

Lancaster Green Spaces Forum held at Williamson Park on 6 June 6 2018.
Hosted by the Friends of Williamson Park, with Joy Greenwood chairing the meeting
(thank you, Joy!)

Groups represented by those attending

Lancaster Green Spaces trustees: Kamilla Elliott, Abi Mills, Jean O'Neill
Friends of Williamson Park: Joy Greenwood (chair), Hilary Smith, John Rodgers, Cedric
Wrenthall, Rose Venn Brown, Richard Danks
Friends of Ryelands Park: Kamilla Elliott, Jean O'Neill, Brian O'Neill
Friends of Carnforth Coke Ovens: Brian Jones and Louise Belcher
Friends of Thwaite Brow Woods: Louise Belcher
Friends of Lunebank Gardens: Brian Jones, Jean O'Neill, Brian O'Neill
Lancaster Civic Society: Roger Frankland
Friends of Storey Gardens: Roger Frankland
Friends of Dorrington Woods: Hilary Smith and Abi Mills
Friends of Greaves Park: Abi Mills
Friends of De Vitre Gardens: Hilary Smith

The first part of the meeting was devoted to reports from the various groups
represented at the Forum.

Reports from the Friends Groups attending

Friends of Dorrington Woods (Hilary reporting)

This group is also small and has had a busy winter, with lots of clearing. The bluebells
and birds have been beautiful. The group obtained funding for playground
refurbishment; it has been installed and is in use.

The group has obtained funding for information boards, to be developed with help from
an artist in-house, and for path for edging and repair. The group needs a greater work
force for large projects; pop up picnic planned for July

Friends of Lune Bank Gardens (Brian Jones reporting)

The once-buried gardens are easier to see because of much clearing, including crown
lifting trees, uncovering paths, and clearing overgrowth with additional goals to
improve drainage and prevent flooding.

Will take part in the next Heritage Open Day.

Long term plans: to develop a heritage walk.

Friends of Thwaite Brow Woods (Louise reporting)

A Woodland Management Plan has been developed considering conservation issues;
tree felling is needed. Anti-social behaviour remains a problem—camps and damage to
woods—but is better than last year when arson was added to the mix.

Friends of Carnforth Coke Ovens (Brian Jones reporting)

The group has big ambitions to be an umbrella group for other coke ovens from Galgate
to Kendall. Its work involves clearing trees and vegetation to show beautiful stone work
of the ovens. The council is considering protecting these sites by including them under
heritage listings.

Friends of Ryelands Park (Jean reporting)

Whilst we have very few volunteers, we have better cooperation from the council, fewer large-scale commercial events, and more council investment.

The Friends obtained LEF funding installed a bench and small garden in memory of founding Friends member, Pam Thomas. Unfortunately the garden has suffered from plant theft and vandalism, but the group presses on and did some replanting at the last work day.

The group is applying for LEF funding for an outdoor gym. It will take part in Heritage Open Day in September.

Long-term goals: refurbished toilets in the football changing area and/or toilets plus a café in Ryelands House

Friends of Greaves Park (Abi reporting)

The park has developed a wildflower meadow and community garden and is seeking funding for signage and also a grant to fund website development.

It will be involved in Heritage Open Day 2018.

A booklet detailing its history has raised a lot of money.

New Friends group: Friends of De Vitre Gardens (community mental health centre on Ashton Rd.) (Hilary reporting) The NHS has given land into a community land trust which will develop a low maintenance community orchard and garden starting in September. This will be maintained by the Friends.

The last group to share their work were our hosts, the Friends of Williamson Park. Their chair Joy Greenwood gave the Forum a very interesting and informative history of the Friends of Williamson Park from its origins to the present. *Please see separate document uploaded under the Forum minutes section of Lancaster Green Spaces website.*

FOWP Recent events and projects:

The High Point Festival in May was well organised, and the Friends were happy with the council's support and with the way the event was run by the organisers. Minor issues (e.g. clean-up and entry locations) to be addressed for future events.

The Friends meet every Monday to work in the Friends' Garden; they will also be assisting with the new Queen's Garden being developed by David Redmore, funded by the organisers of Queen Elizabeth's 90th birthday.

The Friends also meet every Thursday for landscaping and building projects, including dead-hedging, making bird boxes, and painting.

Joy and Hilary have led educational walks and talks about birds, butterflies, and bats—would like a better turnout from the public for these.

Past and present funding:

1. collection boxes in cafe
2. donations from artists who exhibit there (plus sometimes a percentage of sales)
3. Ashton evenings: music concerts with exhibition or raffle (2015-16) plus grant upgraded the older children's playground phase 1; phase 2 in progress.
4. Money raised reinstated the cascade and funded log splitter and trailer (also money raised from wood sales)

Challenges: what work is ours and what is the park staff's. Few joint jobs,

but good relationship.

Forum attendees were treated to a tour of Williamson Park by the Friends, where we saw examples of dead hedging used to create an enclosure for school visits, to protect birds at the bird hide, and to prevent dogs and mountain bikes from destroying flowerbeds. We visited the reservoir, which was in full bloom, and learned of plans to encourage wildlife further. We looked at the new Queen's garden, well underway, and we visited the Friends' garden, which is luxuriant and colourful. The recent warm weather has brought new challenges, but also benefits!

Thanks to the Friends of Williamson Park and the café for delicious refreshments, including ice creams!