

**Fairfield Association
Fairfield Orchard Sub-Group**

**Minutes of the meeting held on
Monday 7 September 2009, 7.30 pm
at Whitegates, Sunnyside Close**

Present: Tony Finn, Oliver Fulton (mins), Simon Gershon, Helen Hicks, Hilary Short, Mick Short (chair)

Apologies: Jon Barry

Minutes: approved

Matters arising

- ? First Aid and other volunteers' courses: new First Aid dates not yet received from Beaumont.
- ? Tree surgery: Simon will check the TPO to see if the lime tree recommended for pollarding is covered.
- ? Towneley Close footpath: Mick and Oliver have not yet arranged the proposed meeting with objectors.
- ? U3A presentation: Mick and Oliver have not yet arranged this.

Current developments

- ? Vandalism. Nothing new other than minor (seasonal?) apple damage.
- ? Tree health: concerns about the Millennium Oak, which seems to be suffering from severe mildew (?). Andy Lee to be asked to advise when he visits for inspection and surgery. Simon has tied up the damaged branch. Some of the apple trees too look a bit the worse for wear. Agreed to ask Steve Edwards to advise.
- ? Uninvited visitors. Concerns about someone who looks to be planning to camp: he was seen storing possessions in the White Cottage pigsties, and was asked to remove it by Gary Foxcroft. Cath Griffiths has been asked to speak to him. The abandoned possessions have now been removed.

Events

- ? Apple Day. Simon is constructing a rota of tasks but expressed concern about the availability of volunteers. It was suggested that email requests for help may not be sufficient, but that there should be enough person-power on the day. Those present all volunteered to help. External people taking part include Workspace, Suzy Jones (Storey Institute), Wendy Haslam (cookery), the Girl Guide group who visited in the summer. It was agreed that there would be no entrance fee but there would be a request for a donation, with no further charges for any activities. Simon proposed to sell fruit trees grown, and chutneys made, at Middlewood: he was asked to check the financial arrangements as if we are selling them on Middlewood's behalf there should be something in it for us. Hilary will contact Shirley to see if the prison will donate cakes as previously. Further practical details are in Oliver's and/or Simon's files.

Breathing Places

- ? Graeme Skelcher has agreed to complete the survey and invoice us before December 15.
- ? Log seating: Andy Lee has offered to donate logs. We need to identify how many we need and of what dimensions, and let him know. Tony and Helen are pricing tarpaulins.
- ? Notice boards and information materials: Helen, Hilary, Mick and Oliver have obtained quotes from Woodscape following a very helpful site visit. Agreed that Oliver will arrange a similar site visit with one or more designers to plan the content. There is now a main page for school visits on the website which includes a deliberately schematic downloadable map plus some useful web links. Although we would expect to concrete in the new boards ourselves, we should not forget excavation costs and transporting the boards to the installation spot which will need a JCB. Simon and Hilary will give Oliver contact names so

he can ask for quotes.

- ? Wildflower plugs and bulbs: Helen will get advice from the National Wildflower Centre in Liverpool. Simon suggested that LUVU (Lancaster University) volunteers might be able to help. Mick suggested that we might experiment with reducing the fertility in the triangle where the bug hotel is going to go, and that we might also involve the LUVU people in this.
- ? Habitat boxes. We have about £200 to spend on the 'bug hotel'. Helen will ask Workspace to quote and Simon will ask Middlewood Trust. This too might be a good project for LUVU, working with local children.
- ? Further school visits are expected in mid-October.

Volunteer days

- ? Simon's proposals approved.
- ? Mick has rescued some of the small trees (whips planted in winter 2007-08) from the bindweed etc.
- ? Simon proposed buying some new gardening gloves for volunteers. If the BP funds for the mower have been fully spent, it was agreed to ask the Fairfield Association for £20, if necessary pointing out that this was more than covered by the proceeds of the sale of the old mower.

'Fruity hedges' and tree grafting

Simon spoke about an 'edible forest' he has visited in Devon and suggested this might be a solution for the 'untidy' areas. He has a DVD about it which he will circulate to members.

Next meetings :

7.30 pm, Monday 5 October at **Whitegates, Sunnyside Close**

7.30 pm, Monday 2 November at **Whitegates, Sunnyside Close**