



Straw's Bridge Friends Group

Constitution

September 2015

1. Introduction

This document sets out the structure and purpose of the Straw's Bridge Friends Group and its aims and objectives. The document can only be changed with the approval of the group.

2. Background

Straw's Bridge Local Nature Reserve is a very popular public open space both for local visitors and those from further afield. The Nutbrook Trail can be accessed on the far side of the lake. The three ponds are the main feature of the site and are surrounded by a variety of habitats including woodland and scrub, meadow and wetland.

The Friends Group has been initiated by the Green Space & Street Scene Team at Erewash Borough Council for a variety of reasons.

It is hoped that it will improve communication between parks users, the Council and other stakeholders. It is also hoped that the forum will help to improve quality standards, address issues affecting the site and contribute towards development and regenerating projects. It is also hoped that the forum can be used to exchange ideas, establish meaningful consultation and feed into the decision making process.

3. Identified Stakeholders

- Erewash Borough Council – various key departments and divisions led by the Green Space and Street Scene Division.
- Councillors (Local and those with relevant lead responsibilities)
- All users (including individuals and clubs)
- Local Friends Groups
- Neighbouring Schools and Colleges
- Derbyshire Police
- Approved Training Providers
- Ilkeston and District Local History Society
- Neighbouring residents
- Neighbouring businesses

4. Membership

Membership of the group shall be open to anyone who is interested in helping the group to achieve its aim and willing to abide by the rules of the group.

5. Finances

The Friends Group will have no budget as such. However, where appropriate, the group will be consulted when Erewash Borough Council make major purchases affecting the site are made. This includes any development and regenerating projects.

The group will be encouraged to explore funding from other sources such as grants and sponsorship. At the point where the group has direct responsibility for any funds, a Treasurer will be elected and bank accounts opened accordingly.

6. Meetings

Where possible meetings will take place on a quarterly basis at Ilkeston Fire Station Community Room. Meetings will be arranged by a member of the Green Space & Street Scene Team at Erewash Borough Council.

Where possible, meetings will be chaired by an elected volunteer from the group rather than being the sole responsibility of Erewash Borough Council Officers.

Minutes will be taken by a Council Officer and circulated to the group. In the absence of a Council Officer another member of the group will take minutes and pass them on for typing and circulation.

7. Responsibility

Although the Green Space Team will oversee the forum, all members will have equal responsibility for making the group a success. This includes Chairing and taking minutes of meetings and taking issues, projects and ideas forward.

8. Electing a Chair and Treasurer

Members of the group will have responsibility for electing a Chair, Treasurer and Secretary with each member having one equal vote. There will an annual general meeting to elect the Chair, Treasurer and Secretary.

9. Aims and objectives

- Improve security within the site and help tackle anti-social behaviour.
- Help to deal with problems and issues.
- Improve site attendance and increase the use of facilities.
- Improve the quality of the site and its facilities
- Make the site accessible to all.
- Encourage young people to take ownership for the park and respect its facilities.
- Support the Adopt-a-Park scheme and the Pride in Erewash initiative.
- Share information and ideas.
- Feed into the Management Plan for the site.
- Help the site become a “good neighbour”.
- Contribute towards development and regenerating projects.
- Support applications for quality awards such as Green Flag.
- Maintain a variety of habitats in order to encourage biodiversity.
- Whatever the group do to improve Straw’s Bridge, it will be done well.

10. Dissolution

If a meeting, by simple majority, decides that it is necessary to close down the group it may call a Special General Meeting to do so. The sole business of this meeting will be to dissolve the group. If it is agreed to dissolve the group all remaining money and other assets, once outstanding debts have been paid, will be donated to one or more local charitable organisations. The organisations to be agreed at the meeting which agrees the dissolution.