**Friends of Saintbridge Pond (FOSP) - SAINTBRIDGE NATURE RESERVE**

**Chair Report (AGM) 2017**

**Firstly what a year we have had, it has been so busy so rather than me write and talk about it lets see what work the FOSP Volunteers have done throughout 2016-2017.**

**See Presentation Power Point Attached.**

**January is our planning behind the scenes month because of the cold and wet weather. Bees Kneeds Award.**

**February- Ken worked hard Willow pollarding along the Spinney, we spread the woodchip down the path which was donated by Gloucester City Council.**

**March =the Aston project cut back the brambles along the entrance to the spinney, what a difference this made. The Bulb & Wildflower map was reviewed and updated, we researched the funding for the tasks in the maintenance plan.**

**April. The timber in the spinney at the Willows was cleared a beautiful new bench was donated and installed by Gloucester City Councillors Gift.**

**May -we had the Green Flag Judges visit so lots of preparation by the volunteers for this visit. Tony & Barbara designed a poster as part of the Seed Swap initiative this explained the foods which are good and bad for wild fowl.**

**June the month the four Cygnets were born the weather was fantastic so everyone got going scything and clearing the Skylark Banks and removing debris from the corner at Skylark. The Website went live thank you Tony & Graham.**

**July another busy month for us as we cleared the Sudbrook silt trap and cleared Skylark bank. The GL4 container arrived so it was necessary to paint the side of FOSP’s container and have a general clear out of the container and the metal sheds at the Community Gardens.**

**August -The Orchard & Rose Garden was maintained and has developed, looking splendid. Grace donated wooden table and chairs and Ken kindly invited all the volunteers to a wonderful tea-party. The stream at Redstart Close cleared.**

**September was another busy month. FOSP volunteers donated items and worked at the Tombola Stall at the GL4 Community Fun Day event raising funds for local groups. The Spinney banks were scythed and Himalayan Balsam removed while a silent auction for the Saintbridge Swan painting raised £25. An enormous task was undertaken by Paul Brunt who compiled a bird sighting log of all the birds around Saintbridge Pond. This is now on the website and a great piece which we wish to use as a template for future use for plants, butterflies and wildlife sightings. Ken was very resourceful when working mowing the Skylark bank and managed to receive £200 donations from local residents for the materials.**

**October – a beautiful autumn. Marianne, Rob and Ken cleared the Community Gardens ready for the winter. More clearing & scything in the Spinney, the bench and posts at the Feeding area were painted and we held one of our Community Bulb planting days.**

**November – we had an increase in volunteers there are 12 regulars now, 20 in total. More work done in the Spinney, bulbs and seed planted. Four members attended the Barnwood Trust Afternoon Tea networking event. Volunteers donated several items. Work on the Maintenance plan timeline, 500 Daffodil’s and Narcissus bulbs were planted on the 2nd Community Bulb Planting Day, three separate incidents were reported to the police and several new species of ducks were noted on the pond. Free trees delivered by TCV and a permit/licence application and drawing sent to the EA for the Feeding Area Project to start at the end of Feb. Marianne found and donated a gold wedding ring while digging in the gardens.**

**December – Many hours spent in the Spinney by Ken, Marianne & Charlie clearing the vegetation and planting the holly trees, but it has paid off and looks superb. The Swans arrived back on the pond and we received £2985 from Glos. City Council for the Feeding Area Project, £50 from Grace for the work we do and the trees arrived from TCV.**

**January 2017**

**Spinney & Brambles were the main thrust of the work. Meeting with members to review all the work done over the year and plan the AGM. Charlie is working on a Profile/Report for FOSP. This will be used as a working document to be reviewed an updated annually. What a task and we are so very grateful for this as it is a useful tool to access funding in the future and good for marketing FOSP to other organisations. Trees planted, seed and bulbs. A total of 14, 000 bulbs planted this year to include Aconite, Daffodils, Snowdrops, Bluebells, Narcissus, Fritillary, Wild Garlic.**

**February Our 2017 AGM.**

**Looking through all this work which has been done this could never have been achieved without the FOSP volunteers who continually turn up and do the work no matter the weather. The Saintbridge Pond and the Fosp Gardens are looking better than they have for a long time. They look like they are being cared for this is shown by the number and range of visitors I see around the pond. Many more families with young children. It is not just the work around the pond it is the work behind the scenes so many of you give up your time, knowledge, skills and expertise and it is paying off. Long may it continue it’s a pleasure to be a member of the group?**

**There are two categories of volunteers, weekends and weekdays.**

**There are two types of volunteers, the ones who turn up every workday and the ones who turn up when they are available. This is the beauty of the group, as each volunteers is a valuable contributor in their own right whether working on the ground or behind the scenes we work as a team which is why we are seeing such a difference at the pond and surrounding area.**

**For me the Theme for this year’s AGM is passion, commitment and longevity, which is very obvious when I speak to everyone. We recognise that without these volunteers’ persistence and continual attendance over the years, this group would have folded and the Saintbridge pond would be an eyesore. So let’s celebrate and acknowledge them and thank them for their continued persistence and passion for the environment and wildlife. Thank you.**

Friends of Saintbridge Pond (FOSP)

Chair: Marilyn McKechnie

19 February 2017