

FRIENDS OF FOOTS CRAY MEADOWS



ISSUE 12

NEWSLETTER

June 2013

www.footscraymeadows.org

email : ffcm06@gmail.com

Antisocial Behaviour !

Can generally be characterized as an overall lack of adherence to the social mores and standards that allow members of a society to co-exist peaceably.

Many people who display this type of behaviour may seem charming, but often cause harm to others and show little remorse for their actions. Antisocial behaviour can be part of a larger conduct disorder, or personality disorder, such as antisocial personality disorder, and is seen in men more commonly than women.

Characteristics

A person who displays antisocial behaviour might appear to be charismatic and outgoing at first, but this can hide the fact that such people tend to be extremely selfish and self-centred. The person's lack of concern with other people's opinions can seem liberating to others who might feel trapped inside the roles of society. Activities suggested by someone with a behaviour disorder that at first seem to be daring and fun may soon become dangerous or give no thought to the well-being of others, however. People with antisocial personalities are also more likely to abuse alcohol and drugs.

Antisocial behaviour often includes hostility and aggression, which may take the form of verbal or physical abuse. Some people may angrily refuse to follow the rules of a situation, or actively defy the authority of a parent, teacher, or employer or in the case of Foothills Cray Meadows the Local Authority. Both children and adults may lie and steal to get what they want or simply to hurt others.

Foothills Cray Meadows

We are seeing more antisocial behaviour affecting the Meadows some of it annoying or a nuisance, others potentially a hazard .

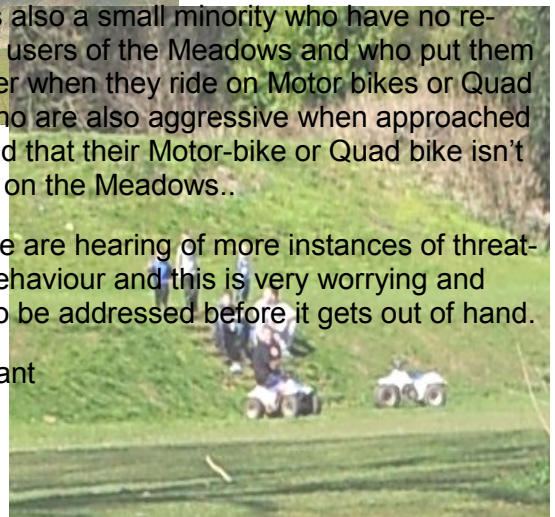
Amongst these are the budding golfers who fire off golf balls in all directions without any regard as to the likely landing point. The fishing fraternity who persist in fishing in the lake despite signs saying it is not allowed and who leave fishing line for the Swans to get snagged on.

The dog walkers who risk their dogs lives by throwing items into the lake for the dog to retrieve despite the notices telling them not to do it and who clearly do not understand the danger the dog is in from a swan protecting its young. The horse riders who fail to stay on the permitted riding area and who on occasions ride at speed in areas of the meadows where large numbers of people are walking.

There is also a small minority who have no regard for users of the Meadows and who put them in danger when they ride on Motor bikes or Quad bikes who are also aggressive when approached to be told that their Motor-bike or Quad bike isn't allowed on the Meadows..

Sadly we are hearing of more instances of threatening behaviour and this is very worrying and needs to be addressed before it gets out of hand.

Nick Grant



Chairs Chat

Well spring has arrived after our grey cold winter which seems to have been bolted on to a very long wet spell. Yet the Meadows remained a focal point for people to visit and remind us how important they are whatever the season.

With high expectations of a sweltering summer! I reflect on the importance of our Meadows as a Natural Habitat and how they are a crucial link to the Natural Green Corridor of the River Cray and the balance of people's visiting experience with minimal disturbance to the habitat. The Friends ask that people take extra care to minimise disruption during the nesting season. The River Cray is an urban river where channel modification, water abstraction and pollution takes its toll and needs restorative care (even on the Meadows). Simple habitat improvements can make a big difference.

To help bring back the Cray into improving health we shall be exploring with Bexley Parks Team, Thames21 and the Cray Catchment Improvement Group opportunities to reduce river disturbance, introduce river flow variation and allow parts of the river bank to improve as a varied native river habitat. Whilst retaining a balance of the natural enjoyment of walking beside the river. Examples of this type of route design can be seen at the standing water ponds and the wooden foot bridge river inlet and wetland.

The Meadows are ideal for Schools and Youth Organisations to take on Environmental Education Challenges. The Friends have, and will again this year be bringing groups of young people on to the Meadows to learn



Picture History Talk by Sally to Envision

through working sessions about the site, its history and the balance of nature in an urban environment. It appears that many of you are pleased to see these groups working and enjoying the Meadows in this way.

What cannot be acceptable is the outbreak of destruct

tive and anti social recreational use of unauthorised Motor Vehicles (quad bikes & off road bikes). This irresponsible and sometimes intimidating behaviour needs to be stopped through an informed and effective Police and Local Authority response. We all need to report every instance to highlight the extent of the problem and we will continue to raise this issue with the authorities. *Please see separate article.*

We should not lose sight of the fact that for the most part the Meadows remain tranquil and a wonderful informal open space enjoyed by many. As always it's only with your active support and a robust membership that we can achieve what we do. I look forward to meeting you at our AGM on Tuesday 25th June especially welcoming new supporters to be our succession for the continued success of the Friends.

Michael Heath - Chairman of FFCM

paws for Tea

On a nice sunny day Members of the Friends of Footh Cray Meadows opened their Information Centre to host the second "Paws for Tea" in aid of the Blue Cross Animal Charity. On offer were Treats for the Dogs and Tea /Coffee with Cake and Biscuits for the owners for a donation.



In addition a raffle was organized by the Friends which together with the donations from the refreshments resulted in over £190 being raised for the Charity.

The winners of the main prize a variety of treats were Winnie and Millie, ages 5 and 2 seen here with Steve Hoare who lives in Swanley with his wife Lisa.

Yet another very successful event in support of a charity by the Friends.



Editorial

You will have noticed that many references to Anti Social behaviour are in this issue of the newsletter.

Whilst most of the examples are of a nuisance or annoying nature there has been an instance of a person who when approached about their anti social behaviour have threatened to “Stick You” a euphemism for stabbing with a knife. This quite clearly is very worrying and as a society we need to take action.

What you can do if you come across anti social behaviour is to note the date, time and what is happening and report it to Bexley Council on 020 8303 7777 or the Police on 101 in the case of a serious situation ring 999. You can let FFCM know by emailing to ffcm06@gmail.com. Building up a record influences priorities and will hopefully lead to resources being given over to stopping this problem.

Do not approach these people or remonstrate with them it is not worth the risk, I know, I was the person threatened with “Stick You”.

Editor - FFCM is arranging to meet with Council Officers, the Local Police Team. It is hoped that from this joint approach a more cohesive plan on how to deal with anti social behaviour on the meadows can be brought into play.

The Council have made a start by changing gates at certain entrances as a means of stopping Quad Bikes.



WILLOW WILDLIFE RESCUE

The wildlife of today is not ours to dispose of as we please, we hold it in trust and must account for it to those who come after.

75 Walden Avenue
Chislehurst
Kent BR7 6EL

07956 472284
Eddie and Pat Williams
Reg. Charity No1137798:



Committee Members

- **Chairman - Michael Heath**
- **Secretary - Karen Wheeler**
- **Vice Secretary - Margaret Dodd**
- **Treasurer - Margaret Dodd**
- **Membership Secretary - Margaret Dodd**
- **Events Manager - Lesley Grant**
- **Publicity Manager - Sally Lands**
- **Newsletter Editor - Nick Grant**
- **Committee Members - Vera Heath, Jan Harmer, Raj Gajebasia**

We need a Conservation Manager.

www.footscraymeadows.org

email : ffcm06@gmail.com

Aims and Objectives

- Working in partnership with Bexley Council to encourage public interest in, and the conservation of Footh 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.

Foots Cray Meadows - Council Management update.

London Borough of Bexley will provide the materials and work with the FFCM to install fencing around the pond near the Stables later in the summer, this is to try to keep dogs out of the pond, as the level of disturbance by dogs means that currently this pond has little value for wildlife.

The condition footpaths along the river are in some places in a very bad state, especially downstream of Five Arches - in areas the paths and banks have eroded down completely. The LBB will be costing repairs to some of these paths and will seek to work in partnership organisations such as Thames 21 and NWKCP to deliver these works. It is proposed in some areas to divert the paths away from the river for short stretches, to allow the banks to recover and improve bank side habitat. Where this does take place alternative paths will be made and you will always be able to walk along at least one side of the river on any given stretch. There is no time table for such works but information will be posted on the notice boards when we do.

Other brief points include:

- LBB to complete installation of Anti Motorcycle Barriers at both Maylands Drive and Cleve Road pedestrian entrances- concrete and tarmac bases to finish.
- Installation of a small number of recycling litter bins to be installed summer 2013- near existing letter bins at main entrances only.
- LBB have a new contract for repairs to playground equipment and we are pleased to say that so far repairs are being done

more efficiently which will hopefully ensure all play equipment is usable for summer.

- Litter clearing is under control. Dog waste bins emptying is now undertaken by Kier (20 Dog Waste Bins at FCM) on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays all year round, is this is working better than when general litter and the dog bins were split between different contractors.
- Height of grass cutting and number of cuts the same as 2012. However we are experiencing some difficulty in maintaining quality - with some mowing not being completed in time or areas missed .
- Yew hedge around the site of the North Cray Place tennis courts have been reduced by another third, lowering them to a more manageable level and extending their life.
- A further section of coppice in the 'Alders' and a new path laid in preparation for closure of part of the river path.
- The dead willow next to five arches will be left for as long as it is felt safe - as dead wood habitat.
- Further work to clear brambles from blue bell areas has resulted in an improved display of flowers in North Cray Woods.

Main Tree & Woodland Work (autumn/winter 2013)

- Willows next to lake pollarded to prevent them splitting (ground conditions permitting)
- More coppicing - exact sites to be determined.
- Sycamore removal and bramble clearance from North Cray and Alders Wood

Bexley Parks Team

6th Sidcup Scout Group taking part in joint Friends of Foots Cray Meadows and Thames21 Projects



River Cleaning



Planting at Marsh Bridge

Some events on the Meadows



Friends of Foots Cray Meadows and Thames21 volunteers repairing Marsh Bridge



Envision Community Project Tree Mulching

Dates for your Diary: Future Events

We hope you are interested in joining in the many events we will be hosting 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 07858762530

- ◆ 25th June FFCM Annual General Meeting
- ◆ 1st July “History Talk” tbc
- ◆ 31st August “Bat Walk”

Posters advertising FFCM Events will also be in the noticeboards at the entrances to the Meadows at the following locations- Car Park, Riverside Road, Leafield Lane and outside Stable House and the Information Centre.

Alternatively you can visit www.footscraymeadows.org

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 Footh 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 Wildlife and Information Centre).

Any names and contact information gathered by The Friends of Footh Cray Meadows will only be used by themselves or Bexley Council on their behalf and not passed onto any third parties.

Name _____

Enclosed is my/our subscription. £5

Children's Names (if applicable) _____

Enclosed is a donation to The Friends. £ _____

Address _____

Please make cheque's payable to:
Friends of Footh Cray Meadows
 and send them along with your completed form to:

Phone _____

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

Email _____