50% deposit	£287.50
10-Oct-19	Castle Bytham PC	£400.00	12-Mar-20	bacs	Men in Sheds 50% final	£287.50
15-Oct-19	Lottery SK	£35.00	12-Mar-20	bacs	Hedge cutting GH Elsen	£240.00
5-Nov-19	Lottery SK	£32.00	12-Mar-20	bacs	NFU insurance	£986.89
5-Nov-19	Donations	£271.14				
14-Nov-19	CoOp	£2,526.02				
21-Nov-19	Human dog race	£100.00				
11-Dec-19	Lottery SK	£32.00				
7-Jan-20	Lottery SK	£40.00				
21-Jan-20	Western Power	£69.94				
11-Feb-20	Lottery SK	£32.00				
3-Mar-20	Lottery SK	£32.00				
20-Mar-20	Bytham's Music	£350.00				
17-Mar-20	South Kesteven	£225.00			Closing Balance	£5,741.31
		£8,224.02				£8,224.02