

Minutes of the meeting of the Fairfield Association held on February 26th 2008 at Whitegates, Sunnyside Close

Present: Tony Finn, Oliver Fulton, Simon Gershon, Jude Naish, Mary Ridley, Michael Sheppard, Hilary Short.

Apologies: Ann and Sid Duncan, Andrew Brennand, Ruth Haigh, Wes Martin, Mick Short, Shirley Rawsthorne.

Matters Arising

- ? The bin has been repaired. Thanks to Mick and Sid.
- ? The gate has been taken apart and put together again, but still needs a new spring.
- ? Michael will do the annual return and amend the trustee list.
- ? The Newsletter will go on the noticeboard.
- ? Tree planting in the play area almost completed..
- ? We are still trying to contact somebody about setting the plaques in tarmac. Jude suggested Thomas Borland. Michael suggested that members of the committee should go along with him and look at the proposed siting.
- ? Michael has responded to the letter from the Orchard Trust.
- ? The Probation Service have completed their work upgrading the paths in the Orchard.
- ? If an entrance is to be created at Townley Close, access will be required through the Orchard to the existing public footpath. Marion is in correspondence with the County Council about the issue. Our present understanding is that the County Council will pay both for the creation and the upkeep of this path.

Review of Recent Events

- ? We have had very good feedback about the Wassailing. The Orchard Trust have agreed to make a contribution to the John of Gaunt Morris Men.
- ? Tree planting in the play area was rather short of tree planters. However, Simon collected £340 in donations for trees and we will be able to collect gift aid from most of these. In addition he has sent in a grant application. He estimated that the final cost to the Fairfield Association will be £50. Shrubs will be placed round the trees to protect them and Paul Cocker, from the City Council will provide wood chippings for mulch.

Forthcoming Events

1) An Easter Egg Hunt is planned for Easter Sunday (or possibly Easter Monday). This will take place in the afternoon. Tony plans a hunt for laminated card Easter egg shapes guided by treasure maps giving clues. All those who get the right answers will receive an Easter egg. There will be a £1 entry fee. In addition there will be an egg decorating competition and an Easter bonnet competition and tea and cakes.

It was agreed that:

- ? Michael will ask Shirley if the Castle can provide some Simnel cakes.
- ? Jude will look into the cost of a gas urn for making tea, since most of our events are outdoors and power is a problem.

- ? Hilary will send letters to Asda, Sainsburys, Thorntons etc to ask for Easter egg prizes.
- ? Posters will go to Westbourne Nursery and into local schools, as well as being distributed locally and Hilary will include coverage in the newsletter.

Go Wild Week

This is planned for the week beginning 12th May and will include sessions by Julia Russell who will talk about herbs on the Wednesday of that week, Maxine Knagg who will talk about trees as habitat and Tony Finn who will do some bark rubbing. There will also be a bird evening, a bug evening and a bat walk. Each session will begin at 7.30 pm and will last for approximately one hour.

It was suggested that the event should be repeated in late summer/autumn.

Treasurer's Report

We have £10,165.37 in our account. We have received £25 in membership fees and a £15 donation. We have spent £209.27 on material to mend the play area surface and we have also purchased a book on Health and Safety. The Auditor is coming up tomorrow on February 27th and Jude, Hilary and Michael will talk to him about Gift Aid and adjustments to our constitution.

Orchard Update

- ? There was a discussion about the practicalities of the merger. In particular it may not be possible to see the Trust's audited accounts before the AGM and the Trust will need some time to have a meeting following the AGM since their AGM is consultative rather than binding.
- ? Hilary agreed to ring up Andrew and see if a date had been set for the AGM, since he was responsible for fixing this.
- ? Some of the paths need digging out so that they can be resurfaced. There was some discussion about the practicalities refurbishing the paths which are at present the responsibility of the Orchard Trust.

FAUNA

Georgina has not yet produced the amended plans, which are needed for the amended planning application, but has promised that they will be ready very soon. Oliver will follow this up as the matter is becoming urgent. LGGS has served notice on Robin Loxham.

Events Manager

There was some discussion of a proposal by Simon that we should have a person responsible for taking care of those things that are common to most of our events.

It was agreed that it would be a good idea to have a central checklist and that each event should have its own folder including press cuttings, but that there was no need for an events manager. It was also agreed that we should trial an Excel spreadsheet as the format for the central checklist.

Play Area

Dog mess is currently a problem. Michael will do notices for Fairfield Green and Tony will provide them for the Orchard. We will also highlight the issue in the Newsletter.

Communications

There had been a useful meeting with Neil, who will give us technical advice in future. Neil had demonstrated the kind of software that is available free. This had the advantage of being simple to use and allow a range of people to add to the site. Oliver felt that the new site would be visually as accessible and much more flexible. Wes will work on the appearance of the site, and will try to get this done before the AGM. Since our second year of subscription to our present host is almost up we may need to pay a small amount in order to maintain continuity until the change over. Oliver also reported, from Jon Weedy, that our present hosts are in financial trouble. Once the transition is over, there should be little upfront cost and the running cost should not be significantly higher.

Tony raised the issue of accessibility for all and it was agreed that this should be a definite target, and that Neil would be an ideal person to work on this.

Oliver agreed to ask Wes, if we could see something of the new site at the next meeting.

AOB

- i) Simon brought along information about free cavity wall and roof insulation for the over 70's and it was agreed that this should be included in the forthcoming newsletter.
- ii) Simon raised the issue of honoraria for committee members. In the discussion that ensued at the meeting, it was felt that we should make it clear to future officers and committee members that they could and should claim expenses. It was also agreed that an annual sum to cover expenses was inappropriate.

Dates of Next Meetings

- i) 7.30 pm March 26th March at Brookhouse, Sunnyside Close (Ann and Sid's house).
- ii) 7.30 pm April 30th