

MINUTES OF FRIENDS OF THE TRIANGLE MEETING held on Monday 7 October 2013

Present: Dave Brookes, Peter Callingham, Mike Swan, Jane Swan, Geoff Easton, Gillian Allen, Matt Homewood.

1. Apologies: Martin Luke, Kathy Barton, Liz Bell

2 & 3. Minutes of last Meeting: held on 2 September 2013 were approved and there were no matters arising not dealt with below.

4. Recent Developments: 'No Parking' signs at entrance to Triangle appear to be working with very few vehicles infringing this request.

Recently erected sign on opposite side of canal advertising housing plots appears to be testing the market before deciding when to start building.

A meeting with the Valuation Office Agency rating officer has backfired slightly in the reduction in our rates valuation due to demolition of toilet structure was completely negated by them discovering that the area of Triangle is larger than previously recorded. The demolition of the corner buildings would reduce bill and change of use may have an affect, although difficult to say what it might be. Charities are entitled to an 80% rebate however, and discretionary rate relief may also be available for the remaining 20%, which Dave/Andrew will explore with the City Council.

5. Lease of Triangle: to Fairfield Association has been finalised to our satisfaction, signed for 30 year period and £30 paid to cover this term, though lease not yet received. This may be due to it needing to be registered with the Land Registry – Dave to chase up.

6. Site investigation: we still need to investigate foul drainage further to ascertain whether there is a soakaway for the demolished toilet and if so what action might be needed.

7. Workshop repair: there is still some repair to brickwork and rendering to be done by the new single door – Dave to chase up. Mike has continued to undercoat the double doors and now has the green paint for topcoat. He suggested that their inside should be painted white for extra light and this was agreed. Peter asked if the exposed rafters could be boarded white (and insulated) – if funds became available. He had taken six bags of rubbish to the tip but the inside of the building still needs cleaning out and whitewashing. It was agreed the old work benches should be kept if new legs could be bought for them.

8. Other works: Tree work: this could be carried out in accordance with the Tree Survey recommendations once planning permission has been granted for our overall proposals, though would need to be done before the next nesting season.

9. Planning applications: were submitted on 11 Sept. on-line for Change of Use including our proposals for the site and for Listed Building consent to demolish the lean-to buildings against the Listed Basin Bridge. As of 4 Oct. there have been no neighbourhood comments made to the Council (deadline is 10 Oct.), Conservation Officer has no objections, Environmental Health will prohibit (noisy) work on Sundays, and Contamination Officer will want planning condition re. unforeseen contamination (and expect work to prevent digging into known contamination to be in place prior to public access to the site).

10. Finances: after spending all the Take Pride funding on the renovation of the workshop building and legal fees associated with the lease of the site, FOTT funds stand at about £800 (very largely raised at our two events on site). The planning application fees of £385 have been paid out of the Contamination Survey and Report grant excess but professional tree work will cost £350 and minor expenses will further reduce current funds. Hence:-

11. Fundraising: Peter reported that we have been successful in our bid to **Lancaster Green Spaces** for up to £900 for an A1 size noticeboard to be made locally and erected (by volunteers?) at the existing entrance to the Triangle after planning permission granted. Discussion took place as to using hardwood or 'plastic wood' with the consensus being for hardwood.

United Utilities funding of small projects up to £1,000 could be sought for either a small solar panel for LED lighting within the workshop or for rainwater collection using water butts. The meeting agreed that lighting was the earlier priority to apply for .

Lancashire Environment Fund: can give grants up to £40k provided there is other match funding. This could be provided by the **Awards for All** fund of the National Lottery up to £10k if we can make a strong enough case and could cover the costs of demolition of lean-to buildings and works to the towpath wall. Application forms to be obtained and worked on.

12. Events: Several suggestions were discussed but thought not really practical until the workshop building has been cleaned out fully, so deferred until this time, when other groups could possibly be invited to use it.

13. Volunteer Sessions: Work still required in addition to workshop cleaning out includes more painting of doors, white-washing of walls, tackling tree stumps, reducing ivy and investigating foul drainage further.

14. Any other business: Dave pointed out that some of the text on the FOTT website is now somewhat out of date. Mike offered to look at this and update as appropriate.

15. Date of next Meeting: was fixed as Monday 4th November 2013 at 7.30pm in the Robert Gillow. All welcome.