

Minutes of the Fairfield Association held on 15th February 2017 at Friends Meeting House

Present:

Hilary Short (chair)
Mandy Bannon
Dave Brookes
Sue Nieduszyuka
Jane Parker
Ian Procter
Mick Short
Shirley Rawsthorne, Secretary

1. Welcome

Hilary welcomed everyone to the meeting

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Andrew Brennand, Ruth Haigh, Tony Finn, Oliver Fulton and Ken Capewell.

3. Minutes from the last meeting

The following amendments were made to last month's minutes:

Tony: 'Tony is to contact Bowerham School to discuss follow up activities following their bulb planting on Castle field last September and to discuss possible involvement in their Science week in March.'

Dave: - 'Dave is in contact with Groundwork about reprofiling the Tesco Bags of Help grant budget to allow new railings to be incorporated into the funding.

- The Valuation Office has confirmed that they consider the current rating category of the Triangle to be appropriate (we don't actually pay rates anyway as we are under the £10K threshold).'

4. Matters Arising

- All the calendars have been sold, including the display copy.
- Beaumont College's Health and Safety document has been returned to them for correction.
- The volunteers' buffet was a great success – catering was thought to have improved under the new management.
- Hilary to let Ken know when the roundabout repairman is to carry out work.**HS**
- A vote of thanks was made to Andrew for the successful Wassail event.
- Mandy to contact the singing group for Easter Egg Hunt.
- Carole Martin and Hilary are to meet to discuss a book of Fairfield cake recipes.

5. Treasurer's Report

Bank account balance is £70,505.

Significant income received: RPA - £1500, Carol singing - £350, Calendars and cards - £1440

Significant expenditure: Spend of Tesco grant - £718, Tools - £263

Jane has agreed to be invoiced quarterly by Alasdair from Friends Meeting House. Mandy advised that FA had been offered use of the upstairs room at the Gillow free of charge. It was agreed to consider the offer once the current series of room bookings comes to an end.

6. Membership Report

There have been no new members since the last meeting. An email, inviting people to update their details, will go out before the next meeting.

7. Additional Items for Discussion

- Repairs to the existing footpaths will be done in the autumn and the cost of the work will have to come from FA funds, which are currently very healthy. Improvements to the Pads paths are to be included in the £40k resurfacing costs. We have put in a £30,000 'expression of interest' form to LEF. Hilary has tried to get a decision and estimate of cost from Canal and Rivers Trust without success and will continue to chase this. Dave suggested that a University wind turbine grant could be used to purchase benches, but would have to be submitted by 28th February. It was agreed that FA funds will be used, if the LEF grant application is unsuccessful and that the benches could be installed at a later date if necessary.

Hilary advised that the Co-op Bank has an uncertain future, and proposed moving some funds, and future large grants, into the Nationwide account. Jane agreed to find out whether the Government Guarantee scheme applies to charities, in the event of a bank failure. Mick to contact Alan Burton about the same subject. **MS/JP**

- Reference was made to the two papers produced on the proposals for Little Wood, and the comments received by email so far:
It was noted that, at the public consultation event, the community had been strongly in favour of opening up the wood to public access. The committee agreed that if the area was opened up, the conservation and environmental benefits of Little Wood would be lost, it would be unlikely to develop as mature and interesting woodland, and current resident wildlife would be driven away. It was noted that the FA already provides wooded spaces in the Orchard for the local community, and that Little Wood would not add significantly to the amount of leisure space available to them. The consensus was that the matter should be discussed at the next AGM, with a recommendation from FFOG and a statement which presented the arguments, for and against, from Hilary.
Hilary agreed to circulate her report and recommendations of FFOG prior to the AGM in June. **HS**

8. Education

- Dallas Rd. Year 2 pupils have been to the Reserve to do birdwatching.
- Tony to contact Lucia about a possible visit from the Loyne School.
- Sue announced a talk on woodland at the Storey on 23rd March 2017.

9. Other Events

Tony to deliver a storytelling session for children at The Storey on 24th February – all proceeds to FA.

10. FOTT

- Dave reported continuing progress on Tesco 'Bags of Help'. £8.5k has been spent so far, and work on railings is expected to be underway soon.

11. FFOG

- Sue referred members to the FFOG website where last year's monitoring reports on breeding birds and wildflowers can be found.
- The most recent FFOG meeting had been attended by an ornithologist who recommended the planting of gorse to improve the environment for birds.

12. Playground

There was a discussion about a letter from the council, who have promised £100 towards the cost of future repairs to the playground equipment. Dave suggested that the letter was studied carefully, as it was unusual for council to offer rebates to non-council facilities, and may be an error.

13. Correspondence

Andrew has received notification that neither the playground nor the Nature Reserve has been awarded Green Space status. Hilary to ask Andrew to circulate the letter for information.

Local planning consultation is currently underway. In Lancaster, plans will be available for comment on February 18th in St. Nics Arcade and Lancaster Library on March 8th. The plans are also available for comment online. Julia Salmon will be asked to circulate this information.

14. Website and Facebook

15. Any Other Business

- I) We will join Beyond the Castle in a Public Exhibition in July.
- II) 2 recent calves; one died.
- III) Press release on Volunteers Supper to go to the Lancaster Guardian.

16. Date of next meeting

The next meeting is at 19.30 on Wednesday 15th March 2017 at The Friends' Meeting House.
AGM 20th June at The Friends Meeting House.