



# Newsletter

Spring 2020 Volume 16 Issue 1

Email: [friendsofcammo@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:friendsofcammo@yahoo.co.uk)

## Corona Virus - Covid 19

Currently Council policy with regard to parks appears to be not to close parks but to close children's play areas and car parks. At the time of writing, Cammo is still open but the car parks are closed. Can we urge everybody in the park to keep their distance from each other and observe the guidelines. Please note that Cammo Lodge Visitor Centre is closed to the public until further notice due to coronavirus restrictions (normally it is opened by Edinburgh Council staff on Thursdays and Friends of Cammo volunteers on Sunday afternoons. It has toilets, displays and publications for sale).

## Dates for Your Diary (fingers crossed)

**Wednesday 3 June** Meeting in the Lodge 7.30pm Open to all

**Wednesday 2 September** Meeting in Lodge 7.30pm Open to all

**Saturday 7 November** Litter pick. Help tidy up Cammo for Winter (equipment supplied). Meet at the Lodge at 10.00am

**Friday 20 November Annual Event** (Please note: Not a Barbeque this year, with all the risks of cancellation due to weather, but a "Wilderness Disco" to be held at Turnhouse Golf Club. Look out for posters and information on Facebook and the website)

**Wednesday 2 December** Meeting in Lodge 7.30pm Open to all

Any other events will be notified on our Facebook page and website, and by email to members, as will be cancellations as necessary. Please note that the meeting scheduled for 3 June is likely to be postponed. A decision will be made by early May.

**Facebook:** <http://www.facebook.com/friendsofcammo>

**Website:** <http://www.friendsofcammo.org>

## Forest Kindergarten

The long-term plan for the Forest Kindergartens is for two containers to be put on some hard-standing between the North carpark and Cammo Road. Once this happens, the two Forest Kindergarten groups will be based there. This will bring an end to the unsatisfactory current arrangements whereby the bus is parked for long periods at the Lodge and the food delivery van has to drive up and down the driveway to the main house ruin. At this point we do not know when the containers will arrive and of course the kindergarten has been suspended currently.

# Environmental Report



## Dead wood

Given that the park has turned into a bit of a quagmire over the winter months, we are lucky to have piles of woodchip being brought in by Special Branch. This has enabled us to cover over the worst affected pinch points in the park. It may be worth pointing out that we cannot use the woodchip on areas that will grow grass back in the summer, because if we do it will prevent the grass growing and consign these areas to permanent mud. Apart from helping park users by making desire line paths less muddy, the wood chip also prevents compaction of the ground which would otherwise result in damage to trees.

We still have quite a lot of woodchip left in the park but as soon as we can get enough volunteers this will be used to mulch trees and protect more of the paths. We will continue to import deadwood into the woodlands both in order to replace natural deadwood that gets burned by park visitors and also to close down some of the desire line paths

which tend to multiply rapidly as some of the paths become muddy and people create more.

As part of the work on the paths, on March 1st the Dirty Weekenders, volunteers from Edinburgh University, turned out to barrow and spread woodchip in muddy places in the park.



## Phase 2 of the Cammo Regeneration Plan

David Kyles and the Council have now completed Phase I of the Regeneration Plan using money from the sale of the old farmhouse. This has consisted of **path works, fencing** around the perimeter of the estate, **some repairs to external walls** and the creation of the **North carpark**. The second phase of spending will hopefully include the wetland and boardwalk project as well as, perhaps, consolidation of the walled garden perimeter walls.



## Little Pool

A fabulous little pool has formed at the bottom of North Field just in front of the large dead, fallen oak. The pool is a result of a broken field drain and is clear and sparkling. With luck it will attract frogs and newts and other pond creatures. During the heavy rains we also had a temporary pool where the wetland will go in South Field. (See photo above.)



## Other Activities

### Tree Planting

There was a large-scale hedgerow planting carried out on 26 January in South Field. This was highly successful with 36 volunteers planting 155 trees and shrubs. These were planted in green mesh enclosures and are thriving. In addition we have planted hawthorn, hazel, crab apple etc. around the new North carpark so that over time, these will screen the carpark from view.



### Birdboxes

Various birdboxes were put up over the winter by the Friends and the Council. These include barn owl boxes, kestrel boxes, starling boxes and tawny owl boxes.



### Bees

Rachael Doughty continues to lead the Bee Group. She reports that the bee colony is thriving so if we have any kind of decent summer, the tantalising possibility of Cammo Honey is there for the Autumn.

### Barnton Horse Chestnuts

After several requests, the Forestry and Natural Heritage service of the council have responded to Nick's request and replaced the felled/dead horse chestnut trees which stood majestically outside the Bank of Scotland on Whitehouse Road at Barnton. They have planted another horse chestnut and a plane tree. We can all look out for them and make sure they are not thirsty come the summer.

### Dogs

There have been one or two unfortunate incidents with dogs upsetting people in the park in the last few months. We would like to remind everyone that dog owners or walkers are responsible for making sure their dogs do not hurt or intimidate other park users.

# Committee News

## Resignation

Unfortunately Shay Dean has resigned as Membership Secretary but luckily Karen Edwards has stepped forward and volunteered to take up this role on the committee.

We would like to express our thanks to Shay for all the work she has done during her time on the Committee and also wish to extend a warm welcome to Karen.

## FoC website

Michael Roe of the Committee has been updating and editing the Friends' website. It is now full of information and a great advert for the Friends.

**Website:** <http://www.friendsofcammo.org>

**Facebook:** <http://www.facebook.com/friendsofcammo>

## Interpretation

Some finger posts to help visitors navigate Cammo Park are ready to be installed when Council workers are available. Interpretation panels for the hedgerow and for Cammo House, along with coloured way markers for the self-guided walks are being prepared and should follow soon after. Simon Gillam of the Friends and Peter Scott of the Community Council worked with the Council to compile an interpretation strategy and to develop proposals, some of which will be taken forward in a second phase.

## Membership

**Annual Subscriptions** are due in April. We will soon be emailing to members with advice as to how to pay. In 2019 more than half of all members paid direct to our bank account. Those paying by standing order do not need to take any action. Those who made a single payment will be invited to pay for 2020. There is no need to complete a membership renewal form.

In the current circumstances when we are urged to stay at home, we do not want to ask members to post cheques to us, nor ask the Treasurer to make unnecessary visits to the bank to pay them in. If you are able to use on-line banking to set up a standing order or single payment, we would be happy to receive payment in that way. If you wish to pay again by cheque or cash, please do not take any action at present and we will contact you later when movement restrictions have eased.

Look out for the swallows! They have arrived in Cammo Park on 19th April (!) every year for the past few years.

