



# Celebrating our community groups

16 February 2023 – Meeting 5

A city of opportunity where everyone thrives

# 'Friends of Groups' in Southampton by the River Itchen

- **The Friends of the Itchen Navigation**
  - Aim is to preserve and develop the work completed in 2012 on the Itchen Navigation Heritage Trail Project. The group has just over 1,400 members.
- **Friends of Riverside Park**
  - Aim is to maintain and improve the physical and natural environment of Riverside Park in liaison with SCC and other interested bodies. 50 paid up members and over 300 followers on Twitter.
- **Friends of Chessel Bay**
  - Group whose aim is to protect and preserve Chessel Bay Local Nature Reserve. Over 60 volunteers helped at the Autumn clean-up.

# Activities

- **Litter picks** – eg Chessel Bay volunteers have removed substantial quantities of rubbish from the Local Nature Reserve for over 20 years
- **Maintenance** – eg Restoration of the banks, removal of non native species and clearing and preservation of the locks (Itchen Navigation).
- **Planting** – eg Spring bulb planting by Friends of Riverside Park
- **Information & Awareness** - Maintenance walks to report on areas in need of repair and improvement; newsletters; online material; interpretive panels.

## Events - On, in and alongside the River Itchen

- **All Aboard Festival** - Annual musical, art and theatrical event on and along the banks of the River Itchen in the Cobden Bridge area event presented by St Denys Boat Club.
- **Trifest** – Annual free community festival at Bitterne Park Triangle, held in Riverside Park and now part of the Friends of Riverside Park.
- **Toes in the water** - An open water swimming festival in February.
- **Numerous sporting events**

These events drive engagement and interest in the River Itchen



# Issues Raised

- **Maintenance**
  - Improvements to the river bank, the towpath, the historic locks - making access for the public more difficult.
  - Currently the jetty at Cobden Meadows is taped off due to damage and needs repairing
- **Pollution**
  - Water quality, plastic pollution & litter
- **Protection and encouragement of flora and fauna**
- **Network potential – Respect River Campaign as umbrella group**



A city of opportunity where everyone thrives

