

14 November 2023

## Annual General Meeting

### Chair's Report

- This report reviews the activities of the Friends of Winsford Town Park for the period November 2022 to November 2023.
- The Friends resumed seasonal work in Town Park in the Spring, meeting on most Wednesday mornings from 8<sup>th</sup> March, weather permitting. As we move into winter, sessions will be held less frequently, before resuming on a weekly basis in Spring 2024.
- Our activities this year have included the following:
  1. Working on the Prairie Zone planting scheme to remove weeds and replant with ornamental grasses and perennials in keeping with the overall design concept of the scheme; the cost of all new plants has been funded by the Friends
  2. Working with Winsford Town Council and Cheshire West & Chester Council to establish a large area adjacent to Dingle Lane and the Viewing Platform for the sowing of wildflower seeds with a pollinator-friendly mix of UK native wildflowers; the area sown is approximately 400sq m and will provide a colourful display from 2024 onwards; the area will need to be re-sown with small quantities of seed for the next two years, which the Friends will fund
  3. Working with Winsford Town Council for the construction of a new bench location by the lower pond, the bench to be a match for the existing benches already purchased by the Friends will be installed in the New Year and is to be known as "Our Family bench"; the construction work and bench are fully funded by the Friends
  4. Repainting the timber benches with a fresh coat of ash black timber paint and repairing, if possible, any of these benches which had been subjected to vandalism or general wear and tear
  5. Working with Winsford Town Council and Cheshire Police to serve a Restorative Justice Order on three teenage boys caught by the Park's CCTV vandalising a wooden bench; the boys repainted several of the wooden benches under supervision and gave a name to the bench they had vandalised which had been repaired and returned to the park; after a lengthy discussion, the name they suggested was "The Boys' Bench", and a plaque is to be fixed to the bench with that name
  6. Planting several hundred daffodil bulbs close to one of Town Park's entrances; the bulbs be in the gift of a local resident.
  7. Planting several hundred purple crocus corms in front of the Viewing Platform on behalf of the Rotary Club of Winsford and Middlewich as part of Rotary's international campaign to raise awareness for the eradication of polio

- In addition to this work, the Friends have had a successful fundraising year, as highlighted in the Treasurer's Report. In summary, the Friends have:
  1. Sponsored the Mikron Theatre Company to perform both their 2023 shows; in April they performed A Force to be Reckoned With, which told the story of women in the police force, and in September they returned with their other show, Twitchers, which told the story of the RSPB; both shows were very well attended with people coming from across the Northwest, and further afield; to experience live professional theatre at its best.
  2. Published the Winsford 2024 calendar, with all photographs taken by local photographers focusing on Town Park's natural environment and its many uses and users throughout the year;

The calendar has been fully funded by sponsorship from local businesses, it has been designed here in Winsford by the NeuroMuscular Centre Design and Print Team, and for the second year running Wickes Winsford is offering a discount off all in-store purchases at the Winsford store in 2024, on production of the discount coupon printed on the front of the calendar.

The calendar is on sale at local stores around town, and the friends will be selling it in-store at Asda and Morrisons in the run-up to the New Year.

Throughout the period covered by this report, the Friends have continued to work with Winsford Town Council, with whom we are in frequent contact.

We have continued to work closely with Jo Fawcett, Town Park horticulturalist, and we are enriched by the knowledge she has so freely shared.

Throughout the period covered by this report, many members of the local community have offered plants from their gardens, some of which have now been given new homes in Town Park.

To them all, the Friends offer our thanks, and look forward to continuing working towards making Winsford Town Park a place for the community to enjoy.

I wish to offer my personal thanks to committee colleagues who have helped make so much of what I have outlined in this report possible. Their enthusiasm and commitment is a credit to them, and Town Park and Winsford are the better for it.

John Malam  
Chair  
Friends of Winsford Town Park  
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