

**Fairfield Association
Fairfield Orchard Sub-Group**

**Minutes of the meeting held on
Monday 10 May 2010, 7.30 pm
at Whitegates, Sunnyside Close**

Present: Tony Finn, Oliver Fulton (mins), Helen Hicks, Rebecca Procter, Hilary Short, Mick Short (chair), Jonathan Tansley

Apologies: Jon Barry, Simon Gershon

Minutes: approved

Matters arising

- Martins' house. Following discussion at the last FA meeting, it was decided that we would not object to the modifications to original plans including marginally increased height. However, as requested Hilary has written to the City Planning Department to say that we wish to be consulted over the design and material of the boundary on the Orchard side.
- Rob Bracewell (City Access Officer) has requested financial support from the City/County for upgrading the footpath south of the Orchard. He has not yet had any replies. Oliver has not yet got County advice on encroachments on the footpath from neighbouring gardens.

Current developments

- Recent problems include the compost bin, persistent cutting through of the fruit hedge (which has been blocked off several times and deliberately unblocked), the use of bleach to kill moss (replaced with grass seed) and possible deliberate poisoning of grass around the young oak tree near the compost bin. Oliver has spoken to Steve Edwards, who advised writing to all the Orchard neighbours unselectively – sharing the problems with them and asking for their help, in the hope of shaming or deterring the culprits. Agreed Mick and Oliver will draft a letter and circulate it for comment before sending it.

Breathing Places

- A final version of the new notice boards will be circulated in the next day or two for a last comma check.
- Helen reported that Jeff Dade is now in direct touch with Woodscape about the plans for adapting the existing board.
- Agreed to organise a ceremonial unveiling if possible.

Events

- The blossom picnic (May 1) was much appreciated, including favourable comments on the excellent organisation. It was noted that apart from publicity via the usual channels (email to volunteers and all members, website) there was no organisation – people simply brought their own contributions to share. Agreed that other events (and their organisers) could benefit from this minimal-effort approach.
- Go Wild Week. The programme is complete and the posters and other publicity in hand. A risk assessment is needed – Tony will update our standard one.
- Apple Day. Helen will liaise with Workspace and invite them to provide a similar stall to last year's. Tony will liaise with Felicity Smith who is co-ordinating Local Food Fortnight. Oliver will forward Simon's briefing email(s) to Helen and Tony. It was agreed that we should aim for a modest event, drawing on lessons from the Blossom Picnic, and hope before long to reach a position where apart from a few games, we simply provide a pitch and 'stall-holders' bring everything they need for themselves.

Orchard management and volunteer days

- Andy Lee has provided 9 replacement oak stumps, donated by one of his clients. Agreed to send a letter of thanks to the donor. These can be installed over the next few sessions as required (not all of the existing stumps are in urgent need of replacing). Also to remove the dead elder stump at the entrance to the S footpath (identified as wheelchair unfriendly by Rob Bracewell); otherwise mainly mowing.

Fundraising / new grant applications

- The Lancashire Gateway application for £1,500 to support school visits was unsuccessful. Hilary will now apply to Awards for All, tied to a celebration of the Orchard's 10th anniversary. Tony reported that his schools contacts have said they are willing to ask for parental contributions to the visits.

Any other business

- Steve Edwards (Lancashire Countryside Officer) has said that his post may be under threat in a possible reorganisation by the County. Agreed that we should offer to write to County in support of retaining the post, and if appropriate should offer a very warm testimonial / reference for Steve, who has been an invaluable friend of and advocate for the Orchard, and volunteer instructor, over many years. Oliver to contact Steve.

Next meetings :

7.30 pm, Monday 7 June 2010 at **Whitegates, Sunnyside Close**

7.30 pm, Monday 12 July 2010 at **Whitegates, Sunnyside Close**