

## FRIENDS OF VALLEY GARDENS, HARROGATE

### Minutes of General Meeting held at St Peter's Church on 8 August 2013

**Present:** Jane Blayney, Chairman, Des Smeaton, Liz Mann, Jenny Travena, Brenda Exall, Derek Evans, Pamela Delahay-Walmsley, Tony Sissons, Jim Clark, Barbara Stone, Sophie Binns, Robert Grange, Anne Grange, Peter Blayney

**Apologies:** David and Jean Luery, Jon Collins, Bridget Boden, Helen McCallum, Martin Fish, Pat Kilburn, Trish McLaughlin, Neil Hughes, Kim Wilson, Simon and Paula Collier, Mark Coston.

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

**Matters arising:** None.

**Report from HBC:** None. An issue was raised over excessively loud music at the skateboard park recently. **JB** will advise **PK**. **AG** advised no complaints from Ellis House.

**Exterior of OMWPR:** **RG** reported that contractor Harrogate Paving had suspended operations after three weeks due to holidays. Work would start on 12 August but was not expected to be completely finished by the end of that week. Extra fencing hire costs would be discussed with Harrogate Paving. Yorkshire Water had passed the drainage work. Thanks were expressed to **RG** for his management.

**Interior of OMWPR:** Headed quotations were still awaited from **NH** for computer materials, display boards, pump, sink, stove, cupboard/seating units and lighting. Estimates for the windows have been received from **MC**. It was understood that Harrogate Glazing had visited the site.

**Drainage:** **MC** to sign off.

**Gardening group:** **TS** reported that two extra Wednesdays had been worked to maximise appearances for the In Bloom judging visit on 19 July. A stall had been set up to show FOVG activities and history. **JB** provided the judges with copies of planting suggestions given to consultants. Results are due in September in the form of certificated commendations but no money. **JB** quoted the results of the survey – 73% supported the published re-design. 80% supported the clearing to date with a further 73% in favour of further clearance of trees. All but one questioned supported the siting of the paths. One wanted more hard surface paths. Wood chip was adequate for the path from the well head. There was strong support for the Sensory Garden and for all-year bulbs within a woodland setting. **JB** had sent planting suggestions to the consultant. **MF** is consulting Newby Hall which has recently restored a rockery, bearing in mind the need for minimal maintenance. **TS** will prepare an article for publication immediately the York results are known. **TS** will co-ordinate a team to paint the four metal bollards black with a gold stripe.

Whilst all concerned are anxious to proceed, it is apparent that **PK** will not authorise further tree clearance unless more funding is available to complete the re-planting. Because the results of much of the funding applications are not expected until September, concern was expressed that this could jeopardise the Peat Garden slot in HBC's tree clearance timetable and put it back another year.

**Treasurer's report:** **AG** reported a bank balance of £18,711 at the end of July. £11,173 would be due to Harrogate Paving but this could increase due to minor extra piping works required. **RG** would negotiate the final costings including the extra fencing needed. Including Yorkshire Gardens Trust's £1,000 (since advised secure over 2013) this would leave £6,000 in the bank to go towards the interior of the OMWPR. **AG** advised that FOVG's application for Gift Aid status had been granted. **PB** would advise members at the next mailing. It is now possible to donate to FOVG by texting **FOVG13£5 70070**. This facility will be added to collecting buckets and should appear on new banners. The banking mandate with HSBC required amendment. **NH** and **HM** were to be deleted and **JC** and **PB** were to be added. This was proposed by **DS**, seconded by **JT** and carried unanimously.

**Membership report:** **PB** reported that seven new members had joined since the last meeting. **JC** had produced an excellent new "Friends" form and would be working with **PB** to streamline membership records employing a series of automatic letters/reminders on the system. It was difficult under present circumstances to tell just how many paid up Friends there were.

**Funding applications:** **JB** reported that five more had been lodged, the decisions on four of which were due in September and one in November. Harry Bolland Trust had granted £475 for the disabled entrance. Yorkshire Garden Trust had granted £1,000, carried forward from 2012, allocated to the rockery.

**Events update:**

- 19 May Nidderdale sponsored walk. £155 raised.
- 19 May In Bloom event "Gardens Harrogate" in Valley Gardens. £115 Raised.
- 16 June 1940s Open Day. £5,300 raised. 20,844 entered Valley Gardens.
- 19 June George Dunnington, former gardener 1950s. Talk.
- 29 June 110<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Royal Hall. £108 raised.
- 7 July Big Picnic. £18 raised.
- 7 August Play Day. Did not attend due to OMWPR not accessible and not enough volunteers.
- 18 August Allotment Day. OMWPR not available due to paving work.
- 13 – 15 September Heritage Open Day. Volunteers needed. Offers to **JB**.
- 25 – 27 October FOVG Display in St Peter's Church precinct.
- 26 October Refreshment Day at St Peter's Church. Volunteers needed. Offers to **JB**.
- 20 December Bag Packing at Marks & Spencer. Volunteers needed. Offers to **JB**.
- 28 June 2014 Dance Festival. Echo 42 staging.
- 29 June 2014 1940s Open Day. **KW** leading with **JC**.
- 5/6 July 2014 Tour de France. **KW** acting on FOVG's behalf.
- 2014 Beer Festival. Crown Hotel. **NH** attempting to exploit for FOVG's benefit.

**Any other business:** **JB** had written to the Leader of the Council, Mr Sampson to request a waiver of the Sun Pavilion charges next year. This has been forwarded to HIC. Failing support, sponsorship will be sought.

The 1940s Open Day had attracted three pages in Yorkshire Ridings magazine and much publicity in the Harrogate Advertiser both before and after the event. The event had been broadcast live on Harrogate Hospital Radio. **JB** had written an article for the Museum's promotion of Heritage Open day and another for the Duchy Residents Association. Articles had appeared in both St Peter's and St Wilfrid's Church magazines.

Introducing herself, Sophie Binns, who runs the deck chair business in front of the bandstand, is hoping to obtain a licence for next year. Sophie feels the business is gaining ground.

It was suggested that FOVG events are advertised in "What's On" and that non-members should be encouraged to attend General Meetings which could feature a speaker such as Malcolm Neesam, or a shortened version of **JB**'s talk given to other community groups. **TS** also has a Powerpoint presentation.

**AG** had ordered 10 green FOVG overprinted tabards which had been well received.

**Date of next meeting:** Thursday 14 November at 7.30 pm in St Peter's Church Brostoff Community Room.