

Upton Park Friends Group
Minutes of the Meeting 13th August 2014,
Upton Park Bowling Club

Members Present: R. E. Bond; S. Colley; E Lord; M.Pearce; N.Taylor; G.W. Lane; J.Anderson-Smith; S Long; C. Thomas (Chair)

Attending: U.Garrattley; C.Kendall; L.Short

Apologies: B.Gaskell; R,Taylor; J.Brandon; B.Goad; E.Corderoy; J.E. Corderoy (Treasurer); Cllr J Faulkner; Cllr D. Cowell; Cllr R. Excell;

The Chair welcomed Usha Garrattley, Carol Kendall and Swithen Long to the meeting.

1. Minutes The minutes of the meeting of 18th June 2014 were accepted as a correct record and duly signed by the Chairman, having been proposed by Sue Colley and seconded by Nigel Taylor.

2. Matters Arising

2a) Committee Vacancies

The Chair proposed Sue Colley as a Committee Member, seconded by Ray Bond. The meeting was in favour and Sue was duly appointed onto the Committee. This leaves a vacancy for Secretary and one other Committee member. The Chair offered to take the minutes.

2b) Public Consultation

Sue Colley has visited Upton St James CE Primary where she spoke to an all school assembly to seek their ideas about things they would like to see in the Park. The children made many suggestions and these have been documented. It will be important to keep the school informed so that the children see that their contribution is valued.

The Chair wrote to the Herald Express in June responding to a letter from Mr P Raybould that raised the issue of the scale of "proposed" tree felling in the Park.

Torbay Council Parks department have told the Chair that they have not received any comments via e-mail about proposals for the Park.

The Chair attempted to convene a meeting of the public consultation sub-group but few people could attend. The immediate focus will be on putting together "building blocks" of a website; a survey and community links (see Items 5a,5b & 5c).

2c) Greenspace Designations

Following advice from Andrew Gunther (Planning Officer) and receipt of technical details from Parks, the draft document was amended to include comments made at the last meeting and a reference to the "Upton Conservation Area Character Appraisal 2002". It was submitted to the Torquay Neighbourhood Plan forum on 27th June.

2d) Traffic calming on Magdalene Road

The Committee's comments were passed to Highways after the last meeting. An update is waited.

ACTION: Chair to seek update for next meeting.

2e) Bowling Club Lease

The Friend's welcome to the lease was relayed to Chris Bouchard at the Council after the last meeting.

The wording on the subsequent Council notices (in the press and on Park gates) led to some anxieties because they gave the impression that the site was being sold and there was no mention that it was being leased to the Bowling Club.

Ray Bond updated the meeting on progress. One issue remains to be resolved but the lease is still on track. Godfrey Lane gave credit to the Bowling Club for their efforts in pursuing the lease and for their work in ensuring the grounds were so well maintained.

2f) It's Your Neighbourhood (IYN) judging

Judging took place on 2nd July. The RHS judge, Rob Harkness, was accompanied by Richard Taylor (Torbay Council) and Tim Ely (Torbay in Bloom). The Chair, who met them and presented a portfolio to the judge, remarked that the Park looked very smart and tidy. He e-mailed TOR2 and Parks to convey thanks for their efforts. The outcome of judging will be known in September.

2g) Sports facilities

No Councillors were present so there was no new information about the future of the Coach Station. Janice Anderson-Smith raised concerns about how any alternative site for a "travel hub" would cope with the large numbers of students who arrived/departed by coaches. Evelyn Lord also expressed concerns that other sites lacked proximity to the town centre.

ACTION: Chair to seek update for next meeting.

2h) Upton Vale Sports Tournament

Joel Ward (Youth Leader at Upton Vale) had e-mailed the Chair relaying how the youth group had needed to stage their tournament elsewhere but went on to describe how they benefited from using Upton Park on regular occasions. The Chair proposed donating £50 to "Youth at UV" in recognition of the valuable work they perform and the support they are showing for the Park. This was unanimously agreed. Nigel Taylor thanked the Friends for this unprompted gesture and the encouragement it would give to the youth group.

2i) Torquay Neighbourhood Plan and Torre & Upton Community Partnership report

Sue Colley updated members on the outcome of recent meetings. Particular note was made of a proposal to create a community sports hub at Barton Cricket Club.

2j) Sports Trust event

As no-one from the Friends group had attended the event on 21st July, the Chair will seek an update from Cllr Cowell for the next meeting.

ACTION: Chair to seek update for next meeting.

2k) September concert

In the absence of Cllr Excell there was nothing to report.

ACTION: Chair to seek update for next meeting.

3 Health & Safety

Members were informed that Greenspace Torbay had advocated use of generic Method Statements created by Tim Ely, but that these still await formal approval by Torbay Council's Natural Environment Department. The Method Statements cover:

Hedge Trimming; Lawn Mowing; Litter Collection; Lone Working; Manual Handling; Safe Handling Of Sharps; Strimmer Operating; and Tree and Shrub Planting.

4. Treasurer's Report

Since the last meeting the bank balance has increased by £6 (membership fees) to £3,323.36 with cash float of £18.38.

£1,500 has been transferred into an interest bearing reserve account, so far accruing 1p interest.

£11.19 from Cash Float had been spent on photocopying and a portfolio binder for the IYN Judging.

5. New Business

5a) Website

The Chair explained that he had been liaising with Torbay Community Development Trust (CDT) about the possibility of volunteer help to assist with building a website, alongside exploring costs of using a commercial website developer. An interactive session followed during which members suggested the following elements should be considered:

- Location & map
- Aerial view
- Contact details
- Agendas/minutes/calendar
- Links to useful websites
- Flora & fauna
- Birds & wildlife
- Events and event organisers
- Park history
- Photo gallery
- Facilities
- Bowling Club
- Blog/news
- Volunteers page
- Cookies policy
- Committee structure

Reservations were expressed about sharing personal details on the website. Janice advised researching the U3A(university of the third age) for advice and guidance about protocols and effective methods.

The Chair asked that if anyone would like to be involved in developing the website to let him know.

5b) Survey

The Chair thanked Usha Garrattley from Torbay CDT for help in identifying a survey tool that we could use. Usha then gave an overview of SURVEY MONKEY.

The Chair outlined that before constructing a survey/questionnaire we needed to consider the following aspects:

WHY do we need to conduct a survey?

WHAT information do we need to gather?

WHO should we survey?

HOW MANY responses would validate the survey and make it worthwhile

WHEN will it be most productive to conduct the survey?

He invited members to contact him if they could help.

5c)Torbay Community Development Trust (CDT)

Usha outlined the role of the CDT informing members that the CDT held a “launch” event on 18th July. It is located in Temperance Street and has a website <http://www.torbaycdt.org.uk>. Amongst it's activities the CDT is developing a Volunteer Bureau. Handouts were distributed conveying more information about the CDT.

The Chair thanked Usha and said that he had been impressed with the support and help already given to the Friends group, so encouraged members to agree that we should register Friends of Upton Park with the CDT. This was agreed. He went onto outline the main aspects of a questionnaire he had received from the CDT to help them identify how we could be helped and also what we might offer to the volunteer sector. Sue Colley offered to help the Chair complete the questionnaire.

Swithen Long suggested that we could seek help from other organisations if we organise things like a litter pick or other organised events. This led to some discussion about the number and availability of litter bins and dog bins in the area.

ACTION: Sue Colley and Chair to complete and submit CDT questionnaire.

6. Any Other Business

6a)Damage in the Park

In recent days, the Chair has reported to Parks, a fallen branch and a breach in the fence along Magdalene Road. Members felt that broken Keep Fit equipment should be removed if it was not going to be repaired.

ACTION: Chair to seek site visit with James Nicholas (Parks) to survey condition of Park and equipment.

6b)Greenspace Torbay Meeting 18th August, Ocombe Farm 6 pm

The guest speaker will be Damien Offer, Director of Torbay Coast & Countryside Trust.

Janice will attend along with the Chair.

6c)Street Cleansing

Sue Colley outlined recent occasions when the Community Punishment team had been used to clear Teignmouth Road of weeds using funds contributed by local residents. She has now been successful in gaining £1000 from the “Proceeds of Crime” funds administered by Devon & Cornwall Police. This will be used to pay for Community Punishment teams to clean street signs.

6d)Fly Tipping at the Coach Station

Godfrey Lane raised concerns that the valued fortnightly Green Waste collection service could be jeopardised by people fly tipping at the Coach Station. Everyone agreed that the area was becoming a mess with people depositing green waste throughout the week rather than just delivering it on the allocated Sunday. Godfrey said he and others have challenged people doing this and questioned why people were not being prosecuted.

ACTION: Chair to raise the matter with the Ward Councillors and alert Greenspace Torbay of the situation.

6e)Shekinah Trust Training Centre

Sue Colley informed members that Shekinah has recently purchased the old Church of Christian Science building (Endeavour House) at 228 Union Street. They plan to run it as a community centre providing training facilities and opportunities for several groups to operate there. It will not be a drop-in or residential centre. She wanted to dispel rumours that it would be a magnet for anti-social behaviour. Carol Kendall added that the Jatis Project may also be involved.

7. Date and time of next meeting(s).

Wednesday 17th September and Wednesday 19th November starting at 6.30 pm in the Bowling Club Pavilion.