

# FRIENDS OF THE CARRS NEWSLETTER



Spring 2019

## Chairman's Message

Just when we were congratulating ourselves on having come through the winter relatively unscathed, spring came along and hit us with a double whammy; first with dramatic floods at the Twinnies end of the park,



the result of heavy rain and two swollen rivers (the Bollin and the Dean) meeting just inside Styal woods and backing up, effortlessly tossing a railway sleeper up in a tree into the bargain, then an enormous beech turned up its toes (well, its roots then) near the middle bridge and came crashing down,



miraculously when no-one was there and missing the riverside path and our new wildflower area. The Carrs continues to attract ever more visitors - a strong and well-supported reason for opposing the suggestion that part of the car park be given up to long-stay parking. The number of Saturday morning park runners has doubled since last spring, the tennis courts have been popular all winter, the children's playground packed with happy and active youngsters, and we're delighted to see the kiosk doing such good business. We have received support from the highest level, too! The front page of the Times on April 4<sup>th</sup> declared that a 20 minute

stroll in the park is the best cure for stress, whilst I also noticed an estate agent recently extolling the proximity of a house to the Carrs Country Park as a major attraction.

Nevertheless, there will be plenty of jobs for our working party in April and follow-up activities afterwards. Top of the list are the puddles in the picnic area, the water running across the path by the first bridge, and of course tackling the return of the Himalayan balsam. We are grateful to 5<sup>th</sup> Wilmslow cubs and scouts for their hard work in clearing the old tennis courts and bowling green and re-discovering trees we planted there for a Jubilee Wood, and we look forward to planning a new use for the site.

With all the good things coming up in the Carrs - the Dog Show, Cinema in the Park, duck races, birthday picnics and preparing for Wilmslow's entry in Britain in Bloom, let's hope for another brilliant summer.

Ian Baillie, Chairman

## Dates for your Diary 2019

There are the usual attacks on balsam and working parties to spruce up The Carrs and keep it looking tidy. The Working Parties tackle tasks like removing litter, cutting back the willow along the river banks, keeping the river clear of debris and planting saplings and wild flowers. Extra hands are always needed so why not consider joining us and help look after your park?

Working Party	28 <sup>th</sup> April 2019 10.30am
Bird Walk	30 <sup>th</sup> April 2019 7.30am
Canine Capers	19 <sup>th</sup> May 2019 12.30pm
Cinema in the Park	8 <sup>th</sup> June 2019
Balsam Bash 1	23 <sup>rd</sup> June 2019 2pm
Balsam Bash 2	7 <sup>th</sup> July 2019 2pm
Working Party	29 <sup>th</sup> Sept 2018 10.30am
Bat Walk	27 <sup>th</sup> Jul 2019 9pm
AGM	20 <sup>th</sup> Oct 2019 2pm

## Events 2019

Preparations are already well underway for Canine Capers in mid-May. This is always a great fun event and is a good way for everyone who walks their dog on The Carrs to get together. Do come and join us. We have added an early morning bird walk this year led by one of Cheshire East's rangers. The Carrs is full of bird life but these can be elusive during the day when the park is busy. Why not set the alarm early and come down and see what is around? Cinema on the Carrs will take place on Saturday 8 June 2019 and it has been announced that the main

film will be Mamma Mia: Here We Go Again harking back to the first Cinema on The Carrs in 2015 when the original Mamma Mia proved a very popular choice.

The bat walk is always popular and despite a poor cool day last year, the weather improved in the evening allowing views of all three species living on The Carrs - Pipistrelle, Daubenton's and the UK's biggest bat (still smaller than the palm of your hand) the Noctule in case you were wondering! The year's events finish with the AGM.

## Wilmslow Park Runs

These runs are going from strength to strength with an average of 150 people running the 5Km course every week. Runs take place at 9am every Saturday with a 2Km Childrens' run for those aged between 4 and 14 on Sunday morning. It's free to join in and you don't have to be a regular runner. Everyone is welcome whatever their ability.



The run starts

## River Water Quality

We have had concerns raised about the quality of the water in the Bollin. Although generally much cleaner as evidenced by the presence of increasing numbers of fish and the resident heron, kingfisher and goosanders there has been a noticeable smell from the river on some days and some reports of illness after swimming in the river. Sally Potts from BEACON (Bollin Environment Action and Conservation) has instigated investigations and has identified some possible issues. However the River Bollin is a natural water source and is untreated and is not suitable for drinking. It is not designated as of bathing quality by United Utilities or The Environment Agency. Friends of The Carrs don't recommend that you let your children or dogs swim in the river – it flows through woods, fields where cattle graze and past sewage works before it reaches us. It isn't a swimming pool and just because it looks clean doesn't mean it is! We're (well, Sal is) planning to put more plants in the water to encourage more fish and she is contacting local farmers and householders with septic tanks to minimise the risk of contamination.

## Britain in Bloom

After achieving a Gold Medal in the Regional group of Britain in Bloom Wilmslow has now moved up to the national finals in the Large Town category. See <https://en-gb.facebook.com/wilmslowinbloom/> for the latest news on projects. So far 1000 bluebells have been planted, there are regular tidy ups, businesses are being encouraged to care for flower displays and there are plans to "yarnbomb" the town. See the link if you don't know what yarnbombing looks like!

We are planning for an immaculate Carrs on judging day so the more helpers the better on Working Parties. Come and join us.

## Nature Notes



The Carrs is currently in the full force of spring: lots of glorious daffodils, wood anemones, bluebells and blossom, the heron has gone off to look for a mate and a woodpecker has been drumming away for weeks. Is spring the best time in the Carrs? Our wild flower area is looking full of promise, too, and we wait with eager anticipation to see what will come up after the disappointment of last year's drought.

We have also planted a second area with annual wild flower seeds – poppies, cornflowers etc. These annual meadows are much showier and colourful perennial meadows, but need more attention each year so it will be interesting to spot the differences.

If you spot something of interest why not log it on the FOTC website, Twitter or Facebook.

## Website

Our website ([www.friendsofthecarrs.org.uk](http://www.friendsofthecarrs.org.uk)) gives news of all the latest happenings on The Carrs and information on how you can join in. For the technophobic watch the notice boards on The Carrs. We do hope you will come and join us.

## Contact Names

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