



Become a member of  
Friends of Warneford Meadow

## Why you should become a Friend of Warneford Meadow

Friends of Warneford Meadow is run by a Board of Directors. However, a company also has members who have various rights, most importantly to elect the Directors at annual general meetings.

FoWM needs members and it's important that we represent the people of the area. Membership isn't just a bureaucratic formality: members aren't only entitled to vote at the AGM, but also receive e-mail newsletters, are invited to work parties and social events etc.

**The membership subscription is £5.00 pa per person.** We need to raise funds on top of that, of course, by activities, appeals and other means. We estimate the minimum annual cost of maintenance for the Meadow at around £3000, with enhancements potentially costing significantly more. The point of the subscription is to confirm your status as a member – a “Friend” – who is entitled to take part in running FoWM and deciding its future.

Find out more about the Meadow and about FoWM at [www.friendsofwarnefordmeadow.org.uk](http://www.friendsofwarnefordmeadow.org.uk). If you have questions, e-mail [warnefordmeadow@gmail.com](mailto:warnefordmeadow@gmail.com). To become a Friend of Warneford Meadow, complete the form and return it with your remittance of **at least £5.00**. Please feel free to add a donation to FoWM as well.

Pay by cheque: post or deliver the completed form and payment to: FoWM, 35, Hill Top Road, Oxford, OX4 1PD.

Pay on line: e-mail the information asked for on the form to [warnefordmeadow@gmail.com](mailto:warnefordmeadow@gmail.com) and send your payment to FoWM's bank account: sort code 08-92-99 + a/c 65625022. Please quote **your name** as the reference.

✂️ -----  
**I wish to become a Friend of Warneford Meadow.**

Name: .....

Address (please include postcode): .....

Telephone: .....

Email: .....

Either I enclose a cheque for £..... (**£5.00 + donation**) payable to FoWM

Or I have made an electronic payment of £..... (please complete) to FoWM's account [sort code 08-92-99 a/c 65625022] quoting my name as the reference.

*I understand that FoWM retains the personal information above in order to send me emails, updates and other reminders. FoWM will treat this information in strict confidence and will not pass your details to any other organisation. Friends of Warneford Meadow is a company limited by guarantee: Company No 8235285*

Signature (not required if e-mailing this information to [warnefordmeadow@gmail.com](mailto:warnefordmeadow@gmail.com)):

Date:



## A wonderful open space right on your doorstep

Warneford Meadow is over seven hectares of grass-land, alongside an orchard planted in the 1940s. It is hidden behind the houses of Hill Top Road and the Warneford and Churchill Hospitals. The Meadow is bounded on the east by Boundary Brook and Southfield Golf Course. The site can be entered from Hill Top Road or Roosevelt Drive, or by one of two foot-bridges from the Churchill site. Public footpaths follow its edges, and there's a well-used path across the middle.

The Meadow was bought by Warneford Hospital in 1918 to protect it from development and provide food and therapeutic outdoor recreation for patients. The hospital farm closed in the 1960s, but the Meadow was grazed or a hay crop taken until the 1980s. Local people have long used the Meadow for recreation – walking, blackberry picking, children's games. In recent years, it was neglected by its owners, the NHS, and began to run wild.

The Meadow has nevertheless developed an interesting ecology. The grass is home to voles and invertebrates. Besides the willows that already grew by the brook, other trees, mainly oak, have grown and there are other plants typical of this kind of terrain. Many birds have been recorded: kestrels and sparrow hawks, skylarks, owls and finches of every kind. Insects are numerous and butterflies can proliferate in good years. However, without sensitive management, some of this diversity might be lost, and the entire Meadow could revert to scrub.

## Town Green Status

In 2006 the Meadow was under threat. Planning applications were submitted by the NHS, who wanted to sell it to developers. Local residents set up Friends of Warneford Meadow (FoWM) to resist the proposals and protect its recreational, aesthetic and ecological value. Supported by FoWM, an application was made to have the Meadow registered as a Town Green. Following a lengthy enquiry, the Inspector recommended in October 2008 that it should be registered. The County Council voted in favour in April 2009; and, following an unsuccessful judicial review brought by the NHS, the Meadow was finally registered as a Town Green in April 2010. FoWM raised over £60,000, mainly from local residents, to meet the cost of legal advice and representation at the Inquiry and in the High Court.



Registration as a Town Green means that local residents' rights to use the Meadow for recreation are protected, and almost all development is prohibited, but does nothing to ensure that it is looked after.

FoWM has therefore looked for ways to secure the Meadow's future, and ensure that it is managed in a way that protects and enhances its recreational, landscape and conservation value. In September 2012 FoWM was established as a Company Limited by Guarantee, with charitable objectives; in due course, we aim to register with the Charity Commission. Shortly afterwards FoWM reached an agreement with the Department of Health that will let us do more extensive work, including mowing the grassland areas; and these were mown for the first time in nearly thirty years in 2013.

## Future ownership?

In August 2011, the Department announced that it planned to sell the Meadow, and in January 2013 advertised it for sale. However, less than a fortnight after the advertisement appeared, the Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust – the former Mental Health Trust, which runs the Warneford Hospital – stated that they intended to take over ownership of the Meadow and wanted to work with FoWM and others to ensure that it remains a valued amenity for local residents and for hospital patients and staff, and that the licence allowing FoWM to carry out maintenance and conservation work will stay in place. At the end of September 2013 the Trust confirmed that they now own the Meadow.

FoWM believes that the Meadow is not only safe from development, but will have a benign non-profit owner committed to working with the local community. FoWM can now concentrate on maintaining and enhancing the Meadow for the sake of all its users. A comprehensive management plan will help to realise FoWM's aspiration to keep scrub and invasive plants at bay and retain a mix of habitats – hay meadow, orchard, and wetland close to Boundary Brook – and of course to enable recreational use as protected by the Meadow's Town Green status.

