

The Fairfield Association and Flora: Past, Present, Plans and Possibilities

Registered charity number: 1058030

<http://www.fairfieldassociation.org/>

The Fairfield Association



A very brief history of the Fairfield Association: A community-based environmental charity

- Since 1996 we have raised more than £500,000 for our projects using:
- Community and cooperation
- Self-sufficiency and working together

A Stormy Start: 1995

- Late summer 1995: plans for development on the play area are uncovered
- October 1995: the ‘great debate’
- November 1995: The Fairfield Association is formed

1996

- September 1996: Charitable Status
- November 1996: the deadline for buying the garages approaches and the Fairfield Association fails to get National Lottery or Millennium Green funding
- We appeal to the local community
- December 1996: The Fairfield Association owns 10 derelict garages!

Fairfield Green 1996



Energetic volunteering!



1998-2000: The Millennium Orchard

- 1999: The Fairfield Association succeeds in its second Millennium Green application and also gets a Lancaster City Council Million for the Millennium Grant;
- 2000: Fairfield Community Orchard starts fruiting!

Fairfield Orchard entrance

November 1999 and July 2005



The Easter Egg Hunt



Orchardeers at work!






Questions?

The Fauna Project

FAUNA 2012

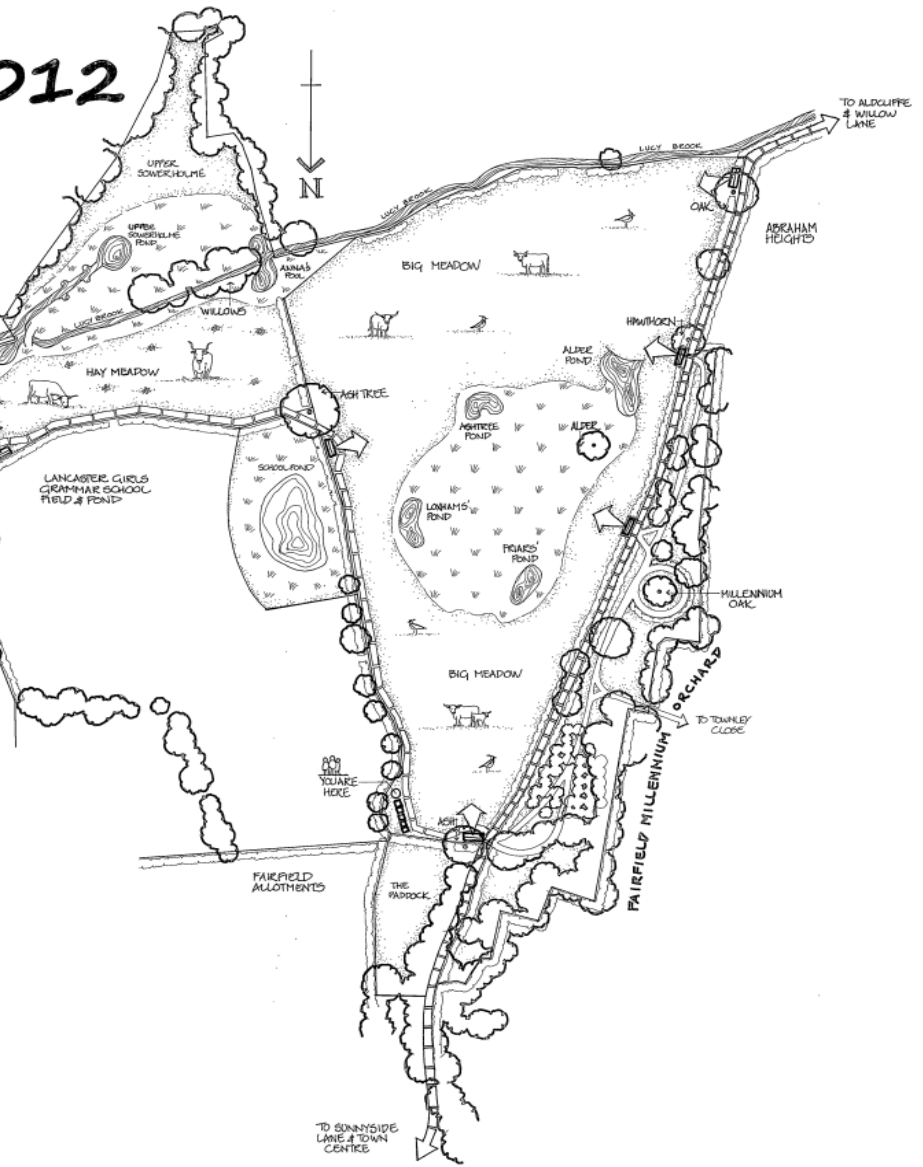
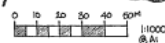
KEY TO PLAN

-  PUBLIC FOOTPATH
-  PERMISSIVE FOOTPATH
-  VIEWING BENCH
-  STONE/GATE/ROAD FEATURES
-  WILDFLOWER MEADOW
-  WETLAND
-  PONDS, SCRAPES & LUCY BROOK
-  TREES & HEDGES

TO CROMWELL ROAD & ALDCLIFFE ROAD

PLEASE NOTE:
NO ACCESS TO LEFT
BEHIND HEDGES

 SUMMER GRAZING
- WINTER WADERS



Cromwell's Pond and the wildflower meadow we are creating beyond it



One of the inhabitants!



Fauna (created 2012)

- A 16-acre nature reserve, about 5 minutes' walk from the railway station;
- We raised £130,000 and acquired a 30-year lease for the land (at £1 per year, from Lancaster City Council), in the first instance.;
- We have created eight ponds and pools to enhance this wetland reserve;
- Fauna is important for local wetland birds (e.g. snipe, water rail).

Improvements to Fauna

- Hedgerows
- Lowland meadow and grassland
- Ponds
- Reedbeds

Indications of success in attracting wetland birds

- The Fauna and Orchard subgroup (FOG) receives a monthly report on both areas.
- This report includes periodic indicators of how many wetland birds there are in Fauna.
- For example, in our January 28th 2013 flush count we saw:
 - 2 moorhens, 2 pairs of mallard, 10 teal and 95 (yes, 95!) snipe.



Snipe

Indications of success in the wildflower meadow

In addition to the monthly reports, there are also annual surveys which monitor change.

For example:

- We have removed the ragwort from Fauna and spread wildflower seeds in our wildflower meadow;
- The 2013 annual report indicates some success in increasing the variety of wildflowers to be found there.



Haymaking in the Fauna wildflower meadow



Questions?

The Flora Project focuses on:

- purchasing,
- conserving,
- enhancing and
- learning about

25.84 acres of fields and woodland close to Lancaster city centre where local people have walked for centuries.



Flora site map

<http://florafields.org/files/281-02B.pdf>

(right-click and open link in new tab or 'Save as', if your browser supports this functionality)

Purchasing

- The Flora fields were in private ownership
- The cost to date of purchasing these fields is approaching £300,000
- Most of this money has come from individual local donations (£80,000 has come from the Heritage Lottery Fund).
- Approximately 200 people have contributed.

Purchasing

- <http://florafields.org/images/floramap.jpg>

(right-click and open link in new tab or ‘Save as’, if your browser supports this functionality)

Conserving

- The Flora fields are rich in both history and wildlife, and the landscape is important to the people that walk along the ‘long pads’.
- We aim to conserve the fields for future generations with sensitivity to all these areas of interest.

- Wildlife in Flora includes lapwing, wading birds and brown hares.
- Landscape features include wet and dry pasture, four old hedgerows, a wood planted in the 1830s (Pony Wood) and a smaller wood (Little Wood).
- Historical features include visible lynchets and the public footpath across it is a remnant of a 'green road' said to have been used by medieval travellers from Lancaster Priory to Cockersands Abbey.

An aerial view showing the lynchets



We hope to attract lapwings to nest
in Flora



Enhancing (1): We hope to:

- Provide more grazing for the White Park and perhaps other heritage cattle too;
- Increase the hedgerows and incorporate wide wildflower margins to the fields, and so provide food and shelter for insects, birds and small mammals;
- Increase and deepen the wet areas, to help wetland birds and water-based small mammals;
- Extend and enhance the woodland areas;
- Sow arable crops in the Spring to increase food and shelter for wildlife.

An arable crop and wildflower margin



Enhancing (2): Initially, we hope to:

- Open up Little Wood for people to enjoy;
- Create a footpath around Pony Wood and Little Wood so that people can enjoy the views from the top of the hill.
- Assess the effects of these changes on the wildlife before deciding whether or not to open up more footpaths later.

Our aim is to achieve a balance that is good for both people and wildlife.

Pony Wood from near Little Wood



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envirart, lancaster,
2010.

From Pony Wood to the Castle



The Public Consultation

- Supported the NE grazing and wetland plans for fields 1 and 2 (133/143);
- Supported the NE arable/wildflower plans for fields 3 and 4 (119/139);
- Supported the extension of Pony Wood (97/132)
- Supported opening up Little Wood, but less clearly (69.5 for open access, 40.5 for fenced footpath only, 24 against any access);
- Supported a footpath (1) around Pony Wood and Little Wood, but less clearly (P1: 64, P2: 17, P3: 17, Combinations: 32)

The Public Consultation

- Supported in general the NE proposals as a whole (For: 99, Against: 6; For in part: 23)
- Raised the following issues:
 - Lynchets in Fields 3 and 4
 - Arable farming use of herbicide and fungicide
 - The possible existence of a public right of way across fields 3 and 4

Plans for Flora

<http://florafields.org/files/281-02B.pdf>

(right-click and open link in new tab or ‘Save as’, if your browser supports this functionality)

First steps

- Estimate costs and raise money for preserving the land and making the changes;
- Find more volunteers to do the work and train them;
- Monitor the changes to the area including changes to the biodiversity (we already have some baseline studies);
- Train more people to help us record the changes.

Learning

- We want to tell people about the nature reserve and its heritage, using our Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) funding:
 - Our schools programme (starting soon)
 - Volunteer training (starting soon);
 - This series of talks.

1848 map of Flora

- <http://florafields.org/files/FloraMap1848.pdf>

(right-click and open link in new tab or ‘Save as’, if your browser supports this functionality)

The Fairfield Association

We need your help and support in caring for our lovely area.

You could:

- Join the Fairfield Association
- Become a volunteer worker
- Make a donation
- Mention us in your will!

Questions?