

Minutes of the Fairfield Association meeting held on Wednesday April 1st 2009 at Lyndene

Present: Margaret Burtonwood, Tony Finn, Gary Foxcroft, Oliver Fulton, Henry and Helen Hicks, Michael Sheppard, Mick and Hilary Short, Jean Stuart.

Apologies: Andrew Brennand, Ann and Sid Duncan, Ruth Haigh , Jude Naish Shirley Rawsthorne, .

Matters Arising:

- ? Henry has ordered securing bolts for the roundabout.
- ? Henry has fitted a screw on the climbing frame; we have a dozen spare ones.
- ? Simon is in contact with the Council about the tree which they have agreed to replace at the end of Sibsey Street.
- ? Simon has contacted the utility services about maps showing the location of drains, pipes and wires. They can provide copies of their maps but this is expensive. It was agreed that we should contact Jon Barry to see if the Council also holds the information. Michael is waiting for better weather before contacting his friend at Harbour and General about a tarmac base for our plaques. He will resolve the matter over the Easter break.
- ? In Shirley's absence, a discussion of possible new links and activities with the Castle was held over to the next meeting.
- ? Hilary has emailed Rachel Byford about the possibility of extending the time frame for the Breathing Places grant but has had no reply as yet.
- ? An email about the Jacob's Join will go out shortly.
- ? John Lambert has made copies of the bollard keys for the use of the Allotment Association.
- ? The William Stout room at the Meeting House has been booked for the AGM. The date and time are: June 8th at 7.30 pm.
- ? The arrangements for the Easter Egg Hunt follow last year's pattern. Tony was given a cheque for £130 to buy Easter Eggs. Ruth has agreed to email round for cakes.
- ? The Treasurer's Report was not updated in the minutes and an email will be sent round to amend the situation.

Treasurer's Report:

Nationwide: No change at £10584.06.

Coop Account: Also no change on our statement; we have £11,178.45 in our account minus £910.54 in cheques that may have been cashed.

We took £20 in from membership fees and a donation and paid out £13.64.

Membership Secretary's Report:

Ruth reported that things were still quiet.

Orchard update

The Management Plan is now in place and there are currently 2 volunteer sessions per month.

The Council Tree Officer (Maxine Knagg) has inspected the sycamore trees at the back of the Orchard and ruled that they can only be removed or pruned if diseased or a danger. Andy Lee has surveyed the trees but we do not yet have his report. The Martins have made a donation to cover approximately half the cost of his survey.

The Martins have asked if they can run service pipes through the Orchard in return for a substantial donation. They did have an agreement with Mrs. Houghton to run the pipes through her land but the agreement had a deadline which has expired and Mrs. Houghton is now asking for extra money if they cross her land. The Orchard subcommittee is generally against the idea since it would be disruptive and damaging in the short run and the sewage drains, water pipes, gas electricity and phone lines are a potential source of future problems. It was agreed that Oliver would contact the Martins and tell them that we do not wish to allow access through the Orchard.

Tony reported that around 60 children from Dallas Road School have visited and been involved in activities in the Orchard and that visits were very successful. The next school visit is 25th April and will involve children and their families. The Breathing Places grant is being used to provide resources which will enable us to continue when the funding runs out. These include information on the web, maps and RSPB materials.

A campaign to encourage dog owners to pick up dog poo and deposit it in the bins will run in the week beginning 6th April. Bags and leaflets will be handed out 7.00 – 9.00 and 17.00- 19.00. Helen Hicks will contact the dog warden for posters, leaflets and bags. It was agreed that we should contact the Council on the matter of our dog bin which has been removed and replaced by a plastic bin.

There has been bark stripping on 3 separate occasions We have addressed the issue by placing notices on the affected trees and by getting in touch with Cath Griffiths who has agreed to patrol the area in the evenings. It was stressed that vandalism should always be reported immediately.

Playground Report: Henry reported no problems. There have been minor repairs to the climbing net. Henry agreed that his contact number should be added to the noticeboard on Fairfield Green (65179).

Open Towneley: the plan to open the right of way across the Orchard is currently advertised in the local press. There will now be a month in which objections can be registered.

FAUNA

We have met Nick Gillibrand of Mason Gillibrand, a local architectural firm who are known to do a lot of environmentally friendly work and there have been a number of follow-up emails. He will produce an outline plan for the use of the white farmhouse and paddock as part of the FAUNA project. Our ideas for the use of the buildings are directed towards community rather than commercial use. This is in line with feedback from Heather McManus who heads the Lancaster City Council's Regeneration Group. The Fairfield Association would hope to share the rent with other local organisations, for example the Allotments Association might be interested in storage space and toilet facilities. If possible we would like to retain a tenant but this may cause legal complications relating to change of use. Legal advice from the County Council is change of use means less compensation for farmers who lose their lease. Nick Gillibrand also thought that agricultural leases might relate to three generations only.

The possibility of a city farm was also discussed and Gary circulated a paper outlining the benefits of this idea, which would certainly meld with our educational activities in the Orchard and would be ideally placed in close proximity to FAUNA and the Orchard.

It was agreed that we should go ahead and commission an initial plan from Nick Gillibrand for £350 + VAT. Oliver agreed to contact Lancashire County Council to see if they will cover that cost.

Should we want detailed working plans, Nick Gillibrand's fee would be around £7,000, and this puts us in a difficult position. Robin is still trying to buy the property which is currently being surveyed. We need to go back to the Council and find out what their latest thoughts are. Our difficulties here are compounded by the fact that different parts of the Council have different ideas.

It was agreed that Oliver would get back to Ann Wood and ask about our present plans to put in a proposal for both FAUNA and the farmhouse and adjacent buildings. Among other things, he would point out our dilemma in terms of outlaying money on detailed plans and our impatience.

It was also agreed that we would arrange a meeting with Robin, possibly involving Jon Barry, on neutral ground. It was also agreed that we should run this strategy

past Jon Barry and that Oliver should look for funding for the initial architectural plans. If funding is unavailable, it was agreed that we should take money from our funds.

Finally questions were raised about the new boundary fence and it was agreed that we should check the position of the boundary with Robin and LGGs.

FUN DAY July 4th

Letters are ready to send out to stall holders and it was agreed that Ruth should produce a flier. Most activities are covered and it was agreed that where we had no volunteer, an activity would simply not run.

AOB

i) Go ahead with variation of lease

ii) Newsletter before AGM

iii) Next two Orchard Subgroup Meetings:

May 5th and June 1st at Whitegates, Sunnyside Close.

iv) Next two Fairfield Association Meetings:

May 6th, Whitegates, Sunnyside Close.

June 17th, Helen and Henry Hicks, Edenbreck.

All meetings begin at 7.30 pm