



Newsletter

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New Path at South West Meadow

Muddy Track eliminated

During early October this year, council workmen began work on the pathway system across South West Meadow; at the very wet and muddy area at the S.W. corner of the estate; and along the back path bordering on the golf course.



Drainage ditch (left of centre), drain pipe (centre), timber path edging and pathway system at the previous very muddy S.W. corner of the estate.

Firstly, all the wet muddy areas were scraped off and the path across S.W. Meadow was dug out to a depth of about 4 inches. The drainage ditch at S.W. corner was increased in depth and width; extra drain pipes were installed under the path, both here, and at strategic positions on the back path; and the previous muddy section of this path was built up and edged with timber. This section, and the complete



The completed pathway showing the new surface

excavated path across S.W. Meadow were then in-filled with Type 1 aggregate, as were depressed sections of the path along the golf course wall. This was left to settle for a few days, during which it was well rolled out by passing mechanical diggers etc.

Finally, a top dressing of whin dust was spread over the entire path across S.W. Meadow and the previous muddy area at the corner of the estate. This was finished off by use of a flat-plate vibrator to ensure the path was well bonded together, and to produce a smooth surface.

18th Annual General Meeting

The event was held on 1st March 2016 in Cammo Lodge. Chairperson Ang Geddes summarised the events of the past year, which included planting of fruit trees in the Walled Garden, and our most successful barbeque to date, when more than 440 people enjoyed a splendid afternoon's entertainment. The BBQ committee was particularly thanked for all their meticulous planning and organisational skills.

During the year we said goodbye to Jeff Chalmers (Events Manager) and Kate Mackerzie (Chairperson), and warmly welcomed our new Chairperson, Angela Geddes, who joined us in December 2015.

The accounts showed we ended the year with £2,249 in the bank, of which £101 was grant money yet to be spent.

Group membership had reached a total of 184 households during the year, but 14 members would now be removed since they had not renewed their subscription, leaving a total of 170 members, which is roughly the same as last year.

This year (from 1st April) we are offering three different methods of subscription payment - cash or cheque as at present, bank transfer or standing order, See attached document for full details and instructions.

The bees would definitely arrive in Cammo during the Spring.

A funding bid for over £10,000 had been submitted to the People's Postcode Lottery. We should know the outcome soon.

Since there were no nominations for Committee members put forward, the existing members were all re-elected and agreed to continue in their present roles.

Cammo Canal

In the early 1700's a burn ran through the estate from the marsh area at the west boundary, past Cammo House, and on through South Field to the Bughtlin Burn. In the late 1720's or early 1730's (the actual date was never recorded), John Hogg, then owner of Cammo Estate, had a long narrow pond constructed to replace the section of this burn stretching from the marsh area to Cammo House. This pond was a long thin rectangular shape, 140m long, 10m wide and 650mm deep, and may have been designed and constructed by William Adam, the leading Scottish architect of that time. Garden ponds, or canals, were fashionable during early 18th century Scotland, and the canal at Cammo is very significant since it is the only canal in Scotland known to have been constructed with an apsidal end at its south-western extremity. Unfortunately, this particular feature of the canal has not been visible for many years, as it has either collapsed into the canal, or has been covered over by the canal bank. The canal runs in a



*Cammo Canal before conservation in 2007.
Note the erosion of the canal bank on the right.*

NE/SW direction with its NE extremity terminating about 50m SW of Cammo House. The canal is constructed of puddled clay, and is fed by a stone-lined underground channel, which links its SW extremity to the nearby marsh drain. The original canal had four grassy banks, and a sluice arrangement in the SE corner fed surplus water into an underground pipe system which ran through Vista Avenue, the woodland strip, and on through South Field to the cattle drinking trough, after which it flowed over-ground to the Bughtlin Burn. There are four inspection chambers located along the length of this underground pipeline, one in Vista Avenue, and three across the breadth of South Field;

In the early 1980's, a short, flat, depressed stone platform was constructed across the NE end of the canal in conjunction with the installation of an improved sluice drainage system. It is believed that the stone slabs for the platform surface were taken from the floor of the nearby Stables building. At the same time, the canal was drained and cleaned out, the sediment and spoil being spread over Low Meadow. In the 1990's, due to blockage problems in the drainage system, the canal was often over-full, resulting in water damage to the surface of the stone platform. In 1999, the surface of this platform was re-laid in concrete, after repairs to the drainage system were carried out. Some of the damaged stone slabs were believed to have been deposited into the canal. All construction work on the canal from the 1980's to 2007 was carried out by contractors employed by the City of Edinburgh Council.



The flooded canal in 2010

and provide stable banking, filling-in and topping-up of worn down areas and general re-planting to provide attractive solid root-bound canal banks.

Over the years prior to 2010 the canal drainage system was often blocked, leading to a gradual increase in the water level. However, in late 2010, the system became completely blocked and the water level rose, flooding the canal and surrounding area by as much as 1m above the proper level, and it became impossible to reach the drainage system to clear it,

Water Gems had designed a much simpler sluice to replace the existing structure, and were given the go-ahead to install it by the City Council. Work commenced in January 2011, with the removal of about 3,000 cubic metres of water, which was achieved by digging a drainage channel towards Vista Avenue to allow the water to escape. By lowering the base of this channel gradually it was possible to release the water relatively slowly, but even so, parts of the lower fields resembled a water meadow for a while.

When the canal was emptied, this channel was back-filled and returned to grass. The new sluice chamber was installed on 31st January 2011, and the concrete platform was re-built at the front since the constant flooding had undermined it.

Finally, the sluice boards were installed, and thereafter the canal filled up to maintain a normal constant level. The new sluice system seems to be working very well since there have been no further instances of flooding during the last five years.



Start of conservation work on both canal banks



The new sluice system after installation in 2011

Year at a Glance - 1st March 2015 to 29th February 2016

March: (1) Friends of Cammo held their 17th Annual General Meeting. (2) Planted 62 new hedgerow trees and plants along east edge of South Field. (3) Planted memorial oak tree at grassy path on east side of South Field. **April:** (1) Carried out Litter Pick within estate, 4 bags litter collected. (2) Mulched about 180 young trees with wood chippings in South Field. **August:** (1) Planted 20 Apple, 6 Plum and 4 Pear trees in Walled Garden. (2) Summer Barbecue (temperature 24 degrees cent.) attracted 440 visitors and proved the best BBQ ever. **September:** Events Manager Jeff Chalmers resigns. It is agreed not to re-fill this position at present. **October:** (1) Chairperson Kate MacKenzie resigns due health issues. (2) Carried out Litter Pick within estate, 4 bags rubbish collected. (3) Old growth and vegetation at Wildflower 1 cut back. **November:** Planted 8 Oak trees to supplement pairs of Ash trees in North and Home Fields. **December:** (1) Mulched all young trees in Home and North Fields with grass cuttings. (2) Angela Geddes elected new Chairperson. **January:** Turned over turf and prepared small area at rear of Wildflower 1 for seeding. **February:** Submitted grant application for more than £10,000 to People's Postcode Lottery.

Cammo Home Farm

At a meeting of the Council's Finance and Resource Committee on 2nd February this year, it was recommended that Cammo Home Farm should be sold for £678,500 to Mr. & Mrs. Shimwell, for demolition of the buildings on site and the construction of a single dwelling house, to be used as their family home.

Cammo Home Farm was de-listed as a Category 'C' Listed Building by Historic Scotland on 24th August 2014.

Litter Pick

On a cloudy but dry day on 25th October 2015, four volunteers turned out to scour the estate for litter and tidy it up for the approaching winter. After about an hour, four bags of rubbish had been collected and the estate was tidy once again. Thanks to all volunteers for a good job well done.

Wildflower 1 extension

On 17th January, despite slight snow during the night, six volunteers turned out to turn over turf at the rear of Wildflower One and prepare the ground for seeding. The work was



strenuous, but kept the volunteers nice and warm. By noon, the work was completed and the volunteers enjoyed hot soup and bread, supplied by Nick Benge. This area will square up the rear of Wildflower One, and will be seeded later in the year,

Flooded Paths

The heavy and persistent rain over the last few months has led to the flooding of the path across Low Meadow,



This path has been susceptible to flooding in the past, but this year's rain has made the path impassable for a month.

Hello and Goodbye

On 22nd of October last year we said goodbye to Kate MacKenzie, who had been our Chairperson for three years, and was retiring because of health reasons. Kate was presented with a large bouquet of flowers, and has our best wishes for a long and happy retirement.

At a group OGM on 1st December 2015, Angela Geddes was unanimously elected to be our new Chairperson. Your committee welcomes her, and looks forward to working closely with Ang, who will be a valued committee member,

Vegetation Cut-back

On a wet day on 25th October 2015, three volunteers spent the morning cutting back old growth and vegetation from Wildflower 1. This will allow maximum light for the new growth during 2016.

Grass Cutting of Fields

On 1st November 2015, the Council had North, Home, West and South Fields cut. Unfortunately, the cuttings were not lifted, but left to rot down. However, the cut grass was used by Nick Benge as a mulch, which he spent many hours transporting by wheelbarrow, and spreading round the base of all the young parkland trees.

Don't forget to pay your 2016 / 2017 annual subscription. Prompt payment is much appreciated.

Dates for your Diary

Litter Pick: Help tidy up Cammo for Summer (equipment supplied)

Ordinary General Meeting: Come along - put forward your views

Ordinary General Meeting: Reports of activities & comments

Litter Piick: Help tidy up Cammo for Winter (equipment supplied)

Meet at:

Date:

Time:

Cammo Lodge	Apr. 10 th	1000/1200
Cammo Lodge	Jun 1 st	1930/2100
Cammo Lodge	Sept 7 th	1930/2100
Cammo Lodge	Nov. 6 th	1000/1200

N.B. It is difficult to predict when work-days will be required to deal with the various projects. However, such work-days will be promulgated by email, giving as much notice as possible...

Major Project – Cammo Canal

This year, the Friends of Cammo hope to undertake a major project, providing the necessary funding can be obtained. The project, which would be carried out in late summer, would be to drain the Canal and remove all the silt, debris and rubbish that is presently choking the life out of the canal.

Contractors have been approached and an estimate of just over £6,000 has been obtained. The group is now actively seeking grant funding for this extremely worthwhile project, but if you would like to make a personal donation, which can be Gift Aided, please contact the Treasurer, Lynn Whitehead, on 0131 339 1277 or email lynnwhitehead@mac.com

New Tree planted in Pinetum

On 24th January, volunteers planted a new Chilean Plum Yew in the existing empty tree enclosure on the sloping bank at the top of the stone stairway. The new tree was obtained from the Botanic Gardens under their Endangered Conifers scheme, and replaces one of the same species which died last year.



Annual Subscription Reminder

Would all members please note that their subscription for year 2016 / 2017 is now due, and should be paid as soon as possible. This year, we are offering three different methods of payment - by cash or cheque, by bank transfer or by standing order. Please refer to the attached document for full details, and instructions on how to proceed. Prompt payment is really appreciated, and avoids the cost and time involved in having to send out payment reminders.

Bughtlin Burn Guardrail

The picture below shows the new wooden safety guard rail at the Bughtlin Burn culvert



on the path between the Visitor Centre and the car park. This barrier was erected last year after the old wooden rail was vandalised.

Snowdrops

After what seemed like months of heavy rain and muddy conditions, it was a very welcome sight to see the first signs of Spring peeping through the ground in the Walled Garden.



Visitor Centre Clean-up

During early March this year, our sincere thanks went to our Treasurer, Lynn Whitehead, who spent about two days sprucing up Cammo Lodge, which had not had a proper spring-clean for years. In addition to cleaning, Lynn had the lighting fixed, washed windows, polished brasswork, ect.

Pineapple replaced

On 17th January this year, the carved stone pineapple was replaced on the stone retaining wall at the Pinetum. At the same time, the two other sculptures, which were loose on their seating, were properly secured and made safe. This work was carried out by the Natural Heritage Service.