



Friends of Valley Gardens

Harrogate's Award-Winning Park

President: Martin Fish

Minutes of the meeting held 17 November 2011

Present: J Blayney, N Hughes, J Clark, B Bentley, B Stone, J Travena, B Exall, J Peachman, P Blayney, P Kilburn, R Dobson, T Sissons, H McCallum, L Bright-McCallum, P Walmsley, D Evans, M Birkenshaw, D Smeaton, M Smeaton, A Bailey, D Bune, S MacKenzie, S Collier, L Clarke, S Clarke, R Fancekiss, A Grange, R Grange, J Ryan, J Allen, E Barclay

1. Welcome to those present

2. **Apologies for absence** – M Fish, A Broadbent, D Elding, A Elding, A Calvert, R Smith, S Wood, M Mann, B Nash, R Henson, A Henson, P Collier, S Leigh, P Leigh, J Gardner, M Holleman, T Holleman, T Hannula

3. **Minutes of the meeting held 29 September 2011** – approved as an accurate record.

4. Matters Arising

Minute 8 Waitrose Green Disc raised us £425.00. Green Disc community groups are invited to a Christmas Shopping Evening to be held on 8th December.

Minutes 6.7/8 The discrepancy minuted regarding amounts raised at Pat Clarke's Open Garden was due to a contribution having been made of £100. Total amount raised therefore was £212.00.

Minute 6.9 The Halloween night did not take place due to another event in the park on the same evening.

Minute 7.2 Information leaflet / card to distribute to members of the public – a card has been produced.

Minute 9.1 Fundometer – under manufacture.

Minute 10 Gardening Volunteer Pack – pending for 2012.

Minute 11.9 No Cycling Signs from the Pinewoods footpath – confirmed that these are present on the pavements.

5. Police Report

The Secretary gave a verbal report on behalf of PC G Frostick. PC Frostick is happy to attend any meeting where the Police can be useful or assist in a specific problem but resources are stretched and prioritizing a must. Written responses will be given where appropriate. PB requested statistics on ASBO's issued in Valley Gardens. HM

6. Events Update

6.1 **40's Day Update** – a working party has been established and has commenced initial planning. S Roberts is contacting re-enactment groups to ascertain interest in participating. Costs of stalls will be £40 commercial and £15 non-commercial. The Sun Pavilion is booked for the day at a cost of £425.00. Potential stall holders will be contacted shortly for pre-bookings. It was stressed that the 2012 event will be twice as big and helpers are needed on the day.

6.2 **Fish and Chip Quiz Night** – 44 bookings to date for the event scheduled for 26 November.

6.3 **Santa's Grotto** – this will take place in the Old Magnesia Well Pump Room Building on Saturday 17 December, 11.30 – 3.30, with stands outside the building selling Christmas treats and mulled wine. Again volunteers are needed to assist.

6.4 **Marks and Spencer** – FOVG volunteers will be staffing checkouts to bag pack, on Friday 16th December where donations can be collected. 12.5% raised goes to M&S, the remainder to us. Again, volunteers needed. Most customers prefer to pack their own bags apparently but do donate.

7. Treasurer's Report

Current balance in bank is £9552.55 with £425 from Waitrose and £1K from Harry Bolland Trust pending.

Reported that FOVG are acting as "bankers" for public contributions towards the rebuild of the fort in the Children's Play Area. £2100 raised to date.

8. Membership Update

8.1 **Nominations** were received for the posts of Administrative Officer, and, Marketing/Publicity Officer.

Administrative Officer - Sue Clarke (temporary) – approved.

Marketing/Publicity Officer – Liam Clarke (temporary) – approved

The Chair requested that the Executive be extended and the following were approved:-

B Exall, P Walmsley and D Evans.

8.2 **Membership Fees** – a paper was considered proposing that membership fees be increased 2012 in order to cover rising administrative costs. The proposals were: £10 per individual, £15 per family, and £20 per organisation.

Some present expressed concern that this increase may put people of joining and rejoining. It was noted that the increases equate to less than £1 per month and is necessary to cover increased costs of correspondence to the growing membership. After debate the proposal was put forward by P Blayney, seconded by B Bentley and the majority in favour. Revised membership forms will be issued for 2012. SC

9 Projects

9.1 Old Magnesia Well Pump Room Building

Quotes have been received for proposed inside works. Stressed that a design is required prior to pricing up. It is proposed that the wood paneling is stripped of existing paint and refurbished. It is also hoped that the second side door can be blocked up with stone.

9.2 Rockery Garden Restoration – this will remain on the agenda although no progress has been made nor will be at the moment.

10. Play Area

An update was given on replacement of the fort. This will cost circa £50K and insurers will pay out £47.7K leaving a shortfall of £5K. £2.1K has already been paid into the public account being managed by FOVG, £2K of which was kindly donated by Menwith Heartbeat Ladies Forum. Four providers have been invited to provide proposals and these will be available to view as part of the consultation process, in the Sun Pavilion on 8 December 2 – 6.30 pm. Two schools have been invited to provide their input.

11. Gardening Volunteer Group update

The gardening volunteers meet on alternate Wednesdays. There are currently 11 on the list and on average 5 turn up. TS requested more to help out.

12. Report from Harrogate Borough Council

12.1 Plans for new Sports Pavilion and Toilets

There will be three public toilets (M/F/D) replicating the current arrangements, to also include sale of refreshments. It is proposed that planning officers will consider within the next 2 – 3 weeks, after which there will be an 8 week target with an opening in May 2012, and funding is available. The old games and parks hut will be closed and all services moved to the new. It will also act as a base for life attendant and worker. The old “hut” will be a new mess for gardening staff and the existing mess will be closed. Longer term it is hoped that this area can be turned into a pay and display car park resulting in income for the park. Members were given the opportunity to see the plans complete consultation forms

13. Pinewoods / RHS

Jim Clark gave background to the proposals to supply a pathway, which has been approved, and plans to lease part of the Pinewoods to RHS to service and maintain. PK and PB had different views as to the siting of the path. There are also proposals to build housing where the temporary car park is presently sited. Concerns were expressed that such plans in a special landscape area could lose the “Green Wedge Status” and the general future of the Pinewoods. After much discussion it was agreed that the Chairman would in consultation with JC make representation on FOVG’s behalf. Members of FOVG who are also members of Pinewoods Group expressed disappointment at any part of the Pinewoods being leased. There were also concerns that the some user groups felt they had not been consulted. It also appears that information in the public domain is vague and varied. The Chairman will contact the Secretary of the Pinewoods Conservation Group and HBC stating that FOVG members would like further details so that these can be relayed factually to our membership.

14. Questions from the Community

Todd Hannula wished to raise concerns regarding underage drinking in the park, and park opening hours. Unfortunately he had to give last minute apologies so this item is deferred to the next meeting.

15. Any Other Business

15.1 Photo of the Month – this was started in 2009 and it is planned to revive it. Submit photos to the Vice Chairman. J Allen kindly agreed to take photos of the park and will meet with the Chairman to progress this.

16. Date of Next Meeting - Thursday 19 January 2012, 7.30 pm

Helen McCallum
FOVG Secretary