

# **Fairfield Association**

## **Minutes of the Meeting held**

### **on 19<sup>th</sup> Sept 2018 at Friends Meeting House, Lancaster**

#### **1) Present**

Mandy Bannon, (minutes), Dave Brookes, Geoff Oliver, Jane Parker (Treasurer) Ian Procter, Hilary Short (Chair), Mick Short,

**2) Apologies** Andrew Brennand, Ken Capewell, Tony Finn, Shirley Rawsthorne

**3) Minutes** from the last meeting were accepted.

#### **4) Matters Arising**

- Local Nature reserve status – on hold pending the receipt of a document from Natural England which the FA needs to sign.
- Pony wood footpath – grant has been extended to the end of November. It is hoped that work will start soon, on existing footpath, if not the new one.

#### **5) Treasurer's Report**

##### **Bank balance**

18/7/2018 £52, 006.04

19/9/2018 £55, 788.48 (General Funds £48, 671; Restricted Funds £7,117)

##### **Significant income received:**

Lancaster University Wind Turbine	£3,430
HMRC Gift Aid reclaim	£1,834
RPA re Education Visits base payment	£1,100

##### **Significant expenses:**

City Council re Play Area	£2500
(NB Elizabeth & Richard Wilson grant now used)	
EJ Ward – haymaking	£520,92 (half of last year's cost, due to using bigger bales)

#### **6) Membership Report**

2 new members over the summer taking us up to 390.

#### **7) Friends**

Geoff reported that two new Friends have joined.

#### **8) Playground Report**

As Ken was not attending, there was no playground report submitted.

#### **9) Education Report**

Tony has two school visits planned. Two different classes from Dallas Road School will benefit.

#### **10) Towneley Close ginnel – handrail**

Val Burnett emailed us to say she had slipped on the steep path leading from Towneley Close to the orchard, three months ago. She landed on her back, tearing ligaments in her ankle and foot. She is recovering but is afraid of using that path again. She has discovered other people have fallen on this path and is concerned that more may injure themselves, particularly in icy conditions. She wondered if a handrail could be installed to prevent others from falling. We contacted Gina Dowding, our local

county councillor. She has reported back to say that according to County, who are responsible for the footpath, the path is not steep enough to justify them putting in a handrail.

Although we would like to offer practical help, it was pointed out we can't install anything without County's permission, and we shouldn't be aiming to do their work as we may be liable if something goes wrong.

Dave will check whether it is Highways or Public rights of Way that are responsible. We could then write to the relevant officer and or councillor to express our concerns and suggest to Val and her friends that they do the same.

### **11) Railway Corner**

Network Rail has fenced off a large part of a small green area along Aldcliffe Road (between Cromwell Road and Brook Street). In the past this area attracted drug users but more recently it has been planted and maintained by Fiona Sturgess. The issue for the FA is whether or not we should enter into a contract with Network Rail which would enable Fiona (or some other working group to go into the railed area and continue to plant and maintain it). The contract would involve a guarantee from the FA that there would always be 2 people working there at any given time. The annual licence would allow people to work – there would be no requirement to do so.

The issue has already gone to the Triangle who have visited the site but aren't keen to get involved. Given that a contract would need to be signed, this decision will finally rest with the trustees but it was brought before the FA committee, who suggested Dave talk to Fiona Sturgess to determine whether she would want to continue working there under the condition she would always have to be working alongside someone else.

### **12) "Mini Hay" Children's literary festival (nature writing/illustration)**

The first Mini Hay meeting had been held earlier in the day (19/9/2018). Attendees were Mandy Bannon, Hilary Short, Tony Finn, Nina Bleasdale (former bookseller specialising in children's literature), Jacqueline Greaves (Chair of Lancaster Litfest) and Emma Rucastle (freelance drama teacher for schools and community organisations). Mandy reported that Nina whose idea it was had agreed to lead the event, which would feature 2-4 children's authors or illustrators, with interactive family-orientated activities, drama etc. The group favoured holding the day on the Sunday following Apple Day, either 22<sup>nd</sup> or 29<sup>th</sup> September 2019.

The committee felt we should consider the following issues before going any further:

#### **Date - tagging the event onto the day following Saturday's Apple Day**

(either Sunday Sept 22<sup>nd</sup> or Sunday 29<sup>th</sup>).

a) The committee asked why this was thought to be a good idea. What are the advantages? (Ans: if we have a marquee for the 2 days, then it could be used for Apple day events if rainy).

Might the tagging of the 2 events not actually dilute the number of families that would attend because families may not want/be able to come to two consecutive events over the same weekend? If we picked a different weekend for the 2 events, we may increase our chances of more families attending.

b) Marketing it – how could the children's literature event be linked to Apple Day? Perhaps better to integrate the two events over two days?

c) Weather - the end of September might be too cold. Wouldn't spring or summer be better – if we're trying to aim for the Hay festival type feel? It was thought that June would be better for an outdoor based event, or one idea put forward was if we decided to stick with the September, we could consider hosting the event in the Friends' Meeting House

It would appear that the two September weekends and most June weekends wouldn't clash with other family orientated events. Hilary will check whether the Loxams will have an Open garden weekend next year. If not, then we could use the "Fun Day weekend", the first Saturday in July.

**Place** – why the paddock in particular? Had we considered the play area? (We explained that the paddock would be closer to the orchard and its natural setting – which could be used for some activities, weather permitting – drama etc.)

**Visitor numbers** – how many people do we want to attract? Too few and it could be (an expensive) embarrassment, too many and lack of nearby car parking could be an issue. We would have to encourage people to walk or cycle, and explain that there is limited parking and the nearest car park is Dallas Road – a good 10 -15 minute walk for children. Our idea to have it as a free or cheap event ticketed through event Brite or similar was met with approval.

**Marquee** - hiring a biggish marquee with flooring, duckboards if necessary and toilets – was all thought to be reasonable (pending cost). The muddy gate area is now drier than it was when we held the Party in the paddock event a few years ago.

**Considering outside caterers** – This was thought to be ok

The committee asked if Nina could prepare a page of A4 overview document before the next meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> October.

#### **11) Mick's Walk & Talk event** – for 30 or so Linguistics MA students

This is an annual event where we give university students a tour of the nature reserve, a presentation and tea and cake. It usually raises about £300. Mick has had to move the date to Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> November, and have an earlier start time than usual.

#### **12) Calendars and Cards**

It was agreed to go ahead with the 2019 calendar and set of new Xmas cards, to be ready for the Green fair on 24<sup>th</sup> November.

#### **13) FOTT Report**

Working with the Canals and Rivers Trust, FOTT may be carrying out some planting on the canal tow path between the bridge and the Triangle.

#### **14) RAD:ISH**

Mick introduced the Research Addressing Dementia: Interventions Supporting Health programme. It was agreed that the FA would like to be involved by providing an opportunity for early dementia patients to carry out outdoor activities on the nature reserve. Mick will invite Dr Garuth Chalfont from Lancaster university's Centre for Ageing Research to come and speak to us.

#### **15) FFOG Report**

Sue reported that the arable field had been cut by Ian Ward. This year we couldn't use volunteers to help with haymaking as we were using a different contractor and system. On the positive side, the use of bigger bales meant it cost half the price of previous years and used less plastic.

A new neighbour on the end of houses along Aldcliffe Road has been given permission by the Association to lay a French drain under Lower Sowerholme to enable the neighbour to drain his garden. This will also benefit the drainage of our land.

**16) AOB** Geoff reported he had seen cattle drinking from the trough which has been filled with water using the new pump.

**17) Next Meeting** - Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> October – Friends Meeting House