

Friends of Stables Lane (FOSL) Working Group - Minutes

Meeting 7pm Wed September 21st 2022, Committee room, Boston Spa Village Hall

Attendance

Sara King	Yes	Andy Colledge	Yes
Kevin Alderson	No	Keith Jackson	Yes
Scott Courts	Yes	Alasdair Rattray	Yes
Lynn Beckwith	No	John Backhouse	Yes

Minutes

1. Comments from the public – (maximum 30 minutes) – No public present.

1.1 The original meeting was cancelled due to the Queen's official 10 day mourning period and re scheduled at short notice. **Action: SK to check with the clerk and MH who does the PC newsletter, to make sure that the next meeting is definitely publicised.**

2. Chairman's report on previous Parish Council meeting

2.1 SK clarified that a recently circulated proposal from the Church Street developers, which included amongst other things, the possibility of the car park being upgraded as part of the development, would be some way off, even if were to ever happen. Therefore the PC recognises that a plan is needed at least for some sort of reasonable improvement in the interim, rather than a full long term replacement at this point and it is due to be discussed at the next PC meeting.

NB. The proposal was put together with input from KJ and a key member of the BSW&V Community Green Group, so KJ was able to explain in more detail about the implications and benefits to the park.

3. Operations and administration

3.1 There was some discussion in which it was felt as a group that at least improving the entrance and sightlines as soon as possible would show that things were getting done.

3.2 Maintenance of the park was discussed and a Working Group is to be set up to meet initially on the 2nd Sunday of each month, starting on 9th October. AC will run it and probably via a What's App Group. A budget of approx. £100 a month was agreed upon for materials needed. **Action: SK to ask the PC for approval of the required budget and materials, to ask MH to put something in the PC newsletter about the Working Group and to ask KA to send an email out to all the Stables Lane volunteers.**

Update: In order to follow correct PC guidelines, a budget of approx. £1200 for the year was agreed upon, with approval for the first materials needed which once sourced by AC, can be ordered by the clerk.

3.3 Security and Vandalism was discussed again. It was generally felt that the situation had eased a bit recently and that we should not let the vandals spoil the park, but take measures to make it less easy to vandalise again as repairs are done, by way of strengthening fences etc.

3.4 The majority of the group felt that the removal of the top gazebo, an 'idea' previously circulated, should not happen under any circumstances (or in the worst case scenario to be relocated within the Park) and wanted that impressing upon the PC. There was some acceptance that if we kept it, that we could not keep reporting damage to the police with the same pressure that we have been doing as they have advised the PC to remove the gazebo in order to remove the attraction to the vandals. Also, it was generally felt that the PC should put pressure on the developers (via the Ward councillors) to make the boundaries more secure as the vandals have an easy escape route from the Police. **Action: SK to bring this up at the next PC meeting.**

3.5 JB reported that sometimes vehicle owners have to be asked to move their vehicles from in front of the metal gate to the park, when bowling club members need to drive to the club house. It is also a matter of safety as if the gate is blocked, emergency vehicles would not have immediate access. A member of the bowling club would be prepared to paint the gate with some wording about not obstructing it, rather than we put up another sign which could possibly be pulled down. **Action: SK to ask the PC's permission to allow the gate to be painted, design as suggested by JB.**

Update: The gate can be painted, but the design to be top rail all in yellow with black wording to say "Please do not obstruct this gate – Emergency access required". The clerk will purchase the yellow paint needed.

3.6 Litter picking in the park was discussed as both SC and another volunteer had had very unpleasant experiences litter picking during the height of summer due to the success of the park attracting so many people. Problems included LCC bin bags ripping as they don't fit the bins properly but are the only ones they will collect, large amounts of half eaten food and drink stuffs attracting flies and wasps and the entrance to the park generally looking unsightly when all the bags are stacked up for collection. It was also noted that there is no recycling happening and some bin monitoring might be a good idea as perhaps some which don't get filled very much could possibly be re-located to areas where the bins were filled quickly. **Action: KA to put more people on the rota during the height of summer when it's hot weather to keep more on top of the litter, SK to ask the PC to order one new bin to replace the one near the top gazebo (as a sort of trial bin) but one in which the LCC bags fit better without ripping when you try and fit them and pull them out and SK to contact the BSW&V Community Green Group about working together on ideas to facilitate some recycling.**

4. Fund raising, events and finance

4.1 The Festival was briefly discussed and everyone felt it went really well. Martin House are going to be using the park for an event soon too which everyone was pleased about.

5. Nature area / green spaces

5.1. The group feel that the wildflower meadow should be further developed and could do with perhaps some re-seeding depending on what species need to be encouraged to thrive. Its development could also possibly be supported by the BSW&V Community Green Group.

Action: SK to ask DM, the clerk to ask SB the contractor to stop cutting it from now on, All to go away and research wildflower cutting and reseeding regimes so that we can come up with a regime with details of how to cut etc. at the next meeting, then SK to ask DM, the clerk to add it to the grass cutting contract for when it goes out to tender in March 2023.

5.2 KJ presented the idea to try and achieve the Green Flag award. The majority of the group were all in favour of it. It's an internationally recognised award which you have to have renewed annually. It looks at various aspects of the park, e.g. that it provides the community with a quality and appropriately managed, safe green space which ensures good ongoing conservation. It recognises the hard work of volunteers and facilitates obtaining funding for further improvements which in turn benefits the whole community. **Action: KJ (and others) will look into it a bit further and we will discuss a plan of action at the next meeting.**

6. AOB

6.1 The dogs on leads signs were discussed as DM, the clerk to the PC had had an email from an unhappy parent visiting the park with their child, as someone had allowed their dog to foul right next to the play area. The dogs on leads signs had previously all been pulled up. It was agreed that putting most of them back is not the best idea, unless they are put back much more securely. There was also discussion about too much signage spoiling the look of the park. SC suggested that a large sign at the entrance of the park might be a better answer to more than one issue. It could both welcome people to the park and politely ask them to respect the other park users and volunteers by following a few simple rules e.g. dogs on leads and thinking about how to responsibly dispose of their rubbish (e.g. if we do manage to put in recycling facilities in the long run). However, it was felt that at least for now some signs should be put up near the children's play area (3) and one near the entrance at the back of the park near St. Marys. **Action: The Working Group to securely mount the signs in the agreed places (as above) at some point in the near future.**

Meeting Closed - 8.45 pm

Next Meeting 7pm Tuesday 13thDecember, Committee room, Boston Spa Village Hall