

Friends of Lenzie Moss Chairperson's Report 2019

Looking back at the past twelve months, this has been a relatively typical year for us in most of our areas of interest. By that I mean we have been involved in four main areas: events on the Moss, maintenance issues, liaison with the council and the ranger service, and consultations on issues affecting the Moss.

Events that have taken place include :

- Evening birdsong walk in May
- Primary 4s TO 7s Scavenger Hunt. In August, which was cancelled by LCC. However we have this as a possible future event.
- Lenzie Moss Wildlife and History in September, which was delayed by bad weather until better conditions in December.
- Fungus Amungus fungi walk in September
- Build a Harry Potter Birch Broom" in October

Work events that took place were :

- Wild Flower Planting in October at the Heather drive side. We hope these plants from our third planting have survived the winter. The second planting has shown better results than the first one.
- Lenzie Moss Conservation Volunteers doing path work in December.
- Clean up day in March.

We would like to thank the Ranger Service for supporting these events. We are pleased to report that the rangers are able to support a series of walks and talks for 2019.

Maintenance

The main work this year for volunteers has been path improvements in the flooded areas of path. These are now in much better shape. However, the boardwalk is giving increasing cause for concern. The side planks are rotting, and holes are appearing in the main surface. When these are reported, the ranger service has

carried out swift repairs, but the boardwalk is near the end of its useful life. We have asked the council for details of their plans for the boardwalk, and we will offer support if required in terms of publicity and helping with fund raising.

Some damage was caused last summer to one of the noticeboards which involved racist graffiti. The perpetrator has since pled guilty to this and other incidents, and the noticeboard was quickly cleaned up. We have also had at least two fires in the dry spell in May, with the fire service attending one of these.

We will soon have a new notice board funded as part of the Lenzie station upgrade, which would replace the older board at the station car park. This will be a similar style to the Heather Drive notice board, but a bit smaller. At that point we would remove the noticeboard at Hawthorne avenue, as we feel that three boards is probably too many.

Consultations

We have been involved in consultations on the new people counter, paths, and artworks.

The people counter data is being passed to us and we will issue a report in the winter newsletter with details of the usage of the path. We can see though that even in the shortest winter months there are 6000 passages counted in a month on the counter.

On paths, there are two current proposals, neither of which seems to be moving forward at any great pace. In fact I mentioned these last year in my report. We have the proposed path from the circular path to the back of Lenzie Meadow school, and the proposed cycle path from Lenzie to Westerhill. For different reasons these are both on hold at present. We have been maintaining our stance which is that any path changes should avoid impact on current users, and not move towards wide, straightened out, tarmac paths.

While views on adding anything to the natural environment are mixed, even within the committee, it is fair to say that the peat stacks artworks generate questions and discussion. By explaining their significance, visitors are reminded about the impact humans have had on the landscape of the Moss. Our committee feel in general that we should limit the impact on the Moss from further signs and installations in the open area.

Getting our message across

Our group is often consulted on any issue that affects the Moss, be it paths, signage, art works or even changes to the station. And having a Friends group is a requirement of the management plan. Many of the grants for the Moss cannot be awarded direct to the council. It's clear that the rise of social media, with the likes of Facebook and Twitter, are where people are voicing their support. We have 500 people who follow us on Facebook and a post will be shared to reach anything up to 5000 people. But when we try transferring this digital support to members, or into support for work days, we find numbers in single or low double digits. This is clearly a challenge for the future of our group. We have long serving members of the committee, with few replacements available should further committee members step down.

Christine Morrison has produced a very informative leaflet, with the title 'Who are we?', which we intend to share with organisations and influencers who may not realise the work and usefulness of our group.

It is worth noting that the next round of the local development plan is underway. Last time we faced proposals for development at Crosshill Road (south Lenzie Moss), Boghead Road (west of the boardwalk), the rugby club, and Blackthorne Avenue. We will update members as we find out what is proposed this time.

Committee members

Last December we lost David Lee, who passed away peacefully from cancer. David had been on the committee since 2014, and he kept the noticeboards up to date and walked the Moss most days keeping an eye on things. David was also a keen fan of the railways and there is a plan to place a new bench near the old peat workings with a view onto the railway.

The committee will also lose the services of Kate Brown, who has been a committee member for over twenty years. Since I can remember Kate has been our secretary, and she has always carried out these duties in a most efficient way, quickly producing the minutes and other communications. We look forward to her ongoing support as a member.

On the committee Joan Christie will remain as a committee member, but is giving up her post of membership secretary. Joan has also been doing this role for twenty years, keeping control of the membership list, subscriptions due and updating contact details. Again in a very efficient way.

We would like to thank both Kate and Joan for carrying out these roles over the years.

We have Katherine Kelsey joining the committee, and she will take on the role of looking after the notice boards.

The committee members for the coming year are proposed to be:

Christine Morrison – who will take on the role of Chairperson

Paul Dudman – treasurer and membership

Katherine Kelsey – Noticeboards

Joan Christie – member

Iain Christie – member

The committee should have the roles of Vice Chairperson and Secretary filled. The role of vice chairperson is not an active one, and there is not an urgent need to fill this. The current committee members will share the secretary role until a replacement can be found. Again I would ask members to consider helping, as our duties are not extensive – four normal meetings a year including the AGM. In addition to the two roles described, we would love to have people who could take on our website updating and events programme.

We have also heard of the recent death of our member Molly Fisher. Molly was the wholly supportive wife of Joe and their six children. For about 25 years Joe Fisher was Librarian of the Glasgow Room at the Mitchell Library. With his wide knowledge of local history, Joe provided most of the information for our History of Lenzie Moss. For a while he was also a superb, eloquent Chairman of this group. After his death in 2010 Molly continued to maintain a keen interest in all to do with the Moss.

To finish I would like to mention some people that help to keep the Moss in the great condition we find it in. I would like to thank Jackie Gillespie and the ranger service for their continued support. Jackie has worked tirelessly to obtain funding for improvement works and does all she can to ensure the conservation of the Moss. We continue to receive excellent support from the Countryside Ranger Service, who do so much of the background work that keeps the Moss in good shape.

Finally, I would like to thank the committee and all the volunteers for their work through the year, and our members for your ongoing support. When we are representing the interests of our group, the numbers of members we have is an important factor.

Paul Dudman, Chair, June 2019