

**Fairfield Association**  
**FAUNA and Orchard sub-Group (FOG):**  
**Minutes of the meeting held on**  
**Thursday 8 September 2011, 7.30 pm**  
**at Whitegates, Sunnyside Close**

**Present:** Dave Brookes, Glenys Ferguson, Tony Finn, Oliver Fulton (mins), Helen Hicks, Ian Procter, Rebecca Procter, Suzanne Procter, Sue Nieduszynska, Mick Short (chair), Chris Workman

**Apologies:** Andrew Brennand, Graham Brandwood, Hilary Short, Ruth Haigh

**Minutes of last meeting:** Approved

**Matters arising:**

- New Secretary for FOG: Glenys has volunteered to take over from Oliver, on a phased basis to start with minuting the October meeting.
- Mick wishes to hand over the task of volunteer leader as soon as possible and of Chair of FOG later – perhaps during 2012.
- Noted also that Mick has handed over the notice board keys to Andrew, who is taking over the task of putting up notices as required.

**Current developments**

- A cow escaped through the fence by the public footpath south of the Orchard. This is a section of fence that was not repaired earlier this year. It will be replaced by a new fence as part of the FAUNA works. Mick has done some short-term repairs.
- Several members have seen dog owners 'exercising' their dogs in the FAUNA field next to the Orchard, and some have been spoken to and asked not to do this as it is not compatible with either the aims of the nature reserve or the presence of cows. It was confirmed that there should be an explicit requirement to keep dogs on leads throughout the FAUNA footpaths once these are finished, and this should be clearly stated on the boards at each entrance, and /or by other small notices as well if required.

**Grants and fund raising inc. Aldcliffe fields**

- Mick reported on the Fields fund – the amount is still growing. A bid was submitted to the estate agents handling the sale, within the deadline of Monday September 5.

**FAUNA (see also draft FOG report attached)**

- Ragwort disposal: we are now bringing green wheelie bins into the Orchard to collect ragwort, and the number of people kindly offering space in their bins is growing steadily. The collection process has been a huge and very positive community effort.
- The piles of hay and ragwort near the Cromwell Road entrance are beginning to rot down. We need to keep an eye on the polythene covers for the ragwort, which could blow loose in strong winds, and we are advised to cover the hay as well. Mick will buy more polythene sheets.
- Dave and Cameron Watson are discussing how best to dispose of the ragwort at that end. It seems very doubtful that a grabber wagon will be able to get close enough, so Dave will ask Cameron to quote for bringing a wagon to the end of the new ramp and using a small excavator to fill it.
- FAUNA construction contracts:
  - The Cromwell Road ramp: held up by waiting for delivery of reinforcing bars for the new concrete, no firm date for completion.
  - Ponds, sluices and reed beds. One tender has come in and another contractor has said he plans to tender and asked for a short extension.
  - Main footpath etc. Minor amendments being made to the design, we hope to go out to tender very shortly.

- Information / notice boards. Agreed to set up a working group of Hilary (convenor), Helen and Tony to work with the graphic designer, and also to order the wooden structures from Woodscape.
- Andy Lee has been asked to look again at the central ash tree and carry out further pruning as required, as there has been more die-back this summer.

### **Orchard**

- Volunteers: Arthur Davies, one of our oldest and longest-standing volunteers, has announced his retirement. Agreed that Helen will buy a card for him and also buy a present of carved wooden apple from John Wilkinson, formerly of Workspace, who will be coming to Apple Day this year in a private capacity.
- Volunteer tasks: Mick's proposed list (circulated previously) was approved.
- Towneley path: finally, the metal fence was removed by County Council workers on Monday 5 September. Unfortunately, and inexplicably, the workers drove to it through the Orchard in a Transit van, damaging one crab apple tree and leaving ruts in the grass. Hilary will write to complain. It was noted that the bollard at the end of Towneley Close has been removed and the way is wide open for cyclists and even motor bikes. We should discuss with County whether a wheel-chair and buggy-compatible bollard could be installed, and we should also press them to get on with the physical footpath creation, as the grass is slippery and potentially hazardous.

### **Events**

- Apple Day 2011 (September 24<sup>th</sup>) Helen explained the arrangements and negotiated further details of, e.g., children's games with Tony. Helen has some volunteers already and is liaising with Ruth to recruit people for specific tasks. Mick and Philip Haigh are meeting shortly to try to sort out the jumbled poles for the two gazebos. Oliver will arrange for the gas boiler to be repaired. Most of the equipment we require has been moved from Simon's to Helen's garage, as Simon will be away.
- Wonderful Woodlands (October 9, Williamson Park). This event is being organised by Simon Gershon. Mick has volunteered to go and give a short presentation on the FA's activities, in hope of recruiting more volunteers. However it was agreed that we are too overstretched to take up Simon's invitation to provide teas. We understand also that the Park café will be open.
- LEF Annual Open Day (September 16, Brockholes near Preston). Oliver will attend, as grant holder nominee for the FAUNA project.

### **Edenbreck Cottage Planning Application**

- This can now be viewed on the City Council's planning web site, and we are being formally consulted as neighbours. There seems to be some ambiguity about the amount of land involved: we understand that Robin Loxam has formally written to the Council asking to buy back some of the Edenbreck Cottage garden as well as his own garden, as previously agreed with us. The planning application does not include any provision for a tool shed. Agreed that Oliver will check with Ann Wood to see how much land Fraser / Robin are bidding to acquire, and Mick will talk to Fraser directly.

### **A O B**

- Oliver is planning to update the FAUNA pages, which are now woefully out of date, and will consult Mick and Dave before asking James to upload changes.
- There is a quarterly meeting of the Morecambe Bay Wealth of Wildlife (MB WOW) project on Friday 9 September. Oliver can't get to this, but Tony, who is going in several capacities, will represent us. It was noted that we benefit from this project to the tune of several days per year professional input from the Wildlife Trust to our school visits, and also through advertising our events in WoW's leaflets and other media. However, at present they have long lead times and we have no events planned for next summer in time for their main leaflet which is going to press now. It was agreed that more notice would be helpful in future.

### **Next meetings :**

7.30 pm, Wednesday 5 October 2011 (*please note changed date*) at **Whitegates, Sunnyside Close**

7.30 pm, Thursday 3 November 2011 at **Whitegates, Sunnyside Close**