

Friends of Braidburn Valley Park Committee Meeting
Monday March 11 2024, by Zoom

1. **Present:** Paul Bailey, Arthur Trew, Alan Fleming, Ian Vandeppear, Barbara Richardson, Claire Jellema, Steve Ambler, Robin Harper, Alastair Bruce, Margaret Bruce.

Apologies : Brian Smith, Brian Barron.

PB welcomed our new committee members, Ian and Barbara.

2. **Minutes of last meeting and matters arising:**

- Hiccups with Duke of Edinburgh Award workparties: BS has worked with them to ensure more regular attendance, and they have made up for missed sessions with extra work during the half term holiday.
- Possible involvement of Edinburgh & Lothian Greenspace Trust in 'social prescribing': while they were interested in ad hoc workparties, or leading children's wildlife walks, for example, they would not take on organising a regular group of people identified by local surgeries for gardening as we had hoped.
- Volunteers had worked in the orchard, vigorous spreading of manure!
- Cherry trees: MB reported all but 1 had new growth evident, she will re-check that one.
- Insect survey: BR had suggested this at the AGM. She will contact the local Entomological Society based at the Royal Museum of Scotland – they may have conducted a survey in the park. She had seen a Wood Brown butterfly in the park last year, a species which was hitherto found south of here. She will also send us a plant survey taken in the park some years ago. AF had also been involved.

3. **Former pavilion area:** David Kyles, parks officer, encourages us to make an application for 'place-based community funding', which may provide funds for drainage & improvement and then development, e.g. a table tennis table. Paul will do so.

4. **The garden outside the main gate:** PB was unsure whether Council workers would clear the area. He will try to clarify; otherwise workparties may be able to do this. A local person has offered to plan appropriate planting. IV suggested a local garden centre may offer some plants if approached; PB will check.

5. **The Conservation Volunteers:** AF and PB had met with David Kyles (Council) and Josef Williams (TCV) to discuss biodiversity issues and stabilisation of the banks of the burn. Wildflower seeding and bank restoration in 2 areas, one just North of the Cherry Tree Bridge and one south of it, would be carried out using willow, terracing and coir matting. JW can supervise the TCV volunteers; his time would be paid by TCV, materials need funding, possibly from FOBVP. AF was querying an initial quote of £5,800 for materials, which seems excessive. AF had also suggested extension of the present wildflower meadow and some more areas, e.g. wet areas used for appropriate species.

Erosion of the banks: RH pointed out that they were being undermined, lower parts already washed away. He had worked with the DoE volunteers placing stones, making the burn flow down the middle to avoid washing away the banks.

AF said the theatre area is the most pressing. BR had seen bundles of willow used to stabilise riverbanks, would this be possible? Gabions also an option. Council to be urged that if nothing is done, the pathway is compromised.

6 New shed and tools: the shed is to arrive on 29.3, tools will then be purchased. A compost bin for leaf mould has been bought. Community Grant funding covers the shed and tools. PB said more such funding was available, but with a short deadline. We agreed not to apply for it at this time.

7. Volunteers, Spring Clean up. New volunteers have been coming forward. AF said the group working in the orchard would have welcomed tea or coffee. Flasks could be filled in the church kitchen: MB aware of use of new water heater.

Wood chip had been used, but is now in short supply.

Spring clean up: now fixed for April 21st. AB, BS to lead on it.

IV said dog waste problem had increased; in a Midlothian park he had seen old plastic bottles hung in strategic places as bag dispensers. Also mentioned spraying bright paint to raise awareness (guilt!); spray is available in the crypt.

8. Spending funds, profits from Tea in the Park: Some possibilities for using funds were discussed – planting, cherry tree replacement, seating, plinth for theatre (see below.) Emphasis should be on a fun event for the community, as was the original purpose, profit a secondary spin off. It was agreed that we could think ahead before TitP how we plan to use any profits, so attendees and volunteers are aware of this.

9. Play equipment update: Installation at both areas expected April – May. A small wooden bench will be installed close to the junior equipment (East side). This is a request on behalf of a family who see the need for a resting point between the Theatre and the next bridge – they will contribute to the costs.

10. Tea in the Park date: 31st August agreed. Suggestions of purchase of good ice cream scoops. Also provision of drinking water for volunteers. Tokens and use of a card reader to be discussed further: SA keen for this, to help attendees, CJ pointed out also better security as less cash would be lying around. CJ keen to recruit someone to work alongside her on organisation, against the day she wants to step back from running the event.

11. AOCB and Plinth for the theatre: Andy Glidden, who worked on the existing plinths, would be available again: initial research is needed to gather material about the history.

12. Date of next meeting: Monday June 3rd, 7.30 (Zoom)