

**SRWT update for Sunnybank Reserve Advisory Group meeting:**

**14.07.16**

**Held on site at Sunnybank Nature Reserve: 6.00pm to 7.30pm.**

**(1) Present & Apologies - Welcome & Introduction**

Attendees: Rob Miller (SRWT),  
Hannah Wittram (SRWT),  
Colin Roth (local resident),  
John Hopkins ( Local Resident )

Apologies: TBC

**Actions from the last meeting:**

**Action:** SRWT to contact Nick about SRWT trimming back some of the branches of his tree blocking the new street lights – **completed by Nick** – Thank you ☺

**ACTION:** HW to contact Art in the Park about the sign off Ecclesall Road, they were hoping to replace the broken mosaic tiles with something more durable, this could have a notice board element incorporated into the design perhaps. – Unfortunately Hannah's email hadn't got through so the new sign is pretty but doesn't mention Sunnybank.

**Action:** Hannah to double check boundaries next time she is on the reserve to see how porous they are in terms of allowing wildlife movement through them – **completed.**

**(2) Capital Works & Land Management Update (July 2015 – February 2016)**

- 2-3 Weekly patrols by reserves team – patrol spreadsheet findings;
  - The leaf bench north of the cycle track was rotten and the back rest has become unstable and therefore was removed from site for safety reasons.
  - The reserve has seen a significant increase in the number of needles we have been finding on site which is a concern but we are working with the police to try and resolve this matter. We've been told that they are patrolling the site on a regular basis.
  - To try and combat this problem we have carried out large amounts of cutting back and have removed the lower branches off of many of the trees to improve sightlines across the reserve to deter this behaviour. There is still more that can be done and we will try and do as much as possible between now & the end of March 2017.
  - We are continuing to liaise with SCC enforcement officers, Sheffield Drugs & Alcohol Team / Domestic Abuse Co-ordination Team & the Police on the matter to improve the situation. Sheffield has seen a general increase in drug use of 35% over last 2 years - this is thought to be linked to government cutbacks and lack of funding to support users. They have provided us with some further advice and have given us some sign templates that we plan to install on the reserve to encourage users to dispose of their needles responsibly. SCC have launched a new project to

map the areas that people regularly find needles, Hannah has been involved in helping give them the information needed for Sunnybank. If anyone spots any needles please contact the trust on [nature.reserves@wildsheffield.com](mailto:nature.reserves@wildsheffield.com) or phone 0114 2634335. Please also report it to the Police on 101 so they can keep a record.

➤ General maintenance from Land Management team consisting of (x3 days carried out since the last RAG meeting (Feb 2016):

- litter picking / fly tipping removal –
- needle and graffiti removal - Group discussed drug use problem on site. HW has recently met SCC, Environmental Health Team and DACT (Sheffield Drug and Alcohol/Domestic Abuse Coordination Team ) and they have provided some examples of posters that could be used that have been useful on other sites. CR and JH asked whether a needles bin near the pond bench area would work. RM wasn't sure if SRWT's insurance would cover it and would it be seen as SWRT condoning drug use? For now we will put up the posters and monitor them and think about the bin as a second option.
- Pathclearance of leaves during winter – Group discussed the encroachment of leaves and vegetation on to the cycle/ footpath near Broomhall Close entrance.  
**Action:** uncover footpath back to the edge
- Strimming of over encroaching and overhanging vegetation (x3 -4 visits from May – October at 6 – 7 weekly intervals). – Group discussed the tree canopy over the cycle path near Ecclesall Road. The tree cover provides a valuable sound buffer but doesn't let enough light in.  
**Acton:** Allow more light through by selectively cutting back, raising the crowns of the overhanging trees. With the aim of retaining as much sound buffer as possible.
- Cutting the hedge along the cycle track.
- Clearing leaves from the footpath and cycle track in the autumn.
- Injecting Japanese Knotweed only two small strands visible on site at the moment.

12-Apr-16	Sunnybank	Chipping brush piles, removing laurel in front of compost pit, fixing/removing hurdle in front of compost pit.
22-Jun-16	Sunnybank	Maintenance Day - (1) Litter pick. (2). Strimming PRow & desire lines. (3) Cut back over-hanging branches. (4) Move the interpretation panel and repaint.

➤ Work was carried out to remove the Laurel behind the bench in the top meadow to open up the site lines and deter drug use. The compost bins will need fencing off to block them from view and some of the old dilapidated hurdles will be taken down. The group discussed the sightlines to the bench

and agreed cutting back a bit more may help as there is still some ongoing drug use.

**Action:** Cut back vegetation around benches.

- CR commented on the meadow patch on the corner opposite the Beetle sculpture. It has become quite overgrown with brambles.  
**Action:** Cut back brambles, on the Beetle side also cut back brambles to prevent them encroaching on to the footpath. Cut back far enough ( 2m ) to give people a chance to pick blackberries without getting knocked down by path / cycle track users.
- Pond continues to do okay, vegetation very well established now and was starting to become dominated by Glyceria. This was cleared out in October 2015 but will need to continue to be managed on an annual basis.
- In May 2016, Jean Glasscock very kindly donated and planted a selection of native woodland species including Lesser Celandine (*Ranunculus ficaria*), Hedge Woundwort (*Stachys sylvatica*), Bugle (*Ajuga reptans*), Wood Anemone (*Anemone nemorosa*), Common Figwort (*Scrophularia nodosa*), Enchanter's-nightshade (*Circaea lutetiana*) to SRWT for Sunnybank NR. These were planted within the central woodland area.

### **(3) Events, Education, Community and Interpretation Update**

Events planned for 2016:

Date	Event	Type
05/10/16	Frog Rescue and Meet the frogs.	VWD and family event
11/10/16	Meadow Rake.	VWD

- We had planned to run Monthly Volunteer Mornings (subject to funding) on the Fourth Wednesday of the Month 10am – 12pm, meeting at the Broomhall Place Entrance. Unfortunately we have had to put this plan on hold due to our Community Wildlife Rangers having had their hours reduced on a weekly basis. This means we now do not have enough staff capacity to deliver this planned activity.
- This year's meadow cut will be a few weeks later to hopefully allow all the meadow species to go to seed. The same as last year, the Frog Rescue event will run 10am – 3pm and open to Adults only and families are invited to come and meet the frogs and help release them 3 – 4pm.
- Group discussed cutting back behind Shell garage where the trees are overhanging the footpath.  
**Action:** Trim overhanging trees from the William street entrance.

#### **(4) Management Plan (April 2015 – March 2025)**

The new management plan for Sunnybank nature reserve has now entered its 2<sup>nd</sup> year. We have a detailed work programme that we will work towards delivering but it is important to highlight that lots of the work is dependent on securing external funding to make things happen on the ground.

Although it is a 10 year work programme, it is simply a guide of what we would like to achieve but it isn't set in stone and it can be a dynamic document enabling us to take advantage of new opportunities that arise and for us to tackle new problems / issues that may develop over this period of time that we were not aware of at the time of writing.

The new management plan, associated work programme and maps can be viewed at the following location: <http://www.wildsheffield.com/nature-reserves/local-reserves-information/sunnybank/management-plan>

#### **(5) Future work programme (July 2016 – March 2017)**

Upcoming work programme:

18-Jul-16	Sunnybank	Maintenance Day - (1) Litter pick. (2). Strimming PRow & desire lines. (3). Cut back over-hanging branches. (4). Plant wildflower plug plants if budget available to purchase.
30-Aug-16	Sunnybank	Maintenance Day - (1) Litter pick. (2). Strimming PRow & desire lines. (3) Cut back over-hanging branches. (4). Japanese Knotweed injection. (5). Remove horseradish from the meadow.
11-Oct-16	Sunnybank	CWD - (1) Rake up the meadow management (frog rescue) arising's and dispose of them in the compost bay. (2). Cut back overhanging branches along the Shell Garage boundary to stop encroachment onto the meadow. (3). Clear fallen leaves from the cycle track & ensure no branches are blocking the street lights.

29- Nov-16	Sunnybank	Maintenance Day: (1). Cut back vegetation at Broomhall place entrance & remove / repair hurdles ensuring compost bay remains hidden from sight. (2). Remove Glyceria from pond. (3). Cut back hedgerows encroaching onto paths. (4). Retain sightlines for public safety. (5). Remove overhanging vegetation along shell garage boundary. (6) Thin woodland strip along Eccy Road, including removal of snow berry. (7). Clear fallen leaves from the cycle track & ensure no branches are blocking the street lights.
14-Feb- 17	Sunnybank	Maintenance Day: (1). Cut back vegetation at Broomhall place entrance & remove / repair hurdles ensuring compost bay remains hidden from sight. (2). Remove Glyceria from pond. (3). Cut back hedgerows encroaching onto paths. (4). Retain sightlines for public safety. (5). Remove overhanging vegetation along shell garage boundary. (6) Thin woodland strip along Eccy Road, including removal of snow berry. (7). Bramble control if required.

- JH asked whether SRWT do anything to conserve bees. RM explained that a lot of the flora on the reserve are important nectar sources. And that we also hope to work with the Sheffield 'Friends of the earth' group to re-seed an area of meadow where the dragonfly sculpture use to be located (the North West corner of the site near the cycle path). They have offered to provide us with the wildflower seeds through their Bee campaign and to try and raise a weekend work party to sow them – this needs to be re-visited.
- A local wood carver has kindly offered to carve a new backrest for the sculptured bench and is currently thinking about designs and looking into timber that he can use to create it. **Action:** Hannah to contact again.
- View work programme 2016-25 for upcoming tasks after July 2016.
- We currently have no funding bid applications in the pipeline for Sunnybank nature reserve but we will continue to look for funding opportunities to enable us to cover the costs of the larger capital items identified in the work programme.

## **(6) AOB**

- John pointed out the disused satellite hanging off the side of one of the People's for Places buildings and commented that it looked unsightly. **Action:** Hannah to contact James and ask whether this could be removed.
- Hannah mentioned the new SRWT Nature Counts Project which is a 2 year project looking at the State of Sheffield nature and feeding into the national

State of Nature Report. The project main focus species are Hedgehogs, Otters and Bluebells. They are currently monitoring hedgehogs and are looking for places to place hedgehog monitoring tunnels. John said he could ask Sunnybank Residential home to see whether they would be interested in getting involved.

The project will also involve flora and fauna monitoring over the nature reserves including Sunnybank which will be really valuable and update our records.

**Action:** Hannah to send Nature Counts information with the RAG minutes.

**(7) Date and time of next meeting:**

- **Proposed Date: Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> January 2017, 6pm – 7.30pm** (please note that this is subject to change), meeting at the Broomhall Centre. A reminder will be sent out via email nearer the time & laminated posters will be put up on the site advertising the meeting along with updates on our website.

**SRWT contact details:**

Telephone – 0114 263 4335

Email: Robert Miller – Living Landscapes Manager: [R.Miller@wildsheffield.com](mailto:R.Miller@wildsheffield.com)

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