

## **Notes of Friends of Rickerby Park Meeting**

**Held at 6pm on 12th September 2011 at Bitts Park Depot**

**Present:** Present: Cath Rowlandson (secretary), David Williams (Treasurer and acting Chair), Anne Williams, Tim Hayes-Jones, Geraldine Hayes-Jones, Roy Gadsby, Rodney Whelan, Eric Taylor, Peter Atkinson, Pam Atkinson, Cllr Bowman, Cllr Nedved, Cllr Mallinson.

**Apologies for absence:** Jon May, Cath Gregory, Doreen Leask, Nils Mills, Cllr Geddes

DW welcomed everyone to the Group and everyone briefly introduced themselves.

Notes from the last meeting were agreed.

### **1. Matters Arising**

The results for the Green Flag awards have been announced and Rickerby Park has been awarded the Flag. The Group recorded thanks and congratulations to the Green Spaces Team for their efforts.

As JM and CG were unable to attend the meeting due to having been called away at short notice, updates on the following matters could not be provided:

- The green algae to the pond. (RG was aware that action was currently being taken against algae to the Eden Bridge Gardens)
- The blank interpretation board to the Eden Bridge Gardens
- The need to consider bringing forward the planting to the cenotaph gardens to allow time for them to become established before the centenary event.

These matters were deferred to the next meeting to enable JM / CG to feedback at that time. **Action JM / CG**

PtA Raised the issue of benches in the Park, this matter was also deferred to the next meeting due to JM / CG being absent.

### **2. Committee Members**

DW explained that the Group was formally constituted and had three officials; the chair, treasurer and secretary. The post of chair had been covered on a temporary basis over recent meetings by other Group members, as the person previously nominated to the post had not been at the meetings. CR confirmed that she had received a formal confirmation that the previous chairperson no longer wanted to hold the post.

DW explained the role of the chairperson and asked if anyone wanted to take on the post. As there were no volunteers DW formally proposed that GHJ become treasurer, DW become chairperson and that CR remain as secretary. THJ

seconded this proposal. DW queried whether the members present had any objections to this proposal. No objections / comments were made and the proposal was formally agreed.

### **3. Council Action Plan**

As JM and CG were not present, the update on the Council Action plan was deferred until the next meeting. A general discussion of current issues in the Park raised the following matters:

- Achieving the Green Flag Award.
- The success of the litter pick
- The siting of the stone sculpture - at last!
- The missing life buoy, responsibility for checking / replacing to be confirmed.
- The issue of flood debris collecting on the fence protecting the willow to the riverbank between the Memorial Bridge and beck at the Rickerby end of the Park. It was queried whether there was a need for the fencing now that the willow was established. Cllr M asked to be emailed with this query. **Action CR**
- The overgrowth of willow stopping sand martins nesting in the bank and obscuring the view of the river, is any action proposed to control the willow **Action JM**
- The need to keep the beck clear of debris to avoid flooding of Rickerby. THJ had been told by JM that it would be cleared but this had not been done yet. There was concern that this needed to be done before the winter weather increased the likelihood of flooding. **Action JM**
- The presence of nettles, ragwort and thistles and unkempt appearance of the Park. This matter was discussed in more detail as The Group had previously raised this and other issues of maintenance in the Park with JM and Cllr Bloxham (The Portfolio Holder). CR summarized the content of the letters and responses received. The Group was keen to acknowledge and thank JM and CG for their work and the improvements made to the general infra-structure in the Park. There was an understanding that the rural nature of the Park needed to be retained but concern that this was leading to a lack of ongoing maintenance / capital expenditure within the Park. It was agreed to seek clarification from JM on this matter. **Action CR**
- Cllr N confirmed that the nettles and grass cutting to the Stanwix meadow area had been addressed since the last meeting.
- Cllr Mallinson informed the Group that a meeting with the Environment Agency about unintended consequences of the flood defenses had been planned but this had not gone ahead. Cllr Bowman agreed to follow this up and was thanked by the Group **Action Cllr B**

### **4 . Stanwix in Bloom**

Cllr N briefly informed the Group about the Event which had just been launched. It is a community based project which is aiming to brighten up and add to the floral appearance to the area. The Council is not funding the project. Judging will be in the summer 2012 and Cllr N is hoping to attract support from Groups and individuals to work towards that. Anyone who is interested in getting involved should contact Cllr N direct by emailing [pauln@carlisle.gov.uk](mailto:pauln@carlisle.gov.uk)

## **5 . Priority Project**

THJ summarized the proposed project to provide a pedestrian / cycle way and bollards to the Park and confirmed that there was a small working group dealing with the project. CR confirmed that at the request of the Group, JM had approached Mr Hayward to raise the project and pass on the working groups offer to meet up and discuss the proposal more fully. Mr Hayward had been unsupportive of the proposal and unwilling to meet the working group. CR confirmed that a letter had been sent directly to Mr Hayward and summarized the content of the letter. To date, no reply has been received to this letter.

The fact that the Friends Group would be able to approach organizations and attract funding sources that would not be open to the Council was raised. It was again stressed that the support for the project by Councilors and Council Officers *in principle* was seen as a fundamental requirement to avoid members wasting time and effort on a project that could not be successful without such support.

The Councilors present were asked if they would support the project in principal. They confirmed that they were unable to commit the Council to any project without taking into account the cost and work involved for officers. However taking account of these matters, they were supportive – in principle.

Cllr M offered to approach Mr Hayward and facilitate a meeting with him; the working group and any other relevant people eg Keith Poole. The Group thanked Cllr M for taking this forward. Cllr LM requested copies of correspondence sent about the project **Action CR, Cllr M**

The cost and funding of the signage and ceramic arm chair etc. at Bitts Park was raised. Cllr M offered to check this. **Action Cllr M**

## **6. Steam Fair**

There was a general discussion about the use of the Park; CR summarized the content of the letter sent to the Council about the event. The Group members present confirmed that they felt that the impact of the steam fair on residents around the Park and to the Park was detrimental and that they were not supportive of the steam fair being held at Rickerby Park. However if the Council decided it must go ahead at the Park then the Group wanted assurance that the organizers would be required to return the Park to its original condition within a specified timescale. (Or be recharged for any such work required)

Concern was raised about the weight limit / strength of the bridge at the Rickerby end of the Park given the weight and size of some vehicles brought onto the Park that way. CR to check with JM as to who could advise on this **Action CR**

## **7. Football Ground**

CR summarized the content of the letter sent to the Council and response received. Concern was again raised about the impact that the use of the football ground is having on the Park especially given the close proximity of the sport facilities and extensive parking available at the sheep mount. Disappointment was expressed at the lack of control imposed by the Council.

There was a general discussion which raised the following matters:

- The possibility of the football club using part of their own field for parking
- Allocation of a part of the Park for football parking
- Enforcement action against drivers parking on the road side
- The effect that provision of bollards as part of the priority project would have on road side parking.
- The possibility of the football ground being held in Trust, but no one at the meeting knew any more details. This issue to be investigated further.

It was suggested that the Group write to the person running the football ground confirming the concerns about parking, damage to the roadside, access and increased use. It was then suggested that the initial meeting be held with Mr. Hayward etc and after this, the possibility of writing to / inviting the person running the football ground be considered in light of the outcome of that meeting. This was agreed as an initial way forward.

### **Any Other Business**

There seemed to be an increase in the number and frequency of people camping overnight on the Park, causing damage by having camp fires and /or BBQs and leaving rubbish. Is camping allowed in the Park? **Action JM**

An informal "shortcut" path is becoming established in the area between the steps to Brampton road and the horse jump by the riverside car park. Can anything be done to discourage this? **Action JM**

Another tree in the Park has snapped midway up the trunk, is this an indication of a common problem that may result in similar damage to other trees? **Action JM**

**Date and Time of Next Meeting:** 14 November 2011, 6pm, Bitts Park Depot.