



Friends of Valley Gardens

Harrogate's Award-Winning Park

President: Martin Fish

Minutes of the meeting held 21 July 2011

Present: J Blayney, H McCallum, T Sissons, P Blayney, D Smeaton, M Smeaton, B Bentley, B Stone, J Peachman, B Exall, M Birkinshaw, R Henson, S Collier, P Collier, P McLaughlin, L Bright-McCallum, N Hughes

ACTION

1. **Apologies for absence** – J Clark, P Kilburn, J Gardner, A Calvert, M Fish
2. **Minutes of the meeting held 26 May 2011** – confirmed as an accurate record.
3. **Matters Arising** (that were not agenda items)

Minute 4.2 Police report – further details regarding incidents were provided.

4. Events Update

4.1 Tea Dance

45 tickets had been sold giving a profit to FOVG of £248.80.

The next tea dance is scheduled for 22 September at the Cairn Hotel. Tickets at a cost of £10 to include tea and cake. Tickets and fliers to be produced. NH

Stressed that all members should attempt to publicise this event and sell tickets. ALL

4.2 40's Day

A profit to the group of £1205.85 was achieved.

The day was deemed a success even though it was not a monetary one taking into account the time/effort that was put in. The Advertiser gave very good coverage, a full page the following week with excellent photographs. The membership was increased. The increased awareness of our existence was a great plus. There was a definite shortage of volunteers to help set up and dismantle which resulted in much pressure on those present.

An issue regarding the uncertain weather forecast had resulted in many stall holders requesting to be moved undercover, i.e., under the colonnades, but this had proved unsatisfactory as many visitors were not aware of their presence at the event. There was a lack of signage to the colonnade stands, on our part. None the less the Pickering 40s Group are hoping to come next year.

A "thank you" get together had been held with feedback received and agreement that a further date be scheduled which is now booked for Sunday 10 June 2012. The Sun Pavilion has been booked for undercover stall holders, cost £425. Sunday was thought to be a better option than Saturday as we would be able to have the bandstand for the full day.

Publicity to be prepared and distributed widely. NH/ALL

Agreed that there will be no fairground at this events.

Hales Bar will be working with us and supporting the event. Thanks to them.

Simon Roberts, who has a range of experience of 40's events elsewhere, will act as advisor.

Question raised as to the popularity of a 1940's theme. Commented at the 40's theme is very popular and has a huge following with events held countrywide and further.

Members were requested to submit suggestions and ideas for the forthcoming open day and also a plea made for additional helpers.

4.3 Big Picnic

Noted that this is a family event run by Friends of Harrogate Hospital who have sponsors. FOVG were present promoting our work. Suggested that at next year's event, the Old Magnesia Well Pump Room be opened for the public.

4.4 National Play Day (3 August)

Attractions required attracting children and families.
Volunteers need to staff stand.

HM
ALL

4.5 Quintessential Evening

Thanks to P Stretton for his magnificent efforts with this very successful event which raised over £630. Peter sold 60 tickets and publicised the event. Discussion's as to whether a similar event with a festive theme could be held later in the year.

HM

4.6 Harrogate Autumn Flower Show

Martin Fish proposed to the Flower Show Committee , that FOVG be the chosen charity 2011 to collect donations at the three exits on the dates of the flower show, 16/17/18 September 1 pm to 5.30. Members expressed their gratitude at being given this opportunity. Volunteers required, at least 2 per exit.

ALL

4.7 Heritage Open Days

FOVG have registered with National Heritage to open the Old Magnesia Well Pump Room on 9/10/11 September 12 noon – 4 pm. Volunteers needed.

ALL

4.8 Waitrose (Addendum)

FOVG is one of three selected charities for September. £1000 is allocated for the three charities. The proceeds are divided proportionately according to the number of green discs donated by the public into their preferred charity. The discs can be collected at the checkout to customers.

5. Treasurer's Report

A total in excess of £7k has been raised to date with a bank balance of £4k.

6. Membership

Membership stands at over 80. It fell after those joining, to express their interest in the skateboard project did not renew this year. Following the 40s Day and summer events we are now over 80, higher than before. Membership is based on paid members. Each family membership and each individual membership is recorded as '1.'

It was confirmed that regardless of joining date, all memberships are due for renewal 1 January annually. Standing order payments to be encouraged where possible.

7. Events publicity and marketing

Posters and fliers to be prepared for Tea Dance and 1940's day.
Quiz night to be pursued.

NH
HM

For all events – all members are requested to publicise.

ALL

Consideration to be given to opening of the Old Magnesia Well Building for Halloween and/or Santa's Grotto.

JB

Face book page now established and maintained with up to date information.

8. Old Magnesia Well Pump Room update

David Collier of Harrogate Photographic Society has a number of relevant photographs which have been archived and could be produced into a book. Some have been displayed at Open Events.

JB

An idea of Christmas cards and / or calendar was suggested.

JB

Quotes for building works have been received via HBC and TS / JB have met with M Coston HBC to consider. These which have resulted in a £500 reduction from the first quotes received if the same contractor is employed to do several jobs.

An application is being made to the Harry Bolland Trust.

A further application of up to £3k is being made to the Community Trust which will be considered during September.

Further applications are consider being made to Wren and Awards for All, Your Heritage Fund.

Planting plans will be available during August, after which landscaping will be costed. Requested that these plans be put on the website.

NH

JB is meeting with Citizens Advice Bureau to obtain advice regarding setting up the groups as a “not for profit” organisation.

JB

9. Rockery Garden Restoration

This will remain on the agenda.

10. Gardening Volunteers

NZ Garden has been weeded and mulched. More volunteers are welcome contact Tony Sissons. Firm dates and times are not set but TS contacts volunteers with plans as necessary. B Bentley tends to the dahlias but would appreciate extra help.

(R Henson left the meeting at this point)

11. Report from HBC

11.1 Skate Park

Problems with cycling through the park to reach the Skate Park. The Police are addressing this but have no powers to stop. Signs are in place which clearly state “no cycling”. The By-Law in place is informal. An incident report is pending from the police. John Jakes to provide. There is a litter issue and additional bins are to be provided and those currently in situation may be relocated.

Ground improvements are in place to turf some areas.

11.2 Sun Parlour repairs and refurbishment

Works will commence next week.

11.3 Play Area

Additional picnic benches are imminent.

The paddling pool is filled May bank holiday to August bank holiday. Suggested that signs be situated indicating these timescales to users.

TM

11.4 Bio-Diversity works

A Wildlife Haven Declaration has been signed. There was no further update on future proposals.

11.5 Vandalism

Raised that graffiti has been placed on the electricity box at the rear of the Old Magnesia Well Pump Room. Requested that this be removed.

11.6 Cycling in the Valley Gardens

Covered under 11.1

11.7 In Bloom

The Valley Gardens were judged on 20 July and results will be known on 20 September.

12. Questions from the Community

12.1 Raised flower beds – “can these be provided to enable park users in wheelchairs to participate in volunteer gardening”? Noted that there would be cost involved and no plans are currently in place, but, should resources become available and the need is there, then consideration could be given.

12.2 BBQ's and Picnics in the area above the Frisbee Golf area – are these permitted?

The answer is no, there is a by-law in place and HBC discourage. The Park Ranger polices this but he has no enforcement powers. A proposal was made that provision for BBQ facilities such as those available in Australia, be considered. HBC have proposed this facility previously but it has not been welcomed. There is an out of hours telephone number to contact and this is placed around the park but reiterated as 0845 300 6091.

13. Any Other Business

13.1 Newsletter

A quarterly newsletter is now being prepared and sent out.

13.2 Speakers

Suggested that a speaker be considered to talk about Dahlias.

14. Date of Next Meeting

Thursday 29 September 2011, 7 pm, Harlow Hill Club