



Friends of Gedling House Woods Questionnaire

Answers to questions 1 to 7

Q1 – Who owns the woods and meadows?

A: (c) – Gedling Borough Council owns the land, and holds the title deeds.

Q2 – Who manages and looks after the woods and meadows?

A: (b) – FGHW entered into a twenty-year licence agreement with Gedling Borough Council in 2003 to manage the woods and meadows on the council's behalf. The licence has since been extended slightly to the end of 2024.

Q3 – Where do the finances come from to help maintain Gedling Woods and Meadows?

A: (a) and (b) – We have a ten-year agreement with Natural England until the end of 2024 to maintain the meadows (under the EU common agricultural policy) which provides our main income. This depends on achieving at least 4 and up to 25 educational visits to the site each year. Gedling Borough Council no longer funds us to manage the woods and meadows, but we arrange with the council for them to pay for an annual tree check and associated work, and herbicide spraying. The council also service our machinery annually. Membership subscriptions and donations cover the running of the association only, and contribute very little to the maintenance of the site.

Q4 – What are the woods and meadows designated as?

A: (c) Both woods and meadows are local nature reserves (LNR). The woods were designated as an LNR on 1 January 1992. The meadows were designated on 15 February 2007.

Q5 – Why are sheep sometimes in the meadows?

A: (b) The meadows are wild flower meadows and so the main aim is to promote wildflower growth to attract pollinators. Wildflowers have to compete with grass so the grass is usually mown every year after the wildflower seeds have dispersed onto the ground. The hay is removed to reduce the amount of nutrient that gets into the soil. Sheep come to feed in late autumn after the grass has grown again, so that the grass does not dominate wildflower growth in the early spring. Sheep eat only the green grass and other leaves. That is largely converted into weight gain and their droppings make little difference to the nutrient balance in the meadow.

Q6 – Why are small children sometimes in the woods and meadows?

A: (a) and sometimes (b) – We encourage educational visits and need up to 25 per year to maintain maximum funding. We receive some visits from primary and secondary schools, but the local nursery uses the meadows almost daily if the weather is good for Forest School activities. We also have occasional visits from families and other groups who come to use the woods and meadows for play.

Q7 – What are the responsibilities of dog walkers when using the woods and meadows, especially when children and/or sheep are there?

A: (c) – It is against the law to allow dogs to worry sheep. This applies even if they don't physically harm the sheep. It is also against the law to allow a dog to be out of control. The law says that dog is dangerously out of control if it injures someone or makes someone worried that it might injure them. Off-lead dogs approaching young children, even if in a seemingly friendly way, can be extremely frightening for the child. Both these laws apply to the person walking the dog and the owner, even if the owner is not there.