

Fairfield Association Business Meeting

February 19th 2014

Upstairs at the Robert Gillow

Attendees

Oliver, Dave, Ian, Hilary, Mick, Geoff, Ruth, Andrew

Apologies

Mandy, Tony, Jane, Peter.

Previous minutes

Accepted with one change. "Succession" sounds too much like what you do when a monarch dies. Workload is sufficient, so remove the second bullet point under "Future Agenda Items".

Treasurers report

Bank balance £33,977.32.

Income

(larger items since last meeting)

Lancashire County Council for Flora £9,000

Gift for Flora £1,000

Payments (larger items only)

Lancaster City Council
re play area resurfacing £11,595
(£379 to be paid from general funds)

Zurich insurance renewal £1,483.24

We have approximately £15K in our general fund at present.

Friends of Fairfield has raised £5000 so far (50% direct debits, 50% cheques, majority have Gift Aid). Pagefast style leaflet to promote Friends of Fairfield mooted for future, possibly for distribution with next newsletter. Geoff suggested trail it in one newsletter, and mail shot it with next.

Hilary went to see Hilary Machell about bequests. Suggested presentation about bequests to FA at the Flora wind-up event in September. Target Solicitors who cover wills and land advice. Possibly host an "Information Evening" and perhaps prepare leaflets for Solicitors' offices.

Ian asked whether cash flow for Flora would be a problem, Dave seemed to think no. Arrangements are in place with trustees for short term zero interest loans if necessary, but hopefully it won't be.

Membership report:

Two new members and four renewals. Some discussion of the intersection between Friends and Members. Agreed to keep both separate, but for Ruth to keep an eye on those who become Friends and were not members.

Website

Nothing to report.

FOG report

Since FOG and Flora quite interdependent at the moment, we rather conflated the two reports. In addition Mick may attend Lancaster Green Spaces meeting on Monday April 7th if he is free.

FSG report

Field walking. Agreed at behest of Mark Derbyshire that we would walk the fields after the deep ploughing to see if any artefacts are turned up. In order to do it well we need some expert advice and to ensure that any found items are located exactly. This is in addition to the metal detecting. Oxford Archaeology North quoted £2k for training of volunteers (approx 4 people for 4 days) and recording, cleaning and analysing. Grants may be available. Independent consultant also an option for approx £1k. Hilary rang English Heritage and they said artefacts are not their thing. Peter Iles County Archaeologist thinks it is possible to do it in a low-tech way. There was some discussion about which option was preferable. Lancaster Archaeological and Historical Society chair is George Howson who has already sent a message out in their newsletter trailing the prospect of a field walk. It was suggested that Ruth send an email to members to see if we could drum up a task force. Possibly with a view to LAHS taking a coordinating role. We agreed that this was not a critical path concern for the Association, but that it would be good to see it happen if someone enthusiastic could coordinate.

Ian discussed with Nigel Pilling the planting of Pony Wood. Some species not on Natural England list ie. Field Maple, Whitebeam, Sweet Chestnut, Horse Chestnut were planned to be included. Nigel told Ian that they were not allowed, furthermore Beech a mistake, Ash no longer permitted, leaving us with Oak (80%) with a few Birch. Nigel has also suggested that we reduce from 400 to 300 saplings in the understory. These strictures also apply to the proposed extension. These are quite dramatic changes on the basis of a single phonecall! We need a clear steer from Claire at Natural England, which hopefully we'll get when she returns to work on Monday 24th February.

Huddlestones (fencing and wetland) left site today. Mick asked about whether they would be able to dig out a little pond, but Dave thought not unless we pay extra. No "muck" (spoil from digging) has been placed in hedges, but theoretically it could be smoothed out in the autumn when they return. Not much done by Huddlestones on Anna's Pool, so Richard did most of work there. There is still a leak over the top of the pipe which Richard might be able to fix on Friday. Hannafins are still planting and will be doing for another two weeks.

FOTT report

Hibernated over the winter, but the last vestiges of the toilet have now been removed in a recent volunteer session. Just before Xmas had a Lancaster Green Spaces grant awarded for a new noticeboard, but it has taken two months for the planners to approve. Will be made by a local tradesman in oak. Work still ongoing on plan to satisfy planners.

Playground report

Nothing to report, except Hilary thinks she might have a grant for the new wall.

Events

Easter in hand and will be discussed further at next FA meeting. Andrew taking on coordinating role for Fun Day. We agreed to concentrate on one field. FoTT still planning to do something in May(ish).

Correspondence

Royal Geographical Society walk. We have replied to say thank you.

Carole Martin has agreed to coordinate the next calendar. Details to be circulated by email by Ruth, with a view to decisions in March or April.

AOB

New administrative volunteers required. In order to proceed we need a list of jobs to match to people. Meeting attendees invited to send Andrew a list of tasks, so we can start to match them to people. This list will be presented at the next meeting and then sent out to supporters to see if we can match tasks to willing volunteers.

Last meeting possibility of Go Wild! Film screening at the Dukes was discussed.

Transition City might take it up. Dukes said we could also use small room which takes 60, include it as part of their programme and we could serve wine etc. The room would need to be rented, so cost benefit required.

Next meetings

March 19th, April 23rd, both at Robert Gillow, 7.30pm.