

FRIENDS OF FOOTS CRAY MEADOWS



ISSUE 23

NEWSLETTER

May 2021

www.footscraymeadows.wordpress.com

email : ffcm06@gmail.com



Why is that wood in the river? Because fish live in trees!

From October 2020 to spring 2021, Thames21 have carried out works to boost river health at Foots Cray Meadows, by adding wood (smaller trees and scrub from the banks) into the river channel.

Natural rivers aren't straight with a flat bed – they are 'wiggly', with areas where water moves fast, areas where it moves slowly, and differences in depth.

These different areas provide homes for plants and wildlife, such as dragonflies, fish and birds. Fish also need fast-flowing, clean water and gravel riverbed areas to spawn, and the smaller fish like to hide amongst tree roots and logs.

You may not think that fish live in trees, but look closely and you might be surprised!

Did you know that the River Cray is a **chalk stream**?

Chalk streams are one of our most precious habitats; 85% of all chalk streams worldwide are found here in southern England.

But chalk streams are under threat: from pollution, litter, man-made barriers, artificial straightening and abstraction for drinking water and industry.

We are working to protect these special rivers!



Logs and fallen trees are a natural part of a river system, like this example at Foots Cray Meadows. They help keep the river healthy and provide homes and food for wildlife.

We have worked closely with the Environment Agency and Bexley council during the planning and delivery of this project.

We obtained all the correct permits and have taken measures to ensure that works do not adversely impact any local wildlife.

For more details, and information on why wood is good for rivers, go to: www.thames21.org.uk

www.thames21.org.uk
Registered Charity Number: 1103997

This project is funded by Enover Community Trust, the Environment Agency and the London Borough of Bexley

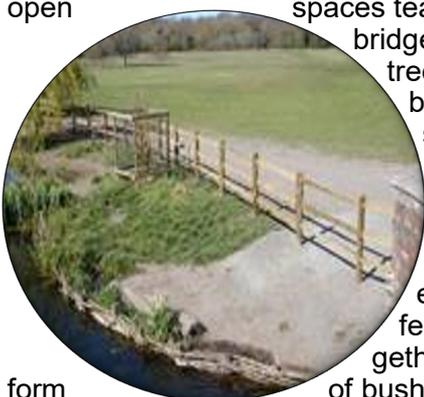


Five Arches

As many will be aware a persistent problem exists of dogs and during the warmer weather young people entering the Lake and together with fishing, causing distress to the water fowl on the Lake.

The Friends of Foots Cray Meadows had prior to covid worked in partnership with Bexley Council together with the Environment Agency and Police to come up with a possible remedy to prevent access.

The first part one of the Five Arches deterrent a fence has now been erected, by the Parks and open spaces team from the



bridge to the willow trees on the west bank. The next stage is for some marginal vegetation from other sections of the river to be planted beside the fence. These together with some of bush /hedging will make access difficult for both dogs and people. This due to Covid is later than had been planned for planting to be established. It has also been agreed not to cut back the vegetation on the banks around the lake.

As far as fishing is concerned there is an ongoing dialogue with the agencies mentioned above to organise a joint patrol at times it appears fishing takes place. For this to be successful a pattern needs to be established and the best way to do this is for reporting of fishing taking place giving details such as time, day and where. If able to photograph without putting yourself at risk this also would be useful.

Refreshment Concession

As a Friends Group specifically set up by Bexley Council in 2006 we have been generally consulted on issues affecting the meadows. We found out about the concession in an email on the 29th March on an entirely different matter. Whilst obviously the Council is perfectly entitled to agree this, we were a little surprised not to have been asked at least for our views and expressed this to the Council.

We will be monitoring both sites being used- Play Park, Riverdale Road and Leafield Lane. Our main concerns our obviously litter and that being able to access the site it is secured properly after use.

Other News

The fly tipping at the Southern end of the meadows behind Ellenborough Road has been cleared.

We will resume our First Saturday in the month opening between 10.00am—1.00pm of the Information Centre located behind Stable House on the 1st May. Will still need to follow Covid guidance.

Our website is up and running but we still need to refine some areas and put in place immediate news items relating to the meadows.

Our AGM all being well will be on 22nd June hopefully face to face.

Committee Members

- **Chairman - Michael Heath**
- **Secretary - Jan Harmer**
- **Vice Secretary - Margaret Dodd**
- **Treasurer - Margaret Dodd**
- **Membership Secretary - Margaret Dodd**
- **Events Manager - Lesley Grant**
- **Newsletter Editor - Nick Grant**
- **Data Protection - Nick Grant**
- **Publicity Manager - Sally Lands**
- **Conservation Officer - Sid Wilkinson**

Committee Members - Vera Heath, Raj Gajebasia, Steve Brown

Co-opted - Jo Whiley, Jacky Turner, Ray Hudson Samuel Tuckett

Aims and Objectives

- Working in partnership with Bexley Council to encourage public interest in, and the conservation of Fooths Cray Meadows (FCM).
- To protect the wildlife and its habitat within FCM.
- To provide a focus for involvement by the community and users in the open space, to volunteer and work with the Council, in the conservation of FCM and its development as a public open space.
- To advance the public's awareness of the open space by promoting FCM its plants, wildlife, landscape, sustainability and supporting appropriate recreational facilities for the benefit of community groups and the general public.
- To develop and deliver information, interpretive material and educational opportunities for FCM
- To raise funds for the purpose of achieving the above aims.

Dates for your Diary: Future Events

We hope you are interested in joining in the many events we will be hosting or supporting in the coming months. At all the events listed there will be Committee Members attending. Dates (where known) and a brief description are below; look out for publicity in the weeks leading up to each date. For further information please contact the Events Manager on 07858 762530

During the current health crisis there are no planned events. As and when some normality returns the following arrangements will be back

Posters advertising FFCM Events sent electronically to members as well as being in the noticeboards at the entrances to the Meadows at the following locations - Car Park, Riverside Road, Leafield Lane, Five Arches Bridge and outside Stable House and the Information Centre. Alternatively you can visit www.footscraymeadows.wordpress.com

The Information Centre which is located behind Stable House is open on the 1st Saturday of each month (March through to November) between 10.00am and 1.00pm

Join Today **Membership costs just £5 per household annually**

The Friends of Foots Cray Meadows is a voluntary group funded by its membership & fund raising activities.

Membership will grant you

- Seasonal Newsletters that will include updates on projects.
- Reduced admission on any talks or events that we are not able to host for free.
- Additional Meadows related contacts, whether you would like help with getting an event off the ground or simply would like to share some ideas or concerns regarding Foots Cray Meadows.
- Early notification of meetings, events and talks.

Money raised will help to:

- Fund projects that will both protect and benefit The Meadows.
- Encourage interest & enthusiasm in the area.
- Organise outdoor events & talks.
- Improve facilities (initially the Information Centre).

Any names and contact information gathered by The Friends of Foots Cray Meadows will only be used by themselves and not passed onto any third parties.

Name

Children's Names
(if applicable)

Address

Post Code

Email

Phone

Enclosed a cheque Payment via Bank Transfer
(please tick appropriate box)

Annual subscription is £5 payable each January and you can do this in the following way, by -

Cheque payable to: Friends of Foots Cray Meadows

Bank transfer to: Sort Code 40-42-01, Account 61550985

Annual direct debit: Sort Code 40-42-01, Account 61550985

In each case, please tick which method used and either send your completed membership form to:

Margaret Dodd
FFCM Membership Secretary
32 Riverside Road
Sidcup
Kent DA14 4PU

or submit via email: ffcm06@gmail.com

We maintain a minimal information database on a secure computer which is used to notify members of our events. We do not pass on this information to any third parties.