

## **Appendix A: Annual Report 2018-06-20**

2018 has been a mixed year when the Fairfield Association has organised and enjoyed a full calendar of community events and activities but there have also been setbacks and challenges.

### **Challenges**

The weather has been a major challenge this year. The wet weather in late summer meant that we were unable, for the first time, to make the hay which helps to feed the white park cattle through the winter. This meant that last year, for the first time, we were forced to buy winter fodder. Continuing wet weather delayed the construction of the new footpath around Pony Wood in the spring. The path will now be constructed in August/September 2018 and our existing footpaths will be upgraded at the same time. The rain and the cold in April meant that we were unable to go ahead with the Easter Egg Hunt. However, this has simply been effectively postponed until Fun Day on July 7<sup>th</sup> when there will be a treasure hunt with egg-shaped prizes. Finally, the recent spate of hot and dry has meant that the wet loving seed sown in the margins, for the first time, has struggled to come through .

We have also had to deal with vandalism. In September we replaced a damaged section of the wall between Towneley Close and the Orchard. In the last few months vandalism at the Aldcliffe Road Triangle has meant that we have had to replace the doors to the shed at a cost of £2235.

The Rural Payments Agency who provide funding for the HLS agreement continue to be more than a year behind in their payments.

Finally, I had hoped to announce at this AGM that Fairfield Association Flora and Fauna Nature Reserve had finally been granted official status as an LNR (Local Nature Reserve). Although we are very close and have a press release ready, the matter remains in the hands of our solicitor. I would like to thank Geoff Oliver for pushing the matter forward. We are hopeful that there will be an announcement in the next few months.

### **Successes**

Our play area continues to attract large numbers of happy children and their parents, thanks to work of our play area volunteers. I would particularly like to

thank Ken Capewell whose energy and skill keeps us going most of the time. I am also pleased to announce that we received a grant from the Elizabeth and Richard Wilson Charitable Fund which will have enabled us to replace the spinner. At the same time replaced the scrambling net on the junior multi-unit thanks to our swimming team who raised £845 in sponsorship and were second only to the university water polo team at the Rotary organised event.

The Nature Reserve is thriving thanks to the many volunteer hours that people give and we now enough trained scything volunteers to undertake work on the rushes and thistles which we previously paid contractors to deal with. Tony Finn's continues to keep them going. At an extra Volunteer session March 3rd our volunteers planted 600 saplings as part of the 'Pony Wood project'. The saplings were supplied by the Woodland Trust and our volunteers were joined by Lancaster Loyne Rotary Club volunteers who donated and planted a further 105 saplings.

Our outreach into schools is overseen by Tony Finn who can't be here today but has left a short report from which I quote:

The Community Orchard with its mixed habitats and open spaces provides excellent learning opportunities for local schools. Although schools and other groups can make unaccompanied visits of their own, most take advantage of the free tuition given by the qualified and enthusiastic tutors that the Association can provide: Tony Finn, Trisha Robinson and June Moriarty. Dallas Rd continues to make full use of their local 'green space' with several classes making regular visits throughout the year and Ryelands primary School also makes regular visits usually bringing a picnic lunch with them! The school wild flower plot established two years ago seems to be doing well despite recent unseasonal weather.

Our educational activities are not confined to schools. We also receive regular visits from Beaumont College and thanks to Sue Nieduszinska, we continue to enjoy regular talks at the Storey Institute, field work opportunities and bird walks.

The Aldcliffe Road Triangle project is now almost complete and looking great. It has a highly successful fundraising programme, including use of its small indoor space for art exhibitions by local artists.

During the course of the year, there has been the usual full and varied calendar of community events and fund-raising activities. These included the Open Garden, Apple Day, and Carol singing (in the worst of weathers). Volunteers made all this possible. Fairfield Christmas Calendar, cards and recipe book raise a huge amount of money for the Association and are on sale at the back of the room. Many thanks to Carole Martin and all our photographers. Also on display are the 'finds' from Flora Fields which are well-worth a look and now well-organised thanks to Mandy Bannon.

## **Looking Forward**

I am proud to say that we are working hard to be inclusive and to understand that the opportunity to volunteer is important to people of wide-ranging ability. In particular, we are now a Dementia-Friendly organisation thanks to the efforts of Mick Short and all those who have volunteered for training.

Last year, I announced that we were hoping for funding for the footpath around Pony Wood from the Lancashire Environmental Fund. This year I can announce that we did receive a grant of £30,000 towards this project. This grant was enabled by the many individual contributions that went towards raising the £3,300 Third Party payment needed to unlock the grant. We have also received a grant of £3430 to buy the benches and the Woodland Trust has generously provided free or discounted trees. As I reported last year, the Fairfield Association remains committed to covering any shortfall.

I have many people to thank including my fellow trustees, our treasure Jane Parker and our auditor Alan Burton, secretaries Glenys Ferguson and Shirley Rawsthorne), Mandy Bannon who compiles and distributes our newsletter, Jonathan who rallies the Orchard volunteers and Julia Salmon who send round the email messages that keep us all informed. I also thank our volunteer organiser Ian Procter and his many volunteers, Sue Nieduszynsa and Dave Brookes who chair our subgroups, Tony Finn who organises the schools programme, Andrew Brennand and Geoff Oliver who organise our Members and Friends, Julia McDowell who organises the website, Carole Martin and, of course, our many, many photographers, and cake makers!