

**Annual General Meeting
Sunday 26th February 2017: Greenbank Church Hall**

Committee Present:

Karen Young, Alan Fleming, Ian Burnside, Dianne Savage, Mandy Drake, Roger West, Hugh Cowan

Committee Apologies: Alan Smith, Alan Silcock, Linda Bendle

There were 20 Friends present in total, letters of apology had been received from several other Friends who were unable to join us.

A walk through the park was not possible in view of the inclement weather so we had a 'virtual walk' which acted as a report on the achievements of the last year and plans for the future.

1. Virtual walk around the park

New community garden at main Greenbank Crescent entrance:

We now have the design and will apply to Tesco and other organisations for a grant to carry out the planting. Support from friends will be needed for planting and maintenance, particularly in the first year.

Scout path needs maintenance work

Explorers will be working on this in May.

Infrastructure issues over last year

Broadband cable damage has naturalised now, but there has been some damage from forestry trucks which have left ruts. DS has walked around with Mike Shields recently and Council are aware– will aim for this to be made good when further work is being done.

Trees

Fruit trees planted in Oct 2015 are doing well so far. They need pruning before they come into leaf – AF is keen to get this done in the next couple of weekends. We will put an email out to Friends requesting help with this.

Council has provided a Horse Chestnut to replace the Wingnut which died – should arrive in next few weekends – AF will email about this when it arrives.

South Morningside Primary – Legacy Tree Planting

10th March planned for P7 tree planting.

Exercise bike:

Bike provided by Council has been sited over last year. We could purchase more with Friends funds/grants if this was thought to be a good idea – we will discuss further in committee. Feelings from Friends present at the meeting was largely supportive.

Tea in the Park

Successful this year – weather was good and reflected in attendance. While doing more than covering the costs is not the first priority, we also made a healthy surplus for our funds.

Tram shelter interpretation panel

Lindsay Walls reported on the successful day. Problem at the moment is that there is no-one taking responsibility for maintenance, following changes in Council staffing.

Wildflower meadow

Not raked this year by Primary 4 of SMP – we hope that this will be done this year.

Graffiti:

We are having difficulty maintaining the painting at the electricity substation due to problems with applying paint that will stick – perhaps due to previous use of anti graffiti paint. Lindsay Walls agreed to ask JC Lindsay for advice on maintenance.

Grass management:

Park is now being managed as part of the Edinburgh Living Landscapes maintenance plan. Aim is to have areas of more naturalised grasses to build biodiversity corridors. Also protects trees if there is no moving round the trunks. One problem is that owners are not picking up dog waste in deposited in the longer grass.

Green Dog Walkers

The scheme has not caught on well with the local dog walkers in terms of getting them to join in – we may seek to use grant to focus on Friends activities instead – perhaps spray painting of dog mess using non-toxic spray, to highlight the issue?

Litter Clean Ups

Two held last year – Spring Clean up this year is arranged for 23rd April. Two members keen to do some work in advance of this date.

2. Minutes of Annual General Meeting 2016

Approved

3. Annual Accounts:

Ian Burnside spoke to the report and indicated that our financial position is healthy – we have a balance which will allow us to achieve the projects planned for 2017, provided we have the support of grant funding.

Accounts have been inspected and approved by the independent examiner.

Discussion re: designated fund – This fund is maintained in case of any losses as a result of bad weather for Tea in the Park. This was currently set at £3,000 but agreed to reduce to £2,000.

Appointment of Independent Examiner

The current examiner Margaret Walsh is happy to continue and all agreed she should be appointed to continue in this role for this year.

4. Changes to constitution:

Several changes were agreed to the Constitution.

The main changes included

- Ability to appoint Honorary Life Members
- Attendance of local representatives at Management Committee
- Updated financial arrangements as a result of changes to bank systems
- External examiner needs to be 'appointed' rather than 'approved'

The agreed changes now need to be advised to the Office of the Scottish Charities Registrar for agreement.

5. Committee posts

Two resignations were reported. Alan Silcock, who has moved from the area, leaves to concentrate on his other voluntary activities, and Roger West, who leaves to set up a new Friends of Fairmilehead Park group who have a meeting on 6th April. We hope the two groups will work together closely over the years.

The Friends thanked RW for all his work over the years and gave him a small gift as a token of our appreciation.

Two new Committee members were elected. Richard Bush and Alastair Bruce. Alastair has agreed to take on the Membership Secretary role.

The other committee members offered themselves for re-election and all were duly elected.

6. Any Other Business

One of the Friends reported a *possible* otter sighting in the park.

Discussed reporting sightings to The Wildlife Information Centre (TWIC) <http://www.wildlifeinformation.co.uk/> We also discussed having a space on the website for reporting of species – agreed to highlight interest on the notice boards so that people know where to report to.