

Minutes of the Fairfield Association meeting held on Wednesday, November 18th at Thorneycroft, Fairfield Road

Present: Andrew Brennand, Melanie Forrest, Oliver Fulton, Ruth Haigh, Helen and Henry Hicks, Carol and Mike Martin, Jude Naish, Hilary Short and Mick Short.

Apologies: Mandy Bannon, Jo Clark, Sam Edge, Simon Gershon, Michael Sheppard,

Matters Arising:

- i) Melanie Forrest asked for more information on the signs leading to the Orchard. The Fairfield Association would like a sign at the end of Sunnyside Lane and one on Aldcliffe Rd. There will be a meeting between representatives of the City and County Councils + representatives of the Fairfield Association, if we wish to go along.
- ii) We are still looking for a reasonable quotation to put the plaques in place in the Playground.
- iii) Friends of Dallas Rd Gardens will be put on the Minutes list.
- iv) Hilary and Jude still need to meet to discuss a contingency fund.

Towneley Close Agreement

Andrew has returned the contract we received from Lancashire County Council, together with our comments. We have a meeting with Jane Elliot and Steve Edwards on Tuesday, December 1st at 10.30.

Pet Cemetery

Melanie Forrest said that the idea of a pet cemetery was very popular with dog walkers and it was a long term personal goal of hers to establish one. It was agreed that this would not be in the Orchard.

It was agreed that the FA would need more information as to what was involved before any decision could be taken. However, the suggestion could be aired at the FAUNA consultation as a possible use for the Paddock.

Charity Commission Return

Since our income for the past year exceeded £10000, a more detailed return is required by the Charity Commission. Michael agreed to provide his Chairman's report from the AGM. The return needs to be completed by February.

Fun Day

It was agreed:

- i) That Fun Day should continue because it is the event which most people associate us with and because it is our biggest fund-raiser and we need the money.
- ii) It was agreed that in fairness to Ruth, the responsibility should not be hers.

There was some discussion as to how the format could be changed so that it became less of a centralised chore.

It was agreed that Ruth would pass on her list to Andrew who would a) email or phone those who had said they were willing to help/had helped and b) place a laminated poster appealing for help by the swings.

FAUNA

Property services have prepared a document that we hope will go to the City Council Cabinet on December 8th. Andrew will present our case and Mick and Oliver will also go along.

Lancaster City Council are being asked to support FAUNA agreeing a peppercorn rent and removing the responsibility for compensation for Robin Loxham from us. The Local Strategic Partnership has agreed to include Urban Nature Reserves in their list of benefits to the community.

Robin Loxham appears to be more concerned about footpaths and grazing than about the white farmhouse. The meeting between us, Georgina and Graeme Skelcher will go ahead next week and we hope to reach suitable compromises on these issues. Lucia will pay Graeme and Georgina's fees. A public consultation will take place, in the Friends' Meeting House, on Friday December 11th, between 2.30 and 5.30, and Sat December 12th, between 10.00 and 3.00. Helen will provide more photographs and bookmarks and Andrew and Ruth will provide material for a FA table including a calendar of events. We will advertise the event in the *Lancaster Guardian*, local radio and elsewhere, and also via a local flyer. The cost of the Meeting House is £115 and we will also have to pay for advertising, tea and coffee. There was some discussion of the price of photocopying but it was agreed that £48 for 1000 shots is still competitive.

We need to apply for grants in early January; January 11th is our first deadline. Lucia suggests that we budget for £100,000 for the first phase and Georgina has gone round the site and will provide costings. This money will provide footpaths, gates, hedging and enhancement to the wet areas. The RSPB and Lancashire Wildlife Trust have offered letters of support and agreed to look at our plans and grant applications.

Our plans are still dependent on a suitable agreement between Robin and the City Council to terminate his lease.

Treasurers Report

The Coop Account, adjusted for outstanding cheques, now stands at £9480.35. Most of this money will shortly be spent on the Breathing Places Grant.

Outgoings totalled £669.81 of which £621.81 was spent on items related to the Breathing Places Grant. This includes a promised donation of £83 which has not yet been paid.

Income totalled £66.33. This includes £45 in membership fees, a £15 donation and £5 raised from the sale of plums by Charlotte, Alex and Maddy Mace.

The Nationwide Account is £10,600.53 in credit.

Membership Report – There have been 4 renewals and 1 new membership.

Orchard subgroup

Andy Lee has updated the Orchard Report. The ash tree needs pollarding to some degree and he will contact Maxine Knagg and get permission. He will also examine the big sycamore and pollard the limes and do some work on the sycamores between the Orchard and the Martins. At some point there will obviously be a bill for all this. The Breathing Places grant continues to be spent. We have now had the corrected invoice from Woodscape. £375 worth of bulbs have now been ordered and planted.

Playground Report

The roundabout has been serviced by Jones and the chain fixed. Although Henry watched for learning purposes, he thinks we need a specialist to service it on a regular basis.

Henry commented that, following the City Council's complaint about the straps on one of the small swings, he had inspected them and they all appear to be in the same condition. The bolts on the big swings need replacing in the spring and Henry will ring up suppliers to get some spare straps for the small swings and also replace them.

The hedge along Wingate Saul Road/Sibsey Street needs cutting. Ruth will contact Paul Cocker. The remains of the bonfire need removing and Andrew will organise this.

There is currently a lot of graffiti – particularly in felt tip pen, on the wooden structures. Ruth will ask the Council how we can remove it and Hilary will ask Jeff Dade for ideas.

Events

It was reported that there was little activity on the Giant Axe on Bonfire Night and that it was a pitch to be avoided in the future.

Our stall at the Green Party Fair will advertise the Public Consultation for FAUNA. Helen will provide bookmarks and cards and we will also sell cake.

Andrew will hold a Mince Pie Party on Dec 19th 2pm – 4pm – mince pies and mulled wine welcome.

Carol singing will take place on Dec 20th, 1.30 – 3.30. Ruth will email around the carol singers. On Christmas Eve, Sonia and Liam will provide refreshments.

January 16th is Wassailing. There will be a meeting in the Water Witch on Wednesday Dec 9th, at 8pm to plan the event. The Stone the Crows Morris Men have agreed to come. We need dry wood for the bonfire, someone to light it and to contact Simon about Jean Laurie who may lead singing at the event.

Tony is trying to get lanterns made at Dallas Rd School. We need to decide whether they should be hung from the trees or used to process away from the event when it gets dark.

Date of next meetings

Wednesday 16th December, at Simon's house (51, Ashfield Avenue)

Wednesday 20th January Mick and Hilary

Wednesday February 24th at the Friends' Meeting House