

Friends of Stables Lane (FOSL) Working Group Minutes

Tuesday 5th December 2023 at 7pm. 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	No
Luke Broadbent	Yes		

Minutes

1. Jim Murison, and his colleague Iain Vernon of Wetherby and District Rotary club attended the public part of the meeting to meet the FOSL members and give an update following a recent meeting of theirs, at which they discussed two requests from the FOSL group, as follows.
 - 1.1. The possibility of fund raising for the Park to provide a permanent table tennis table. This would be estimated to cost around £2,000.00 and would suit all age groups from fairly young children right through to older adults and is both fun and great exercise. Although fund raising is not one of Rotary's main activities and when they do, it is usually for charities, they do also support local their community and will undertake fund raising if it would greatly benefit the community. Jim and Iain confirmed that they would be happy to fund raise to help with the cost of the table tennis table and would probably look at doing something in the summer.
 - 1.2. Volunteer help for the Party in the Park. As previously discussed at the last meeting, the PC and FOSL members who organise and run the Party in the Park need more volunteers on site on the day to sit on the gate, escort vendors vehicles on and off the site safely and generally be a presence and point of contact for people attending, especially as the event is growing each year. Jim and Iain confirmed that Rotary would be able to supply a good ten reliable volunteers who would do one and a half hour slots at a time – some perhaps doing multiple slots. This gives LBE the confidence to be able to consider going ahead with organising the Party in the Park event again this coming year. **Action: SK is still to contact local scouts groups to ask if they would be interested in also volunteering.**
2. Approval of last meetings minutes.

The minutes were approved.
3. Chairman's report / follow up on previous meeting points raised
 - 3.1 The Martin House Glow Walk recently held at Stables Lane had been a great success as they reported that they managed to raise over £10k so were very grateful for being able to hold the

event at Stables Lane. Local feedback was that the event was really well organised and enjoyed by all despite the weather not being great.

3.2 The play equipment matting replacement/ repair work, for which the PC are currently in the process of obtaining quotes for is most likely going to be done by way of replacing patches as and when required rather than doing a whole replacement job.

3.3 The PC's request for a yellow plastic bottle and aluminium can recycling bin is still being chased up.

3.4 The bin near allotment has now been replaced with another vandal proof bin.

3.5 The PC have taken on board that the FOSL group feel strongly about wanting pedestrian entrances wide enough for double buggies on each side of the entrance. This will be completed as part of the car park resurfacing (mentioned further in section 4.1)

3.6 The Traditional Leisure fairground company fair which they were going to hold in September had to be cancelled due to heavy rain at the start of the week and the unpredictability of further rain, as the owners didn't want to risk either getting their large vehicle stuck on the field or making a mess of the grass. They asked to hold one in October, but the PC felt that the weather could also be risky then and didn't want a repeat cancelled event so soon after the last one, so suggested they hold one in the spring instead. It was disappointing that despite being asked to, they did not remove all their posters once the event was cancelled and had sticky taped a lot of them onto bus shelters and BT PCP boxes. This would need to be reiterated if they go ahead with another fair.

3.7. St. Marys entrance was briefly discussed again as Ward Councillor Penny Stables had mentioned at a recent PC meeting that she had been talking to the acting head of St. Mary's about the possibility of an entrance to the park via (next to) the school. LBR had also said that he could approach the head teacher about this previously and as he still has a lot of regular contact with her. **Action: KA asked LBR to mention this to the head teacher in order to keep the conversation going.**

4. Operations, Administration and Finance

4.1 KA gave the group an update on the car park resurfacing situation. Quotes have been obtained from one local company so far and there has been much discussion about what would be the best option. The PC have been advised that a hard pack system is more durable than gravel – which is the same as the paths throughout the park. Parking bays could also be marked out and some marking to make it clear not to park in front of the gate, blocking access to the park. A meeting with the contractor for further discussion is going to take place, hopefully with the tennis and bowling clubs chairmen or representatives. Some members noted that an electricity cable runs along the bottom of the car park to where there is an electricity box in the hedge.

4.2 AC gave an update on the Maintenance WG group.

4.2.1 Following the last meeting KJ and SK had met to look at what boulders and logs would need to be ordered to replace the broken fencing around the nature area. We had seen that the fence was almost intact in the centre part with only the two ends near the allotment table and the far gazebo being vandalised. We came up

with a plan to modify the fence to be lower at either end, which would recycle most of the existing materials. Following our meeting, KJ then met with AC and decided that a low fence could be a trip hazard, but agreed on going back to the original plan to repair then fence as the vandalism seems to have now ceased since the developers put new metal fencing up on the land bordering the park thus putting an end to the escape route the youths took to evade being caught when the police turned up. The fence will also be strengthened with metal wire.

4.2.2 The maintenance group (now operating on the Rotary volunteer day of the 1st Monday of the month and made up of a majority of Rotary volunteers) will now cease for the winter and not restart again until Monday 4th March. However, AC will monitor things over this period in case anything needing urgent repair or work should arise. **Action: SK to ask MH to put something about this in the next PC newsletters.**

4.3 As SC and GS were not in attendance at the meeting, the brown tourist sign was not discussed, or the possibility of a contribution to be made from both the tennis and bowling clubs, as requested by the PC and neither was the application form filled out. The application fee is simply for Leeds City Council to assess whether they would approve such a sign being erected and does not cover the cost of the actual sign (which is also not known at this point). **Action: SK to email SC and GS the form and ask that they (or other suitable representatives of the tennis and bowling club) discuss with their relevant committees, whether they feel able to make a contribution towards the £125.00 application fee and to fill out the form.**

4.4 There was no update on the Legacy system for the park at this meeting as KJ is still looking into it.

5. Nature area / green spaces

5.1 The nature area grass cutting was also discussed, as the PC had agreed in a previous meeting that this could be changed on the maintenance contract. It was agreed upon for a relaxed mowing approach for the whole of the inside of the nature area, so a grass cut in May or at the latest by 1st June and then not cut again until October. Also, the grassy area in front of the fence where the benches are should not be cut short whilst the bulbs are flowering and to give enough time for the leaves to die back to feed the bulbs for the next year, so really leaving an area of 1 ½ m not being cut, but simply cutting what needs to be to keep the grass from encroaching onto the path. **Action: SK to mention this at the next PC meeting.**

5.2 Some members of the group reported that the wildflower meadow areas late summer grass cut had not been done as previously agreed and written into the contract. The grass had not been cut with a mechanical scythe, but with a lawnmower, quite close to the ground and the cut material had not been left for the seeds to fully dry out and disperse but all cleared straight away. It was generally felt that this was disappointing especially as a Green Group member had grown some plants from seed and planted them in order to increase the biodiversity. SK reported that she had spoken to Mike Gadd from the Green Group about this and that he had thought that the clerk was going to pass on his number for the

contractor to contact him to ask when the grass could be cut, but that he had not heard from him. **Action: SK to bring this to the attention of the PC in order for the problem to be resolved for the future.**

5.3 It was asked that going forward the Green Group keeps FOSL more informed of things it plans to do and when with regards to the wildflower meadow and nature areas of the park in general. **Action: SK to speak to the Green Group about this.**

5.3 KJ gave a further update about the Green Flag Award. This had previously been put to the PC, but not approved due to there being an annual renewal fee. However, KJ had spoken with Councillor Kazia Knight from Wetherby in more detail about this as Wetherby has obtained the award for Sandringham Park and she had said that our park should qualify for a free application as even though the park is on PC land, it is a community park. Some other members showed support for this idea and KJ said that at some point, a small sub group may have to be set up to work on a management plan to submit with the application. The date for applications is the end of January, so we would look at applying by January 2024, as the end of January 2023 would be too soon. **Action: SK to update the PC about this.**

6. Events and Fundraising

6.1 The permanent table tennis table and party in the park volunteers have been mentioned in point 1.1 and 1.2 and there were no further discussions around events and fund raising.

7. AOB

7.1 KJ, who is also a member of the NPAG (Neighbourhood plan action group) along with AC, gave a brief update as requested by GS. The group has held one consultation so far and will hold more in the future with the final objective being to assess the responses and feedback given by the public to decide at some point to either just slightly tweak the original plan or look at producing a new plan.

7.2 LBR reported that the developers were now going to change the plans in order to allow the old walnut tree on the site to be kept and not cut down, as it has now been recognised as an ancient tree.

7.3 KA reported that there is going to be some TV filming in the Park, as a local resident is to appear on a TV show and will be filmed enjoying themselves in their local park as part of their background story for the show.

7.4 SK informed the group that she has decided for personal reasons to step down from the PC at the end of December and therefore also as chairman of the group. SK said it had not been an easy decision to come to and the group thanked her for her efforts over the last 18 months since the group started up again after the Covid Pandemic. Although it is not known at this point who will be chairing the group, it was agreed that a further meeting date should be set.

Meeting Closed – 8.50 pm

Next Meeting 7pm Tuesday 5th March 2024, Committee room, Boston Spa Village Hall