



# FRAW News

June 2018

## Membership

Many thanks to all our members who have rejoined this year and welcome to our newcomers. Income through subscriptions and generous donations now exceeds last year. The great majority have helped us to navigate the demands of the new Data Protection legislation (GDPR) that tightens the control of personal data held and used by organisations. If you have not yet replied to our email, please do so as soon as possible to enable us to continue to keep in touch.

## Steps and Weirs

FRAW being able to demonstrate its strong membership will be particularly important this year as two significant projects may finally come to decision time. The much needed replacement of the Salvesen Steps is at a crucial stage with consultants preparing a fully costed scheme. This is due for completion by the end of June and should then lead to a decision whether or not construction can go ahead.

Secondly, we are hopeful that the long-standing questions about the preferred approach to improving fish passage at Dowies Mill will be resolved and that plans will be made available by the RiverLife project detailing how this can be achieved without badly affecting the environment around Cramond Brig and Dowie's Mill.

## Projects with Children

Our work with Cramond Primary's P7s continues and their wildflower plot is flourishing. First to flower were Lesser Periwinkle, Cowslips, Fritillary and Star of Bethlehem. Cornflowers and Poppies from a seed mix are now blooming and the plot is looking very colourful. The striking yellow Rock Rose has begun to bloom and is easy to spot in small rock garden.



The children have also labelled plants with stones on which they have named and drawn a picture of each flower and these are very attractive (see photo). Fact sheets are also being drawn up and these will be displayed soon.



**Why not head down to the garden and enjoy the results of their hard work!**

We also enjoyed a very successful walk along to the new fish pass at Fair-a-Far with around 20 of the Monday Cubs.

The Cubs were interested in the stories they were told and asked lots of challenging questions. Hopefully they enjoyed their walk – on a beautiful evening – and it will encourage them to visit the Walkway again in future.



## Bluebells at Last!



Some of our members will remember that as long ago as December 2014; a well-supported Work Party planted a vast number of bulbs above the path up from the Boatyard. We had previously cleared the site of an enormous infestation of Laurel which had largely taken the area over. Laurel has the effect of poisoning the ground and the fear was that nothing else would grow there. Our fears appeared justified as nothing much happened after all the hard work by our willing volunteers – what a waste of time and effort we sadly thought? However, this year our bluebells have flowered in healthy looking clumps. Hurrah – everything happens to those that wait!

## Other Work Party News

- The planting by the entrance to the Walkway by the Boatyard in a previously abandoned spot is progressing well. Not all species in the seed mix have emerged but the Red Campion, Teasel and Garlic Mustard have been particularly successful. Other species in the seed mix may well be seen later in the summer.
- Our first clearing of sapling growth down from Cramond Brig has taken place which has improved the vistas of the river. We hope to undertake a second phase in July.
- The Community Woodland near Peggy's Mill continues to flourish and we plan to brush-cut around the new trees over the next few weeks. Our new paths are also a success and we plan to install a second flight of steps to enable a circuit to be made.
- We are in discussion with the Natural Heritage Service regarding improvements to the path just downstream of Dowie's Mill and at Peggy's Mill.

## Public support of our parks

The members of the FRAW Committee are also actively involved in ensuring our Councillors and Council Officials are aware of the challenges we face and the need for their support of the work we are doing. We also Chair the Edinburgh Green Spaces Forum, an umbrella group for all the Friends of Parks Groups within the City of Edinburgh and were recently invited to give evidence to the Local Government and Communities Committee of the Scottish Parliament at Holyrood. This was the first time our MSPs had gathered evidence about our parks and green spaces and it was first opportunity for community groups to make their case for our Parliament to give sufficient budget and resources to support our parks.