



Friends of Valley Gardens "Harrogate"

**Harrogate's Award-Winning Park
Charity No: 1148369**

President: Martin Fish

Minutes of General Meeting held at St Peter's Church on Thursday 9 May 2013

Present: Jane Blayney (Chairman), Patrick Kilburn, Jim Clark, Robert Grange, Helen McCallum, Des Smeaton, Jon Collins, Anne Broadbent, Barbara Stone, Betty Bentley, Liz Chidlow, Tony Sissons, Richard Dobson, Simon Collier, Paula Collier, Sue Wood, Hilary Clark, Anne Grange, Neil Hughes, Peter Blayney.

Apologies: Liz Mann, Trish McLaughlin, Jenny Travena, Jane Gardner, Jenny Kimpton, Martin Fish.

Minutes of last meeting: These were approved as a correct record.

Matters arising: None.

Report from HBC and community questions: see the attached from PK.

Exterior of OMWPR: Painting of original wood was needed after some joinery repairs have been completed to the doors. Quotations are being sought. The painting could be done by members and TS would procure appropriate paint. There were some minor works necessary to conclude other aspects dealt with by contractors.

Interior of OMWPR: There had been no further developments. In order to facilitate funding applications further formal quotations are required on headed paper. NH will pursue.

Drainage, paving and surrounding garden: RG reported that the specification for the drainage and paving had been agreed. The invitations to tender had gone out and the preferred tender had been accepted. There had been delays but this part of the project could now proceed and the order had been placed today by HBC. There would be a ten week lead time and the work would take approximately three weeks at a cost of £10,000+. Sufficient York stone had been secured from a mill in Lancashire at a cost of £4,000 and SC was storing it. As a safety measure, stone bollards would be installed at each corner of the building at a cost of £1,200. This would be borne by HBC for which the Chairman expressed thanks. PK will speak to TM about the lead piping connection to the OMWPR. RG would ensure that ducting would be positioned beneath the paving.

JB advised that Consultants Golders had yet to report back with design plans incorporating bulb and sensory gardens and a rockery. The Yorkshire Garden Trust had given £1,000 for the Peat Garden and are advising on suitable plants for the rockery. FOVG can apply for £1,000 from the Duke of York community fund independently and if we can involve another group, a share of £5,000. JB was in touch with Horticap. PK counselled caution regarding longevity of care and intensity of maintenance of plants.

Volunteer gardeners: TS reported that FOVG gardeners had been busy in several areas and tidiness round the OMWPR was being targeted for the 1940s Day. The group had been joined by member LC.

Treasurer's report: AG reported a bank balance of £15,493 plus a donation of £250 just received. Of this, £11,173 was earmarked which included an allowance for safety fencing during operations. This left £4,570; however, it included a sum of £2,200 which belonged to the HBC Playground fund. An application had been made to the Inland Revenue for Gift Aid status.

Membership: PB advised that assessing the precise number of members was difficult due to payments being made at different times of the year and people forget if they do not pay by standing order. JC offered to advise on a computer system that could facilitate monitoring. All were reminded that the subscription was now £10 per individual or £15 per family, preferably paid by standing order and Gift Aided where applicable. Members were invited to recruit at least one new member this year, since, even if these did not actively participate, their subscription was still useful. A brief discussion indicated that members would not like to move towards a renewal date of 1 January. The new membership form would be amended. It was suggested that not everyone may wish to be considered as "a member" as this could imply that they are obliged to take an active part and this was an impediment to recruitment. Instead they could be invited to become "a friend" and make a donation. This would be considered. The long-awaited note for interested parties was in production for issue on a trial basis.

Elections: a) **Trustee:** Nominations had been received from JC and PB. Both were unanimously elected.

b) **Secretary:** There were no nominations. HM offered assistance. Thanks were recorded for all her work over the last three years.

Funding: JB listed the following:

Freemasons – news awaited.

Yorkshire Building Society – are providing help on stalls on the 1940's Day. AG will liaise with them to establish a method of collecting, accounting for and bagging takings.

ASDA - £50 had been raised.

Marks & Spencer - Bagpacking had raised £435 net. Consideration would be given to a Saturday. More helpers were needed. This has been booked again for Friday 20 December.

Sir George Martin Fund - £500 received.

Royal Horticultural Society – had rejected our application on the grounds of volume of applications and that we didn't have enough voluntary gardeners.

Applications pending – There were several in the pipeline. More quotations for the work needed internally were necessary if we were to be able to apply to banks and building societies. AB suggested applying to the Charles and Elsie Sykes Fund and the Stanley and Audrey Burton charity.

BB would obtain details of funding available from the Army Foundation College from her contact Jill Dunnington.

JB would be meeting the Police Commissioner to explore Community Funding possibilities.

Duke of York patronage: AG and JB had attended a seminar where they had been able to compare notes with others, mostly from larger and health organisations.

Events update: 19 May - **JB** and **PB** would be taking part in the Nidderdale Community 20th anniversary Sponsored Walk (8 mile version). So far £95 had been raised. More sponsors welcome.

19 May – Gardens Harrogate Open Day – OMWPR to open. Volunteers required to assist **AG** and **RG**.

27 May – 110th Anniversary of Royal Hall. **JB** and **PB** manning FOVG stand. Volunteers required to assist – contact **JB**.

16 June – 1940's Open Day. Plans were well advanced. Roy Hampson had written an article for Yorkshire Ridings. **NH** needed eight more helpers for the food stall. **JC** and **BB** volunteered. **PB** had spoken to Mike Middleton about the bollard blocking access by the New Zealand garden. **SC** will see if it can be freed. Sue Clarke had offered to make some sandwiches but would not attend the event. **NH** advised that Jackie would help. So far stall space to £765 had been sold. The possibility of a two day event next year had been discussed and 14/15 June considered.

7 July – Big Picnic. **SC** would confirm the date.

7 August – Play Day. FOVG involvement possible.

12-15 September – Heritage Open Days. FOVG have registered.

Any other business: **NH** advised funding possibilities via the Beer Festival. Applications need to be in by February 2014. 25 charities are involved. **KW** has the contact.

Thought needs to be given to capitalising on the Tour de France visit to Harrogate next year.

AG asked for clarification on FOVG's title. Was it Friends of Valley Gardens "Harrogate" or Friends of Valley Gardens, Harrogate? It was agreed that the latter was correct. Tabards had been ordered and would be ready shortly.

JB and **KW** had considered producing notelets for sale but it was felt that they would not attract enough profit.

Date of next meeting: Thursday 8 August at 7.30 pm at St Peter's Church.

Chairman: Jane Blayney (01423) 505231 Vice-Chairman: Neil Hughes (01423) 504390 Treasurer: Anne Grange
Secretary: Helen McCallum (01423) 507208 Acting Admin Officer: Peter Blayney (01423) 505231
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