

Minutes of the Fairfield Association Annual General Meeting held on 12th June 2013 at The Friends Meeting House.

Present

Mandy Bannon (secretary), Graham Brandwood, Andrew Brennand (chair), Dave Brookes, Margaret Burtonwood, Peter Callingham, Ken Capewell, Marcia Clegg, Glenys Ferguson, Paul Ferguson, Oliver Fulton, Ruth Haigh (membership secretary), Bill Littlejohn, Jane Littlejohn, Kate McKinley, Jane Parker (treasurer), Ian Procter, Hermione Roff, Michael Shepherd, John Whitaker, Pamela White, Anne Woodfine

Apologies

David and Pauline Elliott, Ruth Feinberg, Tony Finn, Lesley and J Knagg, Hazel Harrison, Julia McDowell, Sue Nieduszynska, John Roff, Hilary and Mick Short, Philip Turner, Sue Pope, Susan and Alan Wylde

The Minutes for 2012 were accepted as a fair and accurate representation. There is just one typo. The Triangle is opposite Aldcliffe stores, not “stalls”.

Chair’s Report – (full report appended)

In his fourth year of being chairman, Andrew Brennand reported he had received the same strong support and guidance offered in previous years. He thanked all the committee members and trustees who have worked especially hard this year, as we have begun to run a nature reserve and have achieved a record amount of fund-raising in order to extend the reserve. Particular thanks go to Mick Short whose hard work fund-raising has resulted in the crowning achievement of the year – the purchase of fields adjacent to Fauna. Thanks also go to the team who put the bid together for the Heritage Lottery Fund grant: Hilary Short, Oliver Fulton, and others. Thanks also to those who supported the Association with pledges and donations, who have made Flora possible. The Deed of Transfer is about to be signed and we hope to take possession of the fields in the next few weeks. A team has assembled to deliver Flora and there will be a public consultation in autumn.

The Association has delivered a varied calendar of nine community events this year. Since the last AGM, there has been the bi-annual Fun Day, Forest Schools, Kwik Cricket, Apple Day, Carol Singing on Christmas Eve, Wassailing, Easter Egg Hunt, a fund-raising concert by Hum Holler n Sing and an Auction last Saturday, which raised a staggering £3,400. There will also be an Open Garden at Robin Loxam’s farm, where a portion of the gate money will be donated to us. The Association thanks everyone who organised, helped out and attended all these events.

As well as events, the Association also provides facilities and services to the people of Lancaster throughout the year. The playground on Fairfield Green continues to be well-used. Thanks go to Ken Capewell who maintains it so well. The safety surface was partially renewed last autumn and we hope to complete the rest, this autumn.

The Millennium Orchard has also been well-managed. Special thanks to Ian Procter for running the volunteer sessions and thanks to the many volunteers who toil in all weathers, maintaining trees, paths and flora. Thanks go to Tony Finn who has forged links with local schools and groups such as Brownie and Beaver packs who have made use of the orchard for educational visits. Thanks also to Glenys for ruling Fauna and Orchard Subgroup with an iron rod.

We are also grateful to our Treasurer, Jane Parker, who has kept our increasingly complex accounts magnificently. Links with local media remain strong. Communications with members has also been ably managed by Ruth Haigh who handles the database and coordinates the delivery of newsletters via letterbox and email.

This is the first year when buildings have appeared under our remit. Firstly the storage building at the end of Sunnyside Lane has been completed, enabling us to keep all our equipment together in one place. Hilary Short deserves a special mention for writing the grant applications, which funded most of the cost. Secondly, the Friends of the Triangle subgroup, commanded by Dave Brookes and Peter Callingham has made progress with the Aldcliffe Triangle space, (which includes a workshop and

shed) and we are getting close to signing the lease. More can be found out at the fund-raising event on Sat 6th July.

Finally we have to say goodbye to two long serving trustees. Ruth Haigh is standing down as a trustee but will continue as Membership Secretary, a vital role which she does so well. Oliver Fulton has served as a trustee for many years, and has always been a level head, a source of wise counsel and a person who has picked up the least appealing and arduous tasks, and delivered time and time again. We'll be sorry to lose Oliver as a trustee, but glad that he'll remain a friend. Gifts were presented to Ruth and Oliver.

Treasurer's Report (see documents appended at end of minutes)

Jane Parker presented Receipts and Payments Account for the Year ended 30th April 2013.

Total funds carried forward at 30th April 2013 were £44,673 (comprising £12,747 unrestricted funds and £31,926 restricted funds), compared to £59,995 last year.

Ian observed that the amount of gift aid appeared low, but Jane explained that these accounts are just until the end of April, and since then, we have received £30k of gift aid.

The accounts were accepted without amendment.

Membership Report

Membership increased substantially from last year's total of 134 to this year's 189. This is the highest ever membership (the previous highest was 146 in the year 10/11 when there was the first publicity for buying the fields).

130 people renewed their membership (an increase of 14 on last year)

55 new people have become members (up from 18 the previous year)

30 people now paying by standing order.

In addition, 17 people don't pay membership but are active supporters, e.g. organising and running events, helping at events, delivering newsletters and baking (a decrease from 37 last year, but that is because some of those supporters from 11/12 have now become members).

Amended Constitution

Andrew reported that our constitution has not been fit for purpose. When the Fairfield Association began in 1996, no one had expertise and the Charity Commission imposed a constitution upon us. As years progressed, fault-lines have appeared because the original constitution was impenetrable. We agreed last year to knock it into shape, so we went back to the Charity Commission and the amended constitution is the result of their new model and new advice. They have to approve our changes, so we've used their words. They have already granted permission re objects – named extra areas that we've acquired.

The Triangle isn't included on it as we haven't signed the lease yet. We can amend the constitution, once it's been signed. Oliver has produced a commentary to accompany the amendments – all available on the website.

Andrew proposes to submit the constitution but we need to revisit Appendix 2 which needs to be clearer/more transparent. It's about the way committees and sub-committees operate, but we haven't discussed how the FA monthly business meeting is run. The FA business meetings are the engine rooms of our proceedings. Trustees have dealt with confidential/commercially sensitive issues, and this is why we have not made these meeting minutes public, especially this year with the work towards acquiring the Flora fields.

John Whitaker raised two issues. Firstly, there is nothing on the website to say who the trustees are. Andrew agreed that this needs to be obvious, and we are about to put something on the website; how long they have been trustees and when their term will expire. Trustees have the right to stand for three years.

Secondly, John asked about the maximum number of trustees. It is normally seven, or nine? Andrew confirmed that quorums are all laid out in the constitution. There have to be four trustees. If we are reduced to three, their powers are limited to appointing a new trustee.

John Littlejohn asked 'who can elect trustees?' Andrew explained that all members can vote and this will happen at this evening's AGM (or an extraordinary meeting).

Andrew pointed out that the nature of membership has changed within the constitution. The previous one said a membership fee was payable, but we've changed that to say a suggested donation. We get

£900 from membership because people often donate more than the fee. High membership is good when applying for grants. Health and Safety requirements say that events have to be managed by members so we don't want to ask them for £5 to help out.

Paul Ferguson asked if the amended constitution would be effective from the moment we approve it. Andrew said yes and proposed that we adopt the amended constitution as it is clearer and gives us space to grow. It was carried by 20 votes.

Election of Trustees and Officers

The following were voted in for re-election:

Trustees

Andrew Brennand (proposed by Michael Shepherd as Chair, seconded by Oliver Fulton)
Mick Short (not present, but proposed by Hermione Roff, seconded by Oliver Fulton)
Hilary Short (not present, but proposed by Ken Capewell, seconded by Michael Shepherd)
Michael Shepherd (proposed by Oliver Fulton, seconded by Hermione Roff)
Dave Brookes (proposed by Peter Callingham, seconded by Ian Procter)

Officers/committee members:

Treasurer: Jane Parker (Dave Brookes nominated, seconded by Oliver Fulton)
Secretary: Mandy Bannon (Ruth Haigh nominated, seconded by Oliver Fulton)
(The amended constitution says to be a committee member you don't have to be a trustee.)

Standing item for notification of third parties of change to Trustees

We will inform the Charities Commission of change of trustees.

Flora Update

Oliver reported that in the next two weeks or so, we may take possession of the large group of fields from the Harries family. The acquisition of the Gleasons field won't be too long either. We hope it will be as soon as possible so that we can apply to Natural England to extend our higher stewardship agreement to the whole of Flora, (we can't do that until we have made the purchase). The extended agreement will stipulate how the land is to be farmed and landscaped. This will be drafted early July, so that we can get comments in the July FA meeting. There will then follow a public consultation in the first week of September. This will include a set of plans which we hope people will like. Oliver invited people to attend the July meeting if they are interested in the future of Flora. Plans will include provision of ponds/scrapes, arable farming (to attract lapwings, sky larks), hay-making. There will be more tree planting to extend Pony Wood.

Footpaths are not paid for by Natural England so we need to raise money for them.

Then there will be educational things such as the Go Wild activities. Heritage Lottery fund also pays for and requires a Learning Programme – training for volunteers and for:

- Adult Learners: educational activities for adults e.g. lectures on the history and archaeology of the site at the Storey Institute, including field visits; having wildlife recording sessions etc so more people can get involved
- Children – a schools Programme to bring in children from eight local schools, organised by Tony Finn.

Mrs Burton wood asked whether cattle and sheep will be kept on the fields. Oliver said they were likely to allow the White Park cattle more space to graze, but won't be having sheep.

Orchard /Fauna Update

Dave Brookes reported that it's just over a year since we declared the Fauna nature reserve complete. We still have some final snags for contractors to sort out. Extra tweaks are required e.g. adding new water supply for cattle that have been drinking from the ponds. We are on top of the ragwort problem. It is much reduced this year. Ian and the volunteers should be applauded for their work. A biodiversity survey was carried out last week, and wild flowers are increasing.

We have a new tool shed which is very useful. Ian reported that the green roof is thriving. The sedum is very healthy and flowering. The fencing around the shed will be completed soon.

Orchard – Ian reported that the Heritage Lottery Fund agreement re Fauna also covers the orchard. Apple trees have been tagged. We need to manage the mature trees, e.g. coppicing hazel trees. Hedge-laying will continue over winter. We received some comments regarding hedging earlier in the year,

and as a result, we have explained to orchard/Fauna users how a hedge is best managed longterm by laying it.

Volunteers – we have had 15-20 students from the university helping on volunteer sessions. 50 plants were planted at the last session, as a result of this extra help.

Pamela White commented that the work we've been doing in the orchard and Fauna is fantastic and has enhanced the quality of her life. When the first of the cows were born, it was announced and really brought the community together. It would therefore be nice if that sort of communication continue. Graham Brandwood gave sad news that the ill calf born recently had died on Saturday night but that its mother who'd had a difficult labour, was getting stronger.

Oliver has a request from Tony Finn who takes school and cubs and brownie groups around the orchard. He has a sighted assistant, who is not always available, so if anyone would like to offer occasional assistance, we'd be grateful.

Graham Brandwood said dog-fouling is still a big problem, especially if we're trying to increase children's use of the orchard/Fauna. Do we need dog wardens?

Jane Parker commented that there are more dog owners letting their dogs off leads in Fauna, (also more cyclists). Ken said that dogs are also a problem in the playground.

Andrew suggested that we all be vigilant. This is a perennial problem. Philip Turner has put up extra "anti-dog fouling" signs. Bins are being emptied more often, which is an improvement. Michael said there may only be one or two dog-owners responsible and that we need to find out who, or point dog wardens in that direction. Oliver said we have persuaded dog wardens to come out before. Ken suggested they come out at 9.10am to the playground, after children have gone to school. That's when he's observed dogs being allowed to foul there.

Triangle Update

Dave Brookes explained that the Triangle is a quarter of acre of land between the canal and Aldcliffe Road, by Chancellor's Wharf. It's a pleasant green space which has been derelict for some years and has attracted anti-social behaviour. The Friends of the Triangle subgroup (FOTT) have been working on it for about a year. They aim to rent the space off the City Council who lease it from the Rivers and Canal trust. They then want to get grants for a community garden and shed/workshop. To date, they have received £3k from the County Council's Environmental Projects Team, to get planning permission through. £10k has been received from the City Council for building e.g the workshop repairs, replacement windows and reroofing. It's hoped this work will be complete before the summer fund-raising fair on July 6th, when the Planning Outline will be presented. Once we have obtained planning permission, we can apply for grants such as the LEFF Awards for All.

Ian Procter asked what the access arrangements will be for the public - will it be open at all times or restricted to certain times? Dave said it has to be a public space open at all times. We'll be creating new access from the canal and Peter said they have regular volunteers to keep the area clean and tidy. Two buildings are being removed to open up the view of the bridge, and it's hoped that this greater access and visibility will deter rough sleepers and vandals. Michael Shepherd congratulated the FOTT team for their work to date.

Playground Update

Andrew reported that the playground was very popular and well-used. Some of the playground was resurfaced in autumn, and more is to be done this coming autumn. Ken has been working hard maintaining the playground. The swings have been taken down for repair but will be back up tomorrow. A knob has to be replaced on the roundabout gate. Mobile welding repairs to the big slide have been carried out by Playdale. We have not failed a City Council inspection but we have a list of pointers of work to be carried out in the future, which we will attend to in order of most critical. A local resident, Sarah Dawson keeps an eye on things for us. The playground was the first thing that the Fairfield Association created, but in terms of value to the local community, it's the jewel in the crown – so we need to look after it well.

AOB

Julia and James McDowell have revamped the website, so it is now much better, having blogs etc. They have done a lot of work for which we are grateful. Suggestions can be sent to Julia, who is very responsive to new ideas.

Receipts and Payments Account for the Year Ended 30 April 2013

	Restricted Funds £	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds £	Total funds 2011/12 £
Receipts				
Grants and Donations				
Grants	115,530	1,585	117,115	97,184
Donations	120,396	8,135	128,531	7,039
	<u>235,926</u>	<u>9,720</u>	<u>245,646</u>	<u>104,223</u>
Fundraising	<u>2,236</u>	<u>5,304</u>	<u>7,540</u>	<u>3,909</u>
Other Income				
Membership Fees		945	945	725
Bank/Building Society Interest		114	114	106
Gift Aid Claims	968	278	1,246	8,885
	<u>968</u>	<u>1,337</u>	<u>2,305</u>	<u>9,716</u>
Total Receipts	239,130	16,361	255,491	117,848
Payments				
Charitable Payments				
Development and maintenance of facilities				
Playground	4,915	2,070	6,985	568
Storage Facility	17,460	9,440	26,900	-
Aldcliffe Triangle	3,042		3,042	-
Orchard	480	80	560	732
Fauna	5,091	1,990	7,081	101,171
Flora	220,964		220,964	972
	<u>251,952</u>	<u>13,580</u>	<u>265,532</u>	<u>103,443</u>
Other Payments				
Fundraising costs	645	1,678	2,323	710
Insurance		1,773	1,773	931
Accountancy		95	95	95
Event equipment		388	388	70
Photocopying and postage costs		338	338	67
Room Hire		105	105	50
Website maintenance		213	213	0
Other expenses		46	46	40
	<u>645</u>	<u>4,636</u>	<u>5,281</u>	<u>1,963</u>
Total Payments	252,597	18,216	270,813	105,406
Net Receipts / Payments (-) in the Year	-13,467	-1,855	-15,322	12,442
Funds brought forward at May 1 st 2012	45,393	14,602	59,995	47,553
	<u>31,926</u>	<u>12,747</u>	<u>44,673</u>	<u>59,995</u>
Funds carried forward at 30th April 2013				

**Statement of Assets and Liabilities at 30 April
2013**

	Restricted Funds £	Unrestricted Funds £	2013 Total Funds
Co-operative Bank	31,926	12,745	44,671
Nationwide Building Society	0	2	2
	<u>31,926</u>	<u>12,747</u>	<u>44,673</u>

Non-Monetary Assets - retained for use by the charity

1. Land at Fairfield, purchased at a total cost of £17,000, plus legal fees of £716.
2. Land leased from Lancaster City Council on a ten year lease at an annual rental of £1.
3. Equipment and amenity facilities at Fairfield Green purchased at a total cost of £82,588.
4. Land at Fairfield Orchard leased for 1,000 years at an annual rental of £1.
5. Fauna land leased from Lancaster City Council for 30 years at an annual rental of £1.
6. Land at Sourholme, purchased at a total cost of £17,500, plus legal fees of £1,709.
7. Flora land, purchased at a cost of £220,000.
8. Storage facility built at a cost of £25,545 to date.

Jane Parker
Hon Treasurer
June 2013

Notes to Receipts and Payments Account for the Year Ended 30 April 2013

1. Restricted Funds

	B.Fwd 01/05/12	Received 2012/13	Payments 2012/13	C. Fwd 30/4/13
Lancashire County Council (FAUNA)	11,587		8,492	3,095
Higher Level Stewardship (FAUNA)	-2,341		-1,140	-1,201
Community Spaces (FAUNA)	-527	3,979	2,175	1,277
Lottery Grant	103		30	73
Duchy of Lancaster	171		171	0
Community Spaces (Sustainability Grant)	-1,536	3,500	826	1,138
Lancashire County Council	450		450	0
Higher Level Stewardship (Stewardship)	496		496	0
Lancashire County Council (Play Area)	4,915		4,915	0
Awards for All (Play Area)		6,336		6,336
Lancaster District Community (Fun Day)		645	645	0
Lancaster District Community (Asbestos)		1,080	1,080	0
Heritage Lottery Fund (Flora)		87,030	80,000	7,030
Lancaster Green Spaces (Storage Facility)			500	-500
Take Pride Community Fund (Storage Facility)		9,960	9,960	0
	13,318	112,530	108,600	17,248
Aldcliffe Road Triangle		3,270	3,042	228
Fundraising and donations re Flora/Fauna	32,075	123,330	140,955	14,450
	45,393	239,130	252,597	31,926

2. Fundraising Income 2012/13

Flora and Fauna

Event	Income	Expenses	Surplus/ Loss (-)	General		
				Income	Expenses	Surplus/ Loss (-)
Cross Bay Walk 2012	1,065		1,065			
Teddy Bears Picnic	966		966			
Pampered Chef	205		205			
Kwik Cricket				152	15	138
Fun Day				2,942	1,124	1,818
Apple Day				587	30	557
Fauna Celebration				219		219
Easter Egg Hunt 2012				68		68
Easter Egg Hunt 2013				419	150	268
Student Workshop				440		440
Forest Skills Events				70		70
Carol Singing				254		254
Wassailing				142	63	79
Just Giving				11	216	-205
Event resources					80	-80
	2,236	0	2,236	5,304	1,678	3,626

Fairfield Association – Chairman’s Report 2013

Since we will be receiving additional reports this evening from the various projects that are underway it is my intention to keep this report brief and to the point.

This has been my fourth year as Chairman, and I am happy to say that the same strong support and wise guidance that was offered in previous years has continued. My thanks are extended to all the committee members for their hard work and to the trustees as well, who have had a lot to deliberate this year, as last. We have been starting to get to grips with the demands of running a nature reserve and have had a record year in terms of fund raising in order to extend the reserve. The person who has perhaps toiled the hardest on this fund raising endeavour is Mick Short, but he can’t be with us this evening since he is currently enjoying a short period of employment in Heidelberg. We did consider a live video link but in the end decided that the funds were better spent on more fences. I am sure everyone will join me however in recording the Association’s heartfelt thanks for his efforts.

The successful campaign to raise funds for the purchase of the additional fields adjacent to Fauna, is without doubt the crowning achievement of the year, but the process has at times been fraught and the outcome less than certain. In addition to Mick’s central coordinating efforts we need to note the tireless efforts of the team who wrote the bid for the Heritage Lottery Fund grant. Special mention needs to go to Hilary Short and Oliver Fulton, but there were many others involved too. The fact that the bid was successful after the first submission and without amendments is testament to their diligent work. Thanks are also due to those who supported the Association with generous pledges and donations. Flora would simply not be going ahead without the support of all those who gave – and to be so generous in the current economic climate is no small feat. The Association thanks you all. Now an equally diligent team has assembled to deliver the Flora project, and there will be a public consultation in the autumn so you can have your say on how the extra fields are put use.

There has been a delay to our taking possession of the fields since we had to ensure vacant possession, but this has been achieved at long last. There were also some issues about access which have also been resolved to our satisfaction. The Deed of Transfer is in the process of being signed by the vendors. We had hoped to be able to announce its completion this evening, but we are still awaiting a signature or two. We will finally take possession in the next few weeks, ahead of our initial target date of July 28th.

The energy of Association members has delivered a full and varied calendar of community events this year. Since the last AGM we have organised, run and enjoyed no fewer than nine well attended events. These were the now bi-annual Fun Day, Forest Schools, Kwik Cricket, Apple Day, Carol Singing on Christmas Eve, Wassailing, Easter Egg Hunt, a fund raising concert by Hum Holler n Sing, and an Auction just last Saturday. The next event will be the Open Garden at Robin Loxam’s farm on Carr House Lane, for which we will be providing the refreshments and from which a portion of the gate money will be donated to us. Our thanks as an Association go out to everyone who organised, helped out at and attended these events. If anyone feels like they would like to be involved in the next year’s calendar of events then please let us know.

We do not focus solely on events though – the Association provides facilities and services to the people of Lancaster throughout the year. The playground on Fairfield Green continues to be well used, and I would like to extend a special thanks to Ken Capewell who has become increasingly central to the monitoring and maintenance of the playground. The safety surface was partially renewed in the autumn and we hope to complete the rest this autumn. The Millennium Orchard is also a focus for daily activity, and a great deal of effort has been put

in behind the scenes to ensure it remains a well-managed and well used amenity. Local schools and Brownie and Beaver packs have been making good use of the Orchard for educational visits and Tony Finn has been central in forging even stronger links with local teachers and pupils. Volunteers continue to toil in sun, wind and rain, diligently maintaining the trees, paths and flora. For their energy and engagement we are grateful. Special thanks need to be extended once more to Ian Procter for coordinating the volunteer sessions, and to Glenys Ferguson for ruling the Fauna and Orchard Subgroup agendas with an iron rod.

There have been other successes this year, which demonstrate that we are an Association that continues to thrive. This has been another effective year for fund raising, and our Treasurer Jane has kept our increasingly complex accounts magnificently. For that we are grateful. Links with the local media remain strong. In fact a colleague at work buttonholed me at work a few weeks ago to enquire if everything was alright because a week had passed when we weren't featured in the Lancaster Guardian! Communications with members has also been ably managed by Ruth Haigh, who has kept a beady eye on the membership database and coordinated the delivery of newsletters and fliers to the Fairfield area. Her ability to conjure suitable names from the ether when a particular task needs doing is dependably effective. We are never short of jobs that need doing though – so if you feel like you can get involved in any way then please let Ruth know.

This is the first year when buildings have appeared under our remit, so special mention needs to be made of two other projects. Firstly, the storage building at the end of Sunnyside Lane has been completed and is an invaluable resource to make our increasingly onerous volunteer tasks all the more straightforward. It has been a great boon since it enables us to keep our equipment stored centrally and much closer to where it is needed. Hilary Short deserves a special mention for writing the grant applications which funded the lion's share of the cost. Secondly, the Friends of the Triangle subgroup, ably commanded by Dave Brookes and Peter Callingham, have continued to make progress with the Aldcliffe Triangle project, and we are edging closer to being able to sign a lease for that space. There is a fund raising event on the Triangle on Saturday 6th July, and I urge you to go along and find out more about the work being done there.

Finally, we have to turn to the fact that two of our long serving trustees are not standing for re-election this year. Happily from neither of them is it a final goodbye, since we will continue to benefit from their expertise and guidance. Ruth Haigh is standing down as a trustee but will continue as Membership Secretary. This is a vitally important role which she does so well. Our members are our life blood, and Ruth keeps information and coordination coursing through the veins of the Association. Ruth, although we are losing you as a trustee I am profoundly grateful that you will remain as our Membership Secretary and beating heart. Which leads me to our final and most profound thanks of the evening. From heart to head. Oliver Fulton has served as a trustee for longer than he perhaps cares to remember and has always been a level head, a source of wise counsel, and a person who has unfailingly picked up the least appealing and most arduous of administrative tasks. Unfailingly cheerful, even in the face of often apparently insurmountable obstacles, Oliver has delivered for the Association time and time again. The Association is sad to lose you as a trustee Oliver, but is glad that you will remain always a friend. Oliver you have been our Sisyphus, but after years of stone rolling you can finally lay that boulder to rest.

That concludes the Chairman's Report for 2013.