

Fairfield Association
Minutes of the meeting held
On 23rd Jan at: Robert Gillow pub, Lancaster

Present: Mandy Bannon (mins), Andrew Brennand (chair), Dave Brookes, Ken Capewell, Tony Finn, Oliver Fulton, Ruth Haigh (Membership Secretary), Julia McDowell, Jane Parker (Treasurer), Ian Procter, Ruth Feinberg, Hilary Short, Mick Short

Also: Incredible Edibles : Viv Preece and Robin Eyre

The Secret Garden group: headed by Laura English along with: Josh Coates, Emma Geraghty, Emily Dixon, Anthony Briscoe, Sara Bowyer (they left after Item 5)

1) Welcome by the chair

2) Apologies: Matt Homewood, Lindsay Robertson

3) Minutes of the last meeting were accepted as correct.

4) Secret Garden

Laura English explained that they are students from Lancaster University Theatre Studies, embarking on a project as part of their collective arts course for which they need a plot of land to create a permanent, sustainable garden for growing food & flowers which are edible, also to be a sanctuary and a legacy. Looking for an existing garden to do it, they wondered about our orchard or the triangle. Their tutor requires them to have organised a community event by the end of February. Dave explained that FOTT wouldn't meet their timescale as they don't have control of it yet & contamination tests still to be carried out. Andrew explained orchard was not appropriate place. Suggestions were made to contact Marsh Community centre, the Highfield Regeneration Project and the scotch quarry Fruity Corners project. Ruth to email contact details to them.

5) Other Environmental Groups:

Friends of Storey Gardens

Ken, Hilary and Mick attended their meeting. They are in the early stages of trying to reopen the garden to the public and perhaps include an art project. Mick gave advice about setting up. They have some health and safety issues e.g. the big wall and wobbly steps. Annie Watson from the Friends will attend the next Fairfield meeting. Jon Barry is helping them form. The City Council is encouraging them to take over the activity as they can apply for funding. There will be another meeting Tuesday 19th Feb at 6pm in the NICE bar at the Storey Institute.

Incredible Edibles

Viv Preece explained that she and Robin are both gardeners and are enthusiastic about greenery and community. They run their projects on Todmorden principles. Includes Greaves Forage Garden and the Community Orchard on the Ridge. They've had a lot of support from Council Housing department. They are about to undertake a second wave of consultations and would welcome any help we can share. Andrew offered our Health & Safety templates for them to look at.

6) FLORA Fundraising

Mick reported that since December, we've raised £41K, (£50K with gift aid). Three quarters of that is from Haverbreaks residents. As a result of their Walk and Talks, Oliver is optimistic that there may be more to come. Inevitably, the amount we raise will slow down, but there is still more to come, so we will keep pushing. Mick is designing a leaflet for the campaign and is talking to Pagefast who printed the FAUNA leaflet. Mandy suggested asking a FAUNA contractor such as Hanafins to sponsor the cost of printing it. Ruth confirmed that in the first tranche, Mick has sent email and letters to pledgers, and a second tranche, will widen the net geographically.

Fundraising events planned between now and June

a) Ceilidh

Unfortunately, Elley can't organise it this year, but Ruth has made some initial enquiries.

The Priory Hall £15/hour so either £60 or £75 – would need an alcohol licence to sell alcohol

Meeting House big room - £125 but no alcohol allowed

Middle Street Church Hall - £13/hour – not allowed to SELL alcohol, but could increase price of ticket and give alcohol free.

In 2010, we charged £8 /ticket, £4 kids, or £20 family ticket. It included hotpot supper and we made £180 profit. It was agreed that this is very little profit for quite a lot of effort, and our resources may be better directed elsewhere.

The group: Jump the Gun were an expensive outlay: £280 for the night.

To make it more profitable, we discussed whether we would be able to find cheaper musicians, but it was agreed that the musicians would have to be an experienced ceilidh band .

Another possibility was to economise with the food, perhaps do it ourselves?

Another option mooted, was to have the ceilidh after the fundraising as a celebratory event.

Ruth to pursue.

b) Open Garden (instead of Fun Day)

The Loxams' Open Garden, Carr House Lane - Saturday 15th and Sunday 16th June

c) Musical event:

Nick Gebhardt is keen to do Summer Daze, but it's too late for FLORA fundraising, so we could do an indoor concert instead on a Sunday afternoon, say at St John's Church, in May, perhaps. It was suggested we could also ask Gladly Solemn Sound, who have just performed at Wassailing.

d) Promises Auction

Sue Nieduszynska will organise this along with two friends who live on Haverbreaks. It will be on Saturday June 8th, 7.30-9.30 at the Gregson Centre. The room will cost £75 and Graham Kerr's services as an auctioneer will be £50. It has a bar, will accommodate 80 people max. There will be cabaret style tables. We could charge £5 entry which would include a buffet (which would cost £3/head) so we'd make £2/head profit, therefore £160 profit. (plus money donated for promises)

We would need to ask for promises – goods and services from local community, e.g.

Arteria, Gardening, Cooking for a dinner party, Masseur, Artists' commissions, Photographers etc
Ruth will send an email out to ask for other ideas.

e) Philip Turner is writing letters to people, asking for donations and working with Hilary, going to building societies etc.

f) Some companies will match fund charity donations – so Ruth will send out a list of companies to FF members.

g) Cherry Turner has written to say she will write to local businesses.

h) Oliver's daughter has offered to create FAUNA T- shirts which could be sold for £10, making a £2 profit. Andrew wondered if this was too risky, wasn't sure if there'd be a big enough market.

i) Andrew suggested a beetle drive

7) Treasurer's Report

Jane presented the following:

Co-op Account

Balance on 17/12/12 £45,514.44

Balance on 23/1/13 £51,261.84

Income - significant

Flora cheques £3,470

Carol singers £ 254

Wassailing £ 142

Grants £1,725

HMRC gift aid £1,245

Expenses – significant

Rocket Architects (shed)	£ 650
GL Jones (play equipt)	£ 582

8) Membership report

Ruth reported that we've had six new members in January (we don't usually get any this month). This included a £100 donation.
Two lapsed members say they'll be setting up direct debits.

9) Website

Julia said Membership was now highlighted on the Home Page (as well as appearing under Community) There are now blogs for each page, and she will put Jonathan's orchard emails on as blogs.
Julia is planning to do blog training sessions.
See Wassailing on You Tube channel
Julia is still looking for photographs to use on the website.
Ruth mentioned that we don't have a Just Giving button on the website. Julia to remedy.

10) FOG Report

Shed: Hilary said Sam the architect has been in touch with the builder Joe Duirwyn who can cut the budget by reducing the size of the building. The green roof can be added afterwards. 18th Feb is the start date. Ian and Ken have offered to clear the way before then.
Some small amount of asbestos needs clearing – Hilary to contact the original contractor and Frazer.

Misc: Mick – there have been campers in the orchard but they are gone now.

Dave has been working on snagging in FAUNA.

Allotment holders were going to put a fence up, but it hasn't been resolved.

Chair replacement while Mick is away: Dave, Andrew and Oliver to take turns.

Oliver has persuaded Natural England to meet with Maxine Knagg, the tree officer who will explain why she doesn't want us to do the hedge laying on either side of the paddocks. (see below)

Hedge Complaint: Following the last volunteers' session, a local resident put up a notice and petition complaining about the hedge laying that had been carried out. She set up a meeting with Maxine Knagg, the tree preservation officer, and Hilary and Mick attended that meeting on site in the orchard. The complainant was angry that we'd cut down hedges, and will attend the next FOG meeting. To take heat out of the situation, Mick is suggesting:

a) the hedge between Sunnyside Lane & orchard – under the trees could be relaid instead, for now

b) put a questionnaire on website etc to assess level of support around this issue

Several people expressed their doubts about issuing a questionnaire, as it opens the door to policy making by popular vote, rather than expertise.

The Tree Preservation Officer has said it should be discussed and we should consider not laying all of the hedge. Ian doesn't have a problem with this. We've been recommended to leave holly, ash and hazel in the hedge but not elder and sycamore. There won't be time to do all the hedge laying before bird nesting activity anyway.

Hilary said we've had a policy of listening to everyone in the community – we have to take a balance between preserving the landscape and adhering to requirements from funders/experts.

Andrew - This has been an opportunity for us to learn. We need to consult and explain e.g. to put contact numbers on the noticeboards and to let people know what we are doing in advance, e.g. on noticeboards, website, etc. But ultimately, we are stewards of the orchard and FAUNA and we need to make decisions that won't always be popular. Our aim is to create a natural landscape in the longterm using natural traditional methods. He didn't think we should change our policy every time we receive a complaint. It was agreed the letters of complaint should be removed before wassailing.

11) FOTT report

Dave reported that the Leasing is progressing and he will be speaking to the council's Property Services team.

12) Playground Report

Andrew reported that the surface was successfully relaid and the roundabout serviced. The grant for the resurface has been signed off.

13) Events

Wassailing – was a great success - well done to everyone.

Easter event to be discussed at next meeting

14) Items of Correspondence

Hilary received notification from the Land Registry that the tiny triangle of land that needed to be transferred to the Allotments has been processed.

15) Website & Facebook

Mandy to put forthcoming events on website calendar.

16) AOB

Mary Ridley's garage needs clearing out by the end of the weekend. Items to be distributed between Mick's and other garages.

Our annual return to the Charity Commission has been submitted.

Andrew is in the process of getting new quotes for insurance. His first attempt has not yielded a useful quote.

17) Date of next meetings

Wednesday 20th February 2013, Robert Gillow Pub, 7.30pm – 9pm

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