

Minutes of the Fairfield Association held on 17th January 2019 at the Friends' Meeting House

Present:

Hilary Short (Chair), Dave Brookes, Ken Capewell, Sue Nieduszynska, Geoff Oliver
Jane Parker (Treasurer), Ian Procter, Mick Short

1. Apologies

Apologies received from Andrew Brennand, Tony Finn, Shirley Rawsthorne

2. Minutes from the last meeting

The minutes were agreed without alteration.

3. Matters Arising

1. Nothing to report yet on future use of biodegradable packaging for cards, calendars etc.
2. Of the 200 calendars printed only three remain at present and the new cards have sold well. The eventual net profit will be well in excess of £1,000. Most calendars were sold direct to FA members and some were sold at the Visitors Information Centre in the Storey, Arteria and Single Step. The latter was a new outlet for this year and they sold out completely.
3. LNR status is still proceeding slowly, in spite of our efforts. The fact that Natural England (NE) are insisting on us getting Village Green (VG) status for Fairfield Orchard and having official communication with them done via solicitors is slowing things down. We have asked for help and advice from the County Council (via Gina Dowding) and the City Council (via Dave Brookes). We are not clear if we can apply for the VG status ourselves, as we lease the land from the City Council. Ann Wood, in the Council, has queried whether VG status is necessary and thinks that we can apply, ourselves but we need agreement from NE on this before we can proceed. Even if they say yes, it could take up to a year to get through the legal and bureaucratic processes.

4. Treasurer's Report to 16/01/19

Co-op Bank Balance	20/11/18	£62,674-34
Co-op Bank Balance	15/01/19	£49,262-82
<i>General Funds</i>		£53,700
<i>Restricted Funds</i>		-£04,438
<i>Total Funds</i>		£49,262

The negative figure for *Restricted Funds* is because we have yet to claim from funders for some recent Flora footpath contractor bills we have just paid (see further below for breakdown).

Significant Expenditure

Graeme Skelcher - herb and flower monitoring	£600
FW Huddleston (Flora paths contract work, first invoice)	£15, 252

Significant Income

Walk and Talk donations	£290
Carol singing	£272
Sale of calendars & cards to date	£1,275
(money still to come from those selling cards and calendars on our behalf)	

Restricted funds breakdown (see above)

Beyond the Castle	£2, 634
Lancashire Environment Fund	-£15,252
LU Wind Turbine Fund	£3,430
Garfield Weston	£3,472
<i>Total</i>	<i>-£4,438</i>

5. Membership

Nothing to report

6. Playground Report

The frayed tape has been replaced on the climbing nets and the other play equipment is all up to standard.

There has been no further graffiti to date, though some still needs to be dealt with by filling in the wood carving. Ken will use blackboard paint as a simple solution to the graffiti on the underside of the climbing board. He was thanked for his work.

The proposed onsite meeting concerning the possible introduction of small football goals has not yet taken place.

7. Education

No report as such, as Tony was unable to attend. Some discussion took place concerning future walks and Storey talks and it was agreed that we should approach Claire Cornish of Lancaster Meadows Group or possibly representatives of various other green projects (e.g. Claver Hill, Scotch Quarry) to tell us about their work.

8 Pony Wood Path

Work is now progressing well but there is still plenty to be done. Hilary, Frank Huddleston and Georgina Peacock walked the paths the day before this meeting, to discuss the work done so far and agree details of that still to be done. Work to date has been done very well. All gates will be dog proof and the field fences will be cattle proof. Frank Huddleston is an approved contractor for the County Council and so may be able to take on the traffic-calming work needed where the new footpath will exit on to Aldcliffe Road. This would be very convenient for us. However, we still don't have final agreement for some details of our planning permission for work adjacent to Aldcliffe Road or an agreement from the Canal and Rivers Trust for the gap needed in the canal fence to enable walkers to go straight across the road and onto the canal towpath. Because of these issues, there may be some delay in the path being opened and there was some discussion concerning whether part of the path (from the public footpath to the viewing point adjacent to Pony Wood) could be opened earlier. If this idea was agreed at a future meeting, a temporary but effective barrier across the path near the viewing point would need to be constructed and notices concerning how to use the path would need to be in place. To reduce any negative effects on the wildlife, the new path will be open to pedestrians only (no cycles etc), dogs will need to be under short-lead control, and walkers should be encouraged to proceed quietly.

9. Forthcoming Events

Wassailing: Saturday 19 January 2019, 3pm –4.30 pm. Mark Reynolds will lead the event, Gladly Solemn Sound will sing for us and proceedings will end around a small bonfire. We have lots of raffle prizes but need more prizes suitable for children.

Mandy, Ruth, Tony and Sue will give a talk to the Community Centre on Willow Lane on 14th February 2019.

Mick is giving a talk to a Probus group in Rowley Court, Scotforth on 25th February 2019.

Swimathon: March 2019 – we have two volunteer swimmers so far.

Easter Egg Hunt – Hilary will contact Tony

Triangle Summer Fair: 18 May 2019

Litfest (June 2019?) We have not heard from the organisers for some time and so are not sure whether this event will proceed as originally planned

Open Garden: late June 2019 (22nd to 23rd June?)

10. FOTT

Dave has not yet heard back from Andrea Barrett of the Canal and Rivers Trust concerning their 200-year celebration or the canal towpath issue referred to under 8 above. However, FOTT are planning a canal-related art exhibition, to take place around the late-August Bank Holiday.

11. FFOG

Our arable farmer has signed the agreement for the 2019 Flora field work. After the Pony Wood path is completed we will need to mark out the new positions for the wildflower and bird-friendly strips and seed them. Ian has approached the Woodland Trust concerning our need for more trees to complete the new hedging work needed near the new footpath and the Trust is generously proposing to let us have 1450 whips for £340, to be planted once the relevant contractor work is complete.

The White Park herd has been reduced over the winter, making winter grazing easier to achieve in a year when hay is at a premium. Julia Salmon is now producing well-received and colourful wood-carved notices concerning keeping dogs on leads and discouraging cycling on the footpaths.

Sue has approached Cat Smith MP on our behalf and she will come for a guided walk around the nature reserve on 26 April.

12. Website and Facebook

To be discussed in detail at the February meeting after Hilary has talked to Julia McDowell. We need to do some updating work on the website and we need to work out how best to effect this. If we can find others to do the Newsletter, Mandy could perhaps take on some of this work.

13. Any Other Business

It was decided that we should feedback our views on the aspirational cycle path which is part of the Lancaster District Local Plan as part of the current call for additional evidence and information. It was agreed that our submission should be copied to Maurice Brophy.

14. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday, February 20th, 2019, 7.30 pm, the Friends Meeting House.