

# FRIENDS OF THE CARRS NEWSLETTER



Autumn 2016

## Chairman's Message

Spring is usually the time of year full of waiting and eager anticipation, but this year in the Carrs the waiting and eager anticipation are still with us. The long-awaited toilet block is in its final planning stage but work is still not started; our application for a picnic area project has been accepted by the Tesco Bags of Help scheme but it still has to go through a voting process (look out for our entry at your local Tesco store and vote for us!) before we find out how much money we'll get; and we are awaiting the results of the RHS North West in Bloom judges' visit. The fish pass in Styal woods is in full working order but we are yet to see any sea trout or salmon in the Carrs.

Nevertheless, we can look back on some satisfying achievements: we have had several well-attended balsam bashes and seen some good results, we have persuaded Cheshire East to tackle the drainage problem in the picnic area, river bank fencing has been repaired, the trees planted along Styal Road are forming a sturdy hedge, and the apple trees in our orchard blossomed and bore a fine crop of fruit this year.

The problem with long stay parking in the Parish Hall car park is gradually being resolved so more visitors to the park, especially parents and grandparents with children, can enjoy the facilities.

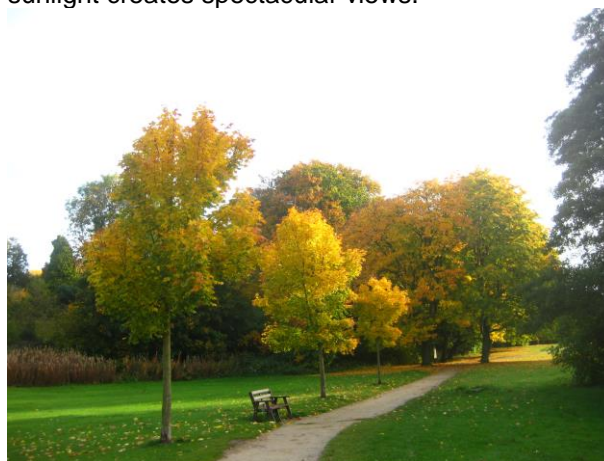
Our work on the river banks has considerably reduced erosion and enabled plants to grow along the river edge. But the one thing we have learned in helping to manage the Carrs is that nature will have her way no matter what you want her to do, and sometimes she knows best. Two wet areas, one by the first bridge and one by the middle bridge, have been cleared of invasive plants and the grass left uncut, and we have watched with amazement as they have filled with a display of wild flowers of dazzling colours and shapes, bulrushes and grasses, accompanied by insects, butterflies, birds, frogs and newts.

A special word of thanks is due to the many dog-walkers who regularly use the Carrs. Litter is an ongoing problem which is tackled daily and unflinchingly by these noble souls who even supply their own gloves and bags. Thank you - the Carrs wouldn't be the same without you! Thanks, too, to our landlords, Cheshire East, for keeping on top of the litter clearance and the grass cutting. Between us, we have managed to keep the Carrs looking good all through the good weather of a summer which brought record numbers of visitors.

And finally, a mystery: during the summer, a number of holes have appeared randomly in grassy areas throughout the park. We have tried filling the odd one in, but it comes back in a matter of days. Has anyone seen the culprit? Do we need to send

a delegation to Blackburn? (Beatles fans will understand).

So when, how much, what, who ...? For answers to these questions and any others, expected or unforeseen, follow us on our website, or leave your comments on our blog. And we look forward to seeing you stroll, run, exercise and ride in the Carrs through the autumn when the park really does come into its own in as the trees turn to gold and low-level sunlight creates spectacular views.



Ian Baillie, Chairman

## Dates for your diary 2017

The AGM took place on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2016 in the Parish Hall. Dates for events in 2017 have not yet been selected. Please watch the web-site [www.friendsofthecarrs.org.uk](http://www.friendsofthecarrs.org.uk) or the notice boards on The Carrs for details. The list will also be in the Spring newsletter.

## New Toilet Block

The Friends of The Carrs have campaigned for several years for the provision of toilet facilities on The Carrs. Finally Cheshire East Council have granted Wilmslow Town Council planning permission and leased them the land for a peppercorn rent. This will allow the removal of three car parking spaces which will be replaced with a building containing two public toilets and a kiosk facility

The intention is for the toilets and kiosk to be open from 8am to 6pm daily, they will be monitored by CCTV and there will be a 20p charge for using the toilets to fund the ongoing cleaning and maintenance.

The overall cost of the project is in the region of £108,000, £30,000 of which will come from section 106 monies passed over by Cheshire East Council. Wilmslow Town Council has earmarked £65,000 for the scheme and the balance will come from their general reserves.

## 2016 Events

### Bat Walk 6<sup>th</sup> August

The popular Bat Walk led by Ranger Martin James took place on 6<sup>th</sup> August. This year we were rewarded not only with views of bats, but Martin conjured up other wildlife. Much to the excitement of the children in the group, first a fox was spotted walking lazily along the edge of the grass. It turned and looked haughtily at the group before turning and vanishing slowly into the undergrowth. In the river a heron was hoping for a late supper, but gave up when the group approached. As ever Martin provided an entertaining and informative evening for all.

### Canine Capers 22<sup>nd</sup> May

The dog show was back bigger and better than ever this year on 22<sup>nd</sup> May. As last year over 100 dog owners joined The Friends for a fun day organised ably by John Booth from The Friends. There were various classes including, Best Trick, Waggiest Tail and Best Rescue Dog. The refreshment stall manned by The Friends proved extremely popular - a heavy downpour during the afternoon provoking a rush for the hot sausage rolls!



**Arthur, winner of Best Overall category with proud owner Olivia Fitton**

A superb agility ring run by Damian Riley, dog trainer and behaviourist proved very popular with many owners wanting to test their pet's prowess. Our thanks to The Vet's Place and Barkers who supplied the rosettes and goodie bags for the winners. and last but not least all volunteers and participants.

More details about Damian Riley's services may be found at [www.damianriley.com](http://www.damianriley.com) For further information about all these events and many more pictures please see our web-site [www.friendsofthecarrs.org.uk](http://www.friendsofthecarrs.org.uk).

## Wild Flowers

Did you know that under their agreement with Ofgem energy suppliers that offer 'green' or 'renewable' plans have to also make a positive change to the environment? The Friends of The Carrs have benefited by receiving free native species trees several times under the Greener Energy Plan run by OVO Energy in which they aim to help local people and organisations improve green spaces across the UK. This year in an extension of the scheme there was also a photo caption competition to name a tree with £250 prize money in vouchers on offer to spend on plants and gardening equipment etc



Ruth Lees entered this photo of a lonely tree on The Carrs looking for companions. Much to our delight (and some surprise) we were notified that we had won and spent some enjoyable hours leafing through catalogs to make our selection. In the end we settled on a collection of wild flower plugs and spring bulbs, and a large set of loppers to keep the river bank willows under control.

## E-mail Addresses

This newsletter can be supplied by e-mail. If you receive this newsletter by post, but have an e-mail address please let us know your e-mail address by contacting [ian.baillie@friendsofthecarrs.org.uk](mailto:ian.baillie@friendsofthecarrs.org.uk).

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