 FoHRGE

Friends of Heathfield Recreation Ground and Environs

**Minutes: FoHRGE Full Committee Meeting May 12th 2021**

Apologies: Katie Allen;

We welcomed Hardit as a new co-opted member of the Play and Sports Committee.

Minutes of the last meeting were agreed.

Actions which still need work on them and will be carried forward:

**Manju** Spring Clean

**Jan and Katie** submit their ideas to the sport and play committee

**Manju Katie** youth contacts for Pavilion consultation

**Joan** recruit secretary

**Rory** photograph competition

Financial report.

**Action updates after meeting** Joan has asked **Rory and Jon** to agree a format to use. **Manju and Rory** agree general funding request template and add to the shared drive.

Process agreed.

**Pavilion Report May 2021**

As you will be able to see from the minutes of the latest Pavilion committee meeting, Ranald has done a sterling job of getting funding agreed from the council to pay for plans, consultation and planning approval. In addition we have received from Steve Marshall (sports), and Yvonne Kheller (parks) their list of what the Pavilion needs to include. These are key requirements which guarantee they will support our application with planning.

It is worth noting that Steve Marshall is negotiating with planning on our behalf to ensure we include what they can approve.

Once Steve confirms planning feedback, Ranald will instruct the architects so plans can be completed and submitted to preplanning.

Park Pavilion planning in Richmond has a history of delay and raising costs. We are working very closely with the council so we can avoid these issues and deliver a future proofed Pavilion which will fulfil the council and community requirements.

Full council sponsored community consultation is likely to take place late summer. The community consultation will be key to show support and demand to feed into grant applications.

The consultations are not expected to be complicated consultation we give our community toilets and a cafe, and sports groups changing rooms they all will be ecstatic. This is clear from our publicity via our social media which has gone down a storm which a huge show of support and an offer of professional help.

Once we get to preplanning stage we can start planning the public consultation which hopefully will include play and sport committee items.

**Manju Question**: Why are we including showers when youth teams do not use them? **Answer:** The council want a future proofed sports provision and showers are needed for adult teams of most sports.

**Manju Question**: When / How did we agree the architect. **Answer:** The budget for the architect is £2,500-£3,000. This very significantly limits the options to architects who will provide pro-bono work as cost for a job this size would normally be about £15,000. We had two architects who offered pro-bono work, both were good but the one chosen was an offer from an architect in a practice. Using an architect from a practice means the 3-4 years of work is protected by the rest of the practice.

**Play and Sport Committee update**

Committee members: Jon Rowles, Ruth Ward, Sally Paveley and Hardit Saluja

The first meeting of the P&S Committee took place on the 23rd February, we discussed the existing provision for play and sports, the current situation regarding funding and refurbishment and the role of this committee within the context of the wider FoHRGE group. The details of the meeting are contained within the minutes and the main action points are summarised here:

The P&S Committee would benefit from somebody who could bring a sports and fitness perspective as none of the current members have much experience in this area. **Action** P&S Committee create an ad and we will advertise for some sports knowledge

It was felt that improving provision should involve community needs and preferences and it was hoped that the main committee would prioritise the establishment of the user group for this purpose.

**Action** Main committee has a list of those that will be contacted for consultations which this committee can use. If it is a focus group you would like it is a different proposition and would be worth you defining your needs – such as numbers from where, skills / knowledge needed, how you would contact them etc. etc. Need to be definite on what you need so when you recruit someone they will be committed to what they have signed up to.

The P&S Committee (with approval from the main FoHRGE Committee) will bring together the necessary consultation and research to draw up a list of immediate proposals for Parks that is realistic and hits our priorities. We should also keep a long list of good ideas to follow up in future.

**Approved.**

We agreed to feed ideas about the use of the Rec extension back to the main FoHRGE and Environment Committee and suggest engaging with Parks as soon as possible in the hope of influencing what gets into the public consultation.

Following the meeting Jon Rowles has drawn up a Play & Sports Vision Plan detailing equipment in various areas of the Rec with suggestions for improvement. There was also an ad hoc meeting between SP, RW, HS & Joan Gibson on Ellerman Green where Joan summarised the achievements of the FoHRGE to date and made some useful suggestions about how best to develop our relationship with Parks.

The next meeting of the Play and Sports Committee will be on 19.05.21.

**Environment Committee Update**

Environment committee has no minutes to share as we have not had a formal meeting yet.

We have however, been very busy with a number of actions:

- Heathfield school now has a new hedge

- We have replenished Heathfield school planters and held a planting day with the pupils. Planting with primary school children is always chaotic, mucky and fun.

- Having received the Local fund grant to rewild the greens in woodlawn estate and at the end of Gostling Road, we now have volunteer teams of 15+ working on the green in Woodlawn Estate and 6+ working on the green at the end of Gostling Road.

- Two very successful plant swaps have been held on the Woodlawn Estate Green at the request of Ruth and a member of the volunteer team Liz. The volunteer group are planning more events on this green.

- Cllr Coombs has asked us to consider two other greens at Argyle Avenue for rewilding in the future, and we have had a request for another one in the Cobbett Road Estate.

**Chairs update May 2021**

As you can see from the committee reports, the friends group goes from strength to strength.

We are a small group managing to make a significant impact to the rec and surrounding area.

Our following is growing: 90 on our email list, 330+ following us on FB, growing committee, about 20 volunteers signed up to the work on the greens, and an offer of professional help with the Pavilion to add to Ranald’s help.

Our message is positive about improvements, being in control of the area you live in, enjoying the area you live in and meeting fellow residents.

Use of the rec is increasing in part due to our existence giving a focal point for resident ideas such as Food for Thought and Heathfield school PTA spring trail, but also because of our care in making it a safe and inviting place to be. This includes the more mundane actions like litter picking and dealing with dog mess. But we also supported such groups as WW to extend their football season by a month, and give residents the backing and belief to demand improvements such as fixes to the noisy chair, being consulted on changes or RHP clearing up after themselves.

Our local residents are getting more assertive and creative. This will bring even more improvements.

The rec was going through a spate of ASB, with young people in cars and motorbikes turning up causing havoc, and later evening small groups of people interested in arson and general noise nuisance.

It is difficult to get people to report the issues in a manner which gets them dealt with quickly but we are making progress via our report it message.

People are starting to get used to calling 999 to get the issue stopped at the time.

It is then important to ensure our SNT and Parks know about the trend by also emailing them with the details.

The next step is to encourage those who did not call 999 but witnessed the issue to report using MET online ASB site. These reports do go to our SNT and are likely to provide additional information to the earlier report.

We continue with our report it campaign. All members of the friends group also need to follow this process for reporting issues as well as encouraging local residents to do the same. It is making a difference and appears to have stopped the current spate of ASB very quickly.

This is the enforcement side of controlling any issues. **Action** As requested by Sally and Ruth we will contact youth services and ask for outreach work at the rec.

Our lottery support is slowly growing which has put us in the position of being able to afford our public liability insurance with cash spare.

Jon has received a request from Graeme Wood – chair of Whitton Business Association (WBA) – they would like to start including community groups within the WBA and run events in the two Whitton Parks. 2022 in Murray Park looks to already be in the planning stage, and they would like to run one on the rec in 2023.

Can we put some thought into this. Although I want to always support the WBA and have personally volunteered for the events in Whitton High Street, it is something we need to go into with our eyes open.

Points I would think about are:

We are a small group achieving a lot – working with the WBA would likely move the focus from our little bit of Whitton, and take our time away from our specific community.

2023 is likely the build year for the Pavilion so may not be the year for a WBA event on the rec, but this we can discuss with the WBA.

The year we run a WBA event on the rec will need to be clear of any other actions due to the workload.

What questions / thoughts do you have?

I would suggest one person becomes the contact point for the WBA and it would be a sizeable amount of work. Who would like to take this on? **Update** no-one volunteered for this role.

**Action** Send in thoughts about the WBA proposition

Ideas were suggested for people we could recruit to do this role.

Discussions around the following:

- Target Teachers – feedback is they are unlikely to want to take on a sizeable volunteer role for a park they only work next to;

- Target School PTA members – we already have one on the committee and work closely with Heathfield PTA. PTAs are already groups of volunteers who tend to put a lot of of their time into volunteering for their school;

- Give out FoHRGE information on volunteer days inviting them to join the committee **Action** Sally is creating the leaflet for this

- Recruit members to take on these roles. Joan updated friends members do not run projects, but **Action** Manju to specify a recruitment campaign for members for committee consideration. This to include positions and work needed to manage the members, their responsibilities, resources needed like leaflets (with prices) and how to run the campaign.

Finally a reminder I will be stepping down as Chair by latest October at the AGM. I will be happy to remain as chair of the Pavilion and Environment Committee.

Status of the Friends Group and constitution has had no work done on it as we have not yet recruited a secretary. Once we get planning permission for the Pavilion we will need to own the lease to apply for grants. This is likely to be done via forming a Pavilion Trust CIC which will be separate from the friends group. We still need expertise to help us organise the Pavilion Trust and improvements to our constitution. **Action** We will therefore, update the ad to explain our needs in more detail and advertise again.

**Newsletter**

Pavilion update, Environmental work on greens, Environmental work at Heathfield school, Plant swap days Joan

Report it Joan

Rec Extension Joan

Rec Repairs Joan

Lottery Same as last Newsletter

**AOB**

Concerns were raised about cycling and scootering in the gated play area. **Action** P&S committee to raise with parks – possibly in a meeting we can arrange with the parks team to discuss work towards the community fund, or via an email request.

Jon asked for new bins at the two entrances to Heathfield school.

A general discussion around there are two bins in this area already and most of the litter there is not caused by Heathfield school as it is mostly MacDonalds, Vodka bottles and drinks cans – alI things primary school children do not consume. Bins are purposely located away from this area by Parks as they would be located next to seats making sitting in the seats and going into the leafy entrances of Heathfield school smelly and unpleasant.

In general there are more than enough bins at Heathfield rec (7) and they are never full despite litter left around seats, play areas, the chair and other favourite picnic areas at the rec. The two bins next to the Pavilion may be filled by Food for Thought on food distribution days, but they are emptied daily.

There have been two incidences of littering by Heathfield parents, but this has been resolved via school newsletters.

MacDonalds packaging is excessive. **Action** Joan write to MacDonalds asking them to reduce their packaging.

**Action** display anti-littering posters at the rec with the caveat the anti-dog fouling posters are not having a lot of affect and anti-littering posters will be unlikely to influence the current litters.