## **Minutes of the Public Meeting, Tuesday 29 April 2025, Knaresborough Working Men’s Club, 7.30pm**

**Present:** Phil Millward (Chairman), Carole Dobson (Treasurer), Karen Millward (Secretary), Hilary Hopkinson (Committee member), Chris Pyle (Committee member), Julia Hatch, Fran Adamson (NYC), Matt Walker (KTC), Mike Pyle, Liz Baxandall, John Keelan-Edwards, Peter Ross, Stella Barclay, Alison Organ, June Graham, Katie Gray, Ian Brown, Aldy Jarrett, Andrea Jarrett

**Apologies:** Hannah Gostlow (KTC), Richard Owen – Hughes, Miranda Armitage, Richard Williams, Mr A Gill, Wendy and Marshall Barclay, Cath and Phil Oldfield, Judith and Ernie Preston, Mark Boldry

1. **Approval of previous minutes**

There were no additions or corrections to the Minutes of the Public Meeting held on 22 October 2024. Minutes were approved.

1. **Matters arising**

**Parking consultation:** PM updated on behalf of HG. North Yorkshire Highways (NYH) had previously consulted local residents on the possible addition of yellow lines for 15 meters each way around the corners of Park Grove and Park Way, as well as outside the park entrance to prevent dangerous parking on the corners. There has been a big response to the consultation and NYH will start a further round of consultation in the near future before making a decision.

**Boot Brush:** A boot brush will be secured near to the exit before the winter sets in; this should help prevent mud being walked out onto the road and pavements.

**Replacement of dead trees in the Queens Green Canopy:** The two dead trees were recently replaced during one of the regular monthly volunteering sessions.

1. **Maintenance**

**Grass cuts:** Paths and the recreational area will be completed regularly by the NYC Parks Operations Team. Annual cut of entire park will be completed annually by parks operations team around October time.

**Meadow cut:** this will be completed around mid August. Either Open Country will cut and rake it or a contractor with a ‘flail and collect’ machine will be used.

**Strimming:** strimming around benches will be completed regularly by Shirelle or Fran; the first strimming session of the year has been done around the benches.

**Fence repairs & replacement:** NYC have got quote to extend fencing around tree at the western perimeter/top pond. As this is a veteran tree this will protect the roots, as with the replacing of the fencing around the other veteran trees in the park. This fencing will be paid for by NYC. The old fencing will not be removed; it will be left just inside the new perimeter and can be dismantled by volunteers to save money and provide valuable habitat.

Wiring will be added along the gate and fences of the new pond to prevent small dogs getting under the gate and into the pond area.

Ponds: The two ponds will be checked annually by YWT. There will also be a meeting with YWT at the end of season to see if they think extra planting is needed within the pond fenced areas.   
It is planned to put some large logs and log piles within perimeter of the ponds to create habitat for newts etc.

**Balsam Management:** This is the first year a contractor will not be cutting the balsam. The plan now is the manage the balsam by hoeing in March/April whilst it is still low in the ground, strim larger patches and pull by hand in summer (through volunteering sessions and people pulling whilst walking in the park).

FoJSP have also worked with the neighbouring properties around the park and encouraged them to remove the balsam (most people did not know it was an invasive species). This has been a successful strategy and most properties adjoining the park are now managing their balsam.

FoJSP will continue to map the balsam, which has reduced by approx. 90% in the last 3 years but if it starts to increase again, an additional contractor cut may be required.

**Bench oiling:** the benches will be cleaned and re-oiled over the next few weeks by the committee. Whilst this takes place the benches will be cordoned off until the oil dries (around 6 hours). Only 2-3 benches will be cordoned off at any one time.

1. **Enhancements**

**Ponds:** in addition to the broken fencing at the top pond being left to create new habitat, logs will also be placed around the perimeter of the pond fencing to create further new habitats.

**Wild flower planting:** All shrubs, plugs and seeds planted/sown are to increase butterflies and pollinators through increasing the range of wild flowers and plants in the park.JH thanked all of the many volunteers who had helped with planting since last September when the planting started. Between September and Christmas around 200 shrubs were planted over many volunteering sessions. This year cubs from the 1st Scriven Scouts group also helped with planting.

More planting is planned and later in the year there will be a review of what has thrived and what has not done so well.

JH circulated a list of what has been planted/sown (see appendix A).

**Recreational area and mole hills:** Therehave been lot of moles in park generally but the recreational area seemed to be particularly badly affected.

Hilary Hopkinson (HH) has been researching whether there are any particular factors that caused the increase and whether it is likely to be ongoing issue.

HH reported that the National Trust at Fountains Abbey have also had an increase in mole activity this year – their solution is to roller the areas affected.

Yorkshire Wildlife Trust advised that some plants may help repel the moles (eg daffodils and marigolds).

Spring is the time of year when they are particularly active but there is also another flurry in autumn when the young leave to find new territory.

The committee felt that at this stage, it is better to wait and see what happens next year but it was noted that it is important to ensure the park is suitable for many different users and use of the recreational area is important, especially for children.

It was noted that if any action is taken in the future, it would not involve harming any moles.

1. **Website**

A previous committee member had offered to build the website but he had to step back from committee due to work. Nobody else on the committee has web building skills so we are now looking at using professional service. A local agency has provided the lowest quote but it is still considerably beyond our means. We are now investigating whether we can get financial support as well as ‘advertising’ on local volunteering sites asking for help.

One of the key objectives for the new site would be to help raise funds so that our outgoings do not exceed our income.

1. **Replacement of veteran trees**

The NYC arb team have not got a strategy for the replacement of veteran trees across the area but they recognize it would be helpful to have one at some point in the future. FoJSP will continue to nudge NYC and put forward some ideas as a starter. We do not want to just do our own thing (do we plant replacements as near as possible to the existing veteran trees or elsewhere, we also need to be mindful to preserve the recognised lines of clear sight and understand how Kindle Wood fits into the strategy (they are growing trees from JSP seeds/saplings).

1. **Monthly volunteering group**

A new monthly volunteering group has had its first meeting and replaced two dead trees in the Queen’s Canopy as well as other small jobs around the park. The group will meet monthly, usually mid week. Anyone wanting to find out more or wishing to join the group should contact [friends@jacobsmithpark.co.uk](mailto:friends@jacobsmithpark.co.uk)

**AOB**

A question was raised about adding more wood chips around the entrance to help prevent mud in winter. PM explained that wood chips had washed out onto the road and blocked drains and therefore a decision had been made not to add further wood chips at the entrance.

Concern was raised about the consistency of path cutting ie different people cutting different path routes. Fran Adamson (FA) advised that they do not know when the Parks Team are cutting the park so it is not possible for someone to show the ‘official paths’ nor ensure that the paths are cut close enough to the perimeter. It was noted that the Parks Team have been provided with a map of the park marking the outer path route.

Concern was raised about the recreational area; this has not been cut this year and the grass is already too long for ball games.   
**FA** agreed to feedback to the Parks Team

A number of bat and bird boxes were put up in the park a couple of years ago and following their success, a new owl box will be put up by professional contractors in October.

Alison Organ thanked FoJSP for putting up the poster for KNA Forest Park, which has now raised the money it needs to pay off the bridging loan.

Green Gardening Question Time will be held on Wednesday 14th May 7-9pm, at the Centre at Gracious St, Knaresborough. Tickets are available at Castlegate Books in Knaresborough or through the Eventbright website.

**Date of next meeting:**Tuesday 14 October 2025

**Meeting closed 8.45pm.**

**Appendix 1**