

Minute of the Fairfield Association Annual General Meeting held on 18th June 2008 at The Friends Meeting House.

Present: Jon Barry, Andrew Brennand, Margaret Burtonwood, Tony Finn, Simon Gershon, Ruth Haigh (Membership Secretary), Jenny Martin, Wes Martin, Jean Mussell, Jude Naish (Treasurer), Rebecca Procter, Michael Sheppard (Chair), Hilary Short (Secretary), Mick Short, Adrienne Wallman.

Apologies: Mandy Bannon, Oliver Fulton, Mary Ridley, Ann and Sid Duncan.

The Minutes for 2007 were accepted with the amendment that Adrienne Wallman will be recorded as present at the AGM in 2007.

Chair's Report:

Michael spoke briefly about each of our current projects as follows:

FAUNA

Progress is slow although a lot of effort has gone into this over the year. Michael thanked Oliver for his tireless efforts and Mick for his support. We continue to press the case and hope for actual progress in the forthcoming year.

Mick commented on the progress that had been made. The allotment extension has been agreed and the land swap between Robin Loxham and LGGS has been completed. The Fairfield Association is in the process of submitting a further planning application. We have received a lot of support from Lancashire County Council and thanks were also given to our local city councillor, Jon Barry, for his help.

The Playground

This continues to be very popular and generally well used. We always have a few problems with a minority of young people (and the odd dog owner) who do not respect the facilities, the environment or those living in the area. In late 2007 a problem of bullying and harassment was successfully dealt with through community action with support from PCSO Cath Griffiths. Vandalism, whilst costly, has been minimal in comparison with other similar Lancaster sites.

Michael thanked Sid Duncan and others for the regular inspections and for undertaking repairs which have reduced our costs. He also thanked Simon, and those who donated trees, for planting the new trees, which should, in years to come, create additional shade and beauty.

Orchard Trust

In 2007 the Fairfield Association voted, at its AGM, to move towards a merger with the Orchard Trust and we have been working hard on that. Following extensive negotiations and communication with the Orchard Trust trustees we were now in a position to merge the operations and responsibilities of the Trust into the Fairfield Association and would take a vote shortly on an amendment to our constitution in line with this decision.

Michael then went through the proposed changes to the Constitution which were circulated, and which are appended as part of the Minutes. These changes were accepted with one abstention.

Michael thanked the original and still serving Orchard trustees: Marion McIntock, Andrew Jotischy, Tony Flynn and Jon Barry, and also the more recent trustees who had been nominated a year ago by the Fairfield Association, Mick, Oliver and Simon, for their work over the past year. The Orchard will be handed over to the Fairfield Association in good repair and with a large amount of lottery funding.

Michael emphasised the commitment of the Fairfield Association to the future wellbeing of the Orchard and noted that over the eight years, since the Fairfield Association first created the Orchard, we are being handed back an amenity which, unlike many others, is

in good state to continue to benefit the local community. Lottery Funding from Breathing Spaces will mean that the Orchard will be also able to extend its local educational role.

Michael thanked Fairfield Association members and Orchard trustees alike for the new activities based in the Orchard such as Wassailing and The Teddy Bears' Picnic, which have brought the community together and helped to raise funds. He praised the continuing local commitment to volunteering days which help maintain the Orchard and he offered particular thanks to Simon, who had been leading the volunteers during the year.

Events

Michael noted that it has been a year in which many occasions intended primarily as community events have also raised funds. Our carol singing made more money than ever and at one point there were forty singers in the group. There have been many new events in the Orchard and many cake stalls. Our fund raising over the year has left us in a strong financial position as well as providing lots of fun. It was impossible to thank everybody individually, but particular thanks were given to those who organised Fun Day: Ruth for 2007 and Mandy Bannon who was currently organising the event for 2008. He noted that with our activities increasing, we need to widen the circle of volunteers.

Website

This has been a difficult year, since our current provider has not given us effective support. However, we now have a new website manager, James McDowell, who is well qualified and has already begun to improve the site.

Membership

Thanks were given to Ruth Haigh for her hard work in pursuing memberships. 79 membership forms were returned this year and these included 31 new memberships. Our total membership is now 115.

Treasurer's report: We had £9668.72 in our account at the end of the 2008 compared with £8171.36 in our account at the end of the previous financial year. Our healthy financial situation is a tribute to our fundraising activity over the year. However, the upkeep of the play area has involved a good deal of expenditure and will be a continuing expense. We have recently opened a new bank account with the Cooperative Bank and this will enable us to collect memberships by Standing Order. Jude emphasised the importance of asking people to sign Gift Aid forms.

The Accounts were accepted without amendment.

Election of Officers

The following were re-elected unopposed:

Chairman: Michael Sheppard

Treasurer: Jude Naish

Secretary: Hilary Short

Membership Secretary: Ruth Haigh

AOB

- i) Friends of the Orchard Standing Order and Gift Aid forms were circulated.
- ii) Following a report by Adrienne of an incident in the Orchard, Ruth suggested that the telephone number of our Community Support Officer should be on our website and notice boards.
- iii) Ruth proposed a vote of thanks to Michael.