

Friends of Stables Lane (FOSL) Working Group - Minutes

Meeting 7pm Tuesday September 5th 2023, Committee Room, Boston Spa Village Hall

Attendance

Sara King	Yes	Andy Colledge	Yes
Kevin Alderson	Yes	Keith Jackson	Yes
Scott Courts	No	John Backhouse	Yes
Lynn Beckwith	Yes	Geoff Shaw	Yes
Luke Broadbent	No		

Minutes

1. Comments from the public

A member of the public, Chris Lazenby from the Church Street Action Group attended the meeting to discuss some concerns he has regarding the boundary between Hollydene and Stables Lane Park within the latest plans submitted to LCC for the Church Street development. KA stepped out of the meeting at this point as he knows the developer. There was a very long discussion. Chris's main concerns were:

- 1.1. Because of the removal of hedges 26 & 27 stated on the plans, how the boundary lines lie within the middle of the hedge and that some parts of the hedge is fairly thin in places leaving it vulnerable, that in the end much more hedge will be 'removed'. The hedge is classed as ancient as it's been there for such a long time and the digging up of the area in general will disturb the microbiome in the soil beneath the hedge line and trees, which as it has been untouched for so many years is a complex habitat of microorganisms which helps to support the hedge and it's undergrowth, and in turn, the wildlife within the immediate area.
- 1.2. In Chris's opinion, there is still confusion as to who actually owns the hedge. He has previously already met with Keith Blake, the PC chairman, to air these concerns and following this Keith did extensive work looking into this matter. Keith had obtained land registry documents for Hollydene and the houses to the north of Stables Lane and along with the PC's documents for Stables Lane, together with a local surveyor, had concluded that the Hollydene and Stables Lane boundary is shared. Chris has requested that a second opinion be obtained from another surveyor.
- 1.3. As plans for this development have been amended and re-submitted several times over the last few years and looking back at plans from many years before this, Chris believes that the ratios on the plans are different and that the boundary line has a 'kink' in it which has moved and changed each time the plans have been amended and no longer even appears on the plans.
- 1.4. The current plans include a masterplan proposal for Stables Lane similar to the stand alone document, the PWP park improvement plan, both of which address amongst other things, the ongoing continuity and development of the wildlife corridor within the shared boundary

mentioned above. Back in December 2022, the PC agreed, after discussion and feedback, from the FOSL working group, that although a stand-alone document, it was a desirable plan which covered off expectations of the park. As some of the park along this boundary may need to be encroached upon by the PC in order to maintain a 5m wide biodiverse wildlife corridor (as advised by environmental experts/ knowledgeable people within the community) Chris felt that it would be like the PC 'giving' the land to the developer. He was unhappy about this and also thought that the PC had agreed to work with the park to facilitate the development, although the latter is not the case.

2. Approval of last meetings minutes.

The minutes were approved.

3. Chairman's report / follow up on previous meeting points raised

3.1 The PC had agreed to look at the possibility of surrounding the nature area with boulders and logs instead of repairing the fence which vandals keep vandalising and that the grass cutting contractor leave some areas unmown. However SK had not had time to look into supply and prices yet or look at what areas should be left unmown. **Action: SK to progress these actions.**

3.2 The PC had obtained a quote for the play equipment matting replacement/ repair work, from the original installers, which was £2462.00 + VAT. The group felt that this was far too expensive and that they should be told that it wasn't fit or purpose and asked to reconsider. **Action: SK to raise this at the next PC meeting.**

3.3 SK had asked the Graffiti team contact if the anti-graffiti liquid previously used on the gazebo walls and ceiling could be used on the benches and tables, but it can't be.

3.4 The PC had previously said that using Forge recycling at the Festival would allow them to evaluate whether we would use them for an ongoing collection from Stables Lane, as they hand sorted rubbish and offered food waste recycling. However, before the Festival, Forge was taken over by Biffa and they provided an appalling service, failing to deliver the bins for the Festival, not collecting them on time and implying that any rubbish could be put in any bin despite providing separate waste bins for dry mixed recycling and food waste (at a cost) leading us to doubt that they hand sorted it to the degree they stated as most of the dry mixed recycling would have been, and indeed was, contaminated with food waste. The PC have decided that asking LCC to provide another yellow recycling bin like the ones in Stables Lane car park and Millennium Gardens for the recycling of plastic bottles and aluminium cans would be a suitable solution and at least provide a reasonable recycling solution.

3.5 The Traditional Leisure fairground company had asked the PC about being able to hold fairs on Stables Lane in the future. The PC have agreed to them holding one on the weekend of 15th – 17th September on a trial basis and along with several conditions, noted in their contract.

3.6. The PC did not agree to have a lost property box mounted on the defibrillator post, but suggested that the tennis club be approached as a place to be able to leave lost property. However, the tennis club is not always open and a sign would be needed so people knew where to collect an item from, so it might still be better to have a box of some description near the entrance of the park, should anyone come across a suitable box at any point.

3.7 The no parking/ emergency vehicles access sign had been finished and mounted following the last meeting. However, some group members reported people still parking in front of it. This will need to be monitored.

3.8 KA reported that the damaged bin near the allotments was to be replaced with another vandal proof bin.

4. Operations, Administration and Finance

4.1 The park entrance was reviewed as previous actions were taken to improve the sight line and put in a designated pedestrian entrance before the Festival. The group still feel that the entrance on the garage side should be made wider in order to fit double buggies through so that they don't need to go through the main entrance, which is for vehicles. The group also felt that a pedestrian entrance on the tennis courts side was needed. Even if this would narrow the vehicular entrance, it was felt that this would be a positive, as it would mean vehicles would have to drive even more slowly. **Action: SK to put this to the PC at the next meeting.**

4.2 There was a brief update about the maintenance working group's activities. AC reported that the Rotary have been very good at providing volunteers but that hardly any other members of the public had come forward to help, so the maintenance WG is going to be 'merged' with the Rotary group's meetings of 10am on the first Monday of the month. **Action: LBW to put something about it on social media and SK to ask the PC to put something about the Rotary volunteers working on our behalf in the PC newsletter.**

4.3 As LBR was not at the meeting, there was no update to the possibility of being able to start discussions with St Mary's school about being able to create another entrance to the park alongside the school.

4.4 The group agreed that ideally the blue and white Stables Lane car park sign should be replaced with a brown and white tourism sign, stating 'Stables Lane Park'. **Action: SK to bring this up at the next PC meeting.**

5. Nature area / green spaces

5.1. SK had been in touch with Mike Gadd from the BSW&V Community Green Group to ask whether the wildflower meadow areas were ready to be cut yet. Mike had said not quite yet, but that he was keeping an eye on the seed development and would let us know when it could be done. **Action: SK to let the PC know once the cut can be done.**

6. Events and Fundraising

6.1 There was a brief review of the Party in the Park.

6.1.1 Although the costs were higher this year because of having to provide first aiders amongst other costs, £1259.00 profit was made and will be added to the Stables Lane reserve account. A fantastic £425.00 was raised from KJ's classic car event and a large proportion from the generosity of the ice cream vendor who donated £404.00. The main change this year was the introduction of pitch fees, but some vendors hadn't paid the fee before the event as the weather was dubious and then didn't make a donation afterwards (although understandably some won't have made much money due to the weather). It was felt though, that having the pitch fee and its paperwork as part of the process did mean collecting the money was a bit easier, especially for LBW as the PC clerk took on all this work. SK and LB feel that next year the ice cream vendor shouldn't need to pay as much, to make it fairer.

6.1.2 LBW felt that she put in a lot of hours being there all weekend and that there weren't enough other 'volunteers/ officials in yellow jackets' on site especially during the day on Sunday when it was very busy, when problems were encountered when one vendor decided to leave early and drive through the people attending the event. Although KA had sent out a request for volunteers from the Stables Lane volunteers list, no one had come forward to offer help. As LBW did/ does all the work to get the vendors to the park and get ready for the event, she doesn't want the job of also having to organise volunteers as well, either before, or during the event, as it is too much to take on. SK said she would be prepared to organise the volunteers if needed. It was agreed that for next year we would approach some local groups (scouts etc.) to see if we can get some definite promise of volunteers and if we can't by March when the Festival planning begins, we wouldn't go ahead with the Party in the Park event. **Action: SK to look into the possibilities of volunteers.**

6.1.3 As some of the costs were quite high this year and next year we probably won't be able to get as much funding from the Ward Councillors in future, it was discussed that we will also need to look at getting sponsorship from local companies to fund some costs. **Action: Group members to think of any possible companies to contact especially if they have a contact within them and pass this information on to SK. SK then to liaise with the other Parish Councillors and the clerk as to who to approach once we have a Party in the park review or planning meeting.**

6.2 LBW didn't have an update about the permanent table tennis idea, other than that she hadn't got much positive feedback from the owners of Salt, but that she would ask Sammi, the manager. KA suggested that as the Rotary had recently said that they were happy to do fund raising to benefit the park, that perhaps they could be approached to fund raise for the cost or some of the cost of the table. **Action: LBE to speak to the manager of Salt in the first instance.**

7. AOB

7.1 GS, who is the Honourable Secretary of the bowling club, raised a point about the state of the park's car park again. Although LCC had filled in some of the holes before the Festival, they had done it a little too early and it had already worn out by then causing a huge puddle. Also, because there are no lines marking parking spaces, some people park badly and then less car owners can get in there to park, causing problems when there are bowls matches or tennis tournaments on. The whole group feel very strongly that the car park needs to be urgently upgraded. They feel that the park is so nice, but the car park really lets it down. This led on to a discussion about the cost and that there could be money available to do it once Church Street is developed, although that could be some time away yet. KJ asked about whether the precept money was still being allocated for Stables Lane or if not whether that would be an option to raise funds. Also, KJ raised the point about the group previously talking about a legacy system where local people could leave a legacy which would help further maintain and develop the park into the future. **Actions: SK to raise the issue about how strongly the group feel about the car park needing to be done at the next PC meeting and to also find out about the precept money. KJ to look into how we would set up a legacy system.**

7.2 It was noted that since the developers had erected some more substantial fencing, around the Church Street development land, that the anti-social behaviour and vandalism had decreased, which a real positive.

Meeting Closed – 9.30 pm

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