

## **Friends of Pittville Trustee Meeting 13 October 2020 at 6.15pm (on Zoom)**

**Contributors** Trustees: Judie Hodsdon (JH), Paul Benfield (PB), Chris Archibald (CA), Andy Hopkins (AH), Philippa Howell (PH), Janina Kay (JK), Sandy Marshall (SM), Sally Thomas (ST), Henry Williams (HW)

Non-voting representative: Dennis Parsons (DP)

[PB, ST and DP were unable to stay for the whole meeting.]

Minutes: Jocelyn Potter

### **1 Welcome**

JH welcomed everyone to the meeting.

### **2 Apologies**

Gloria Jones (GJ), David Richards (DR). JH thanked GJ, at what would have been her last meeting, for all her work over the years with membership, newsletter deliveries and events.

### **3 Minutes of the trustee meeting, 14 July 2020**

JH thanked SM for circulating these before the meeting. They were accepted as a true record.

### **4 Matters arising**

**4.1 Strategy meeting** [See 10.5 for information boards.]

**4.2 Survey** ST will put this on hold until next year, when it will be easier to survey park users.

**4.3 Leaflets** Since grant deadlines were missed for this year, an application will be made next year.

**4.4 Green Flag accreditation** JH reported the good news that the park has been reaccredited. CA added that the even more significant Green Heritage Site Accreditation has also been renewed.

**4.5 Meeting with police** JK will continue trying to organise a fixed time, which has proved difficult.

**Action: JK**

### **5 Finance report**

PB circulated, before the meeting, a balance sheet and accounts of income and expenditure for the year.

It was decided that the £25 donation for David Evans' Walk and Talk should be retained by FoP rather than divided with Pittville Pump Room Revival (PPRR) – but that since FoP supports the wellbeing of the group, if PPRR need funds for a particular project, they can apply to FoP for help. PB will update the September accounts to show this donation.

AH noted that only half the payments for music events appeared in the accounts. JK will submit an invoice for the other £100, and PB will update the September accounts. He will discuss the updates with Joe Marr, who is reviewing the year's accounts.

JH thanked PB for his work on the accounts, and will discuss with him possible changes to some of the wordings.

**Action: PB, JK, JH**

## **6 Website and email progress**

JH reported that the transfer to the new host has been successful. She has occasionally asked for help, and has paid Dan Espley a small sum for assistance. FoP now needs a Wordpress expert to deal with issues as they arise. Fiona Clarke's help will be needed to transfer the domain name to a different host (since she is still the registered owner), but the name will remain the same.

**Action: JH**

## **7 AGM arrangements**

This will take place by email, over about three weeks. PB will finalise the accounts and the commentary on them. JH will write the annual report. These will be sent out (to trustees before members) with biodata about ST, who will be standing for election; last year's minutes, and a short introduction which will include a request for members to provide specific help or stand as trustees. The Mailchimp distribution, with links to the attachments, will be circulated by the end of October with a request for questions, comments and support for the election of ST. In all cases where a vote would be usual, support will be assumed unless objections are received.

AH suggested that a video version of the chairman's report could be placed on the website and the Facebook page. JH will consider this.

ST offered her help in preparing for the meeting.

**Action: JH, ST, SM, JK**

## **8 Officer elections and new deputy chairman post**

JH suggested that since elections need to take place soon after the AGM, there should be a quick Zoom meeting in November for these and to address any concerns raised by members. This will be on Tuesday 17 November.

PB is happy to continue as treasurer for one more year, but – following a promotion at work, on which he was congratulated – will need help if the responsibilities increase at all.

It was agreed that a new post of deputy chairman should be created formally. ST will stand for this post.

## **9 December newsletter**

This will be sent out in the first week of December. AH listed possible contributions: an article supporting the retention of the cedar tree, which is not in the park but is significant in the view from the park; a summary of the chairman's report to the AGM; an article on the activities of PPRR; a quiz focusing on history, trees, wildlife, events etc, with answers on the website to increase traffic there; an explanation of how a patch of asphalt could be left outside the gates. He also suggested personal information about volunteers, rather than a report on their work, although CA said that it may also be possible to report on planting in Bed 38.

JH hoped that the asphalt issue will have been resolved by then. CA pointed out that Severn Trent have the right to dig up the ground, and are obliged to make repairs but don't have the skills to replace the paving. Noting that Severn Trent took away paving paid for by FoP, a charity, JH has passed on information about the paving obtained from the original architect and has been assured by Chris Riley, head of Gloucestershire Highways, that reinstatement of the surface is now on Severn Trent's emergency list. If the work isn't done, our MP's office will get involved. JH will continue chasing this issue. In response to a question from JK, JH said that the Grade 2 listed gates belong to CBC and the paving, owned by GCC, is in the curtilage of the gates. JK also pointed out that Severn Trent can take six months to respond to an 'emergency'.

AH will email people about contributions for the newsletter, and would be happy to receive suggestions for a central focus. The deadline for submissions will be 23 November.

**Action: AH, JH and all trustees**

## **10 Projects**

**10.1 Masterplan** JH suggested thinking about commemorations (eg seventy years of the Queen's reign; the laying of the foundation stone for the Pump Room) in relation to projects.

CA reported that before Christmas there will be some planting, and temporary fencing to protect the plants, and that more plants will be put in the rockery at the end of March or beginning of April.

He also pointed out that since FoP has about £12,500 earmarked for projects, and the new steps will cost about £26,500, a sub-committee needs to fundraise. He and JH will discuss possible applications to Gloucestershire Community Foundation and the Honourable Company of Gloucestershire, for example.

**Action: CA, JH**

**10.2 Bed 38** Plants and trees are on order, funded by FoP.

**10.3 Prestbury Road streetlights** DP reported that the lights will be protected, but probably not legally; repairs will depend on the powers of persuasion of John Payne (JP), and he will lead on this.

**Action: JP**

### **10.4 Music in the park**

AH thanked SM and JK, and expressed his pleasure in the teamwork involved in putting on the two events, which were successful and appreciated by the public. However, the Cheltenham Trust (TCT) were obstructive and disrespectful of a community group simply wishing to put on free events in a council-owned bandstand. JK and SM agreed and said that AH's technical knowledge was invaluable in overcoming obstacles on the day.

AH suggested that if the TCT were less proprietorial about access to the electricity needed for the bandstand, FoP might consider taking the lead in restoring it.

JH expressed her appreciation of the events and will convey to TCT the committee's disappointment at the Trust's attitude, especially since one of the Trust's aims is to work with the community. She pointed out that future events could be held in another area of the park.

**Action: JH**

### **10.5 Information boards**

CA highlighted the need to consider boards for the Pump Room and around the lakes (1-3 boards on birds, wildlife, wildflowers etc), and replacement boards at the gates for each side of the park. There is a need to research better quality boards, like the one replaced by Ubico on the west side. JH suggested applying for funding for new boards, for example from CBC.

PH pointed out that the board by the play area is barely legible, and the information out of date, so a replacement is urgently needed. CA said that since the east side leaflet has been revised, information is available to update the board. JH asked for a volunteer to help CA with this.

JK said that members often ask if they can volunteer, so opportunities should be flagged up in the newsletter and volunteers allocated roles immediately – for example, creating new boards, or other small projects.

**Action: CA and others**

## **11 Regular activities**

**11.1 Green Space Volunteers (GSV)** JH reported that the Helen Lovatt, the High Sheriff of Gloucestershire and a local resident, talked to some of the volunteers during their last working party. Ms Lovatt will also sponsor a maple tree in the south-east corner of the grassy area in front of the Pump Room.

CA reported that an average of 26 volunteers have been at work since lockdown ended, and others have expressed interest in joining the team.

**11.2 Pittville History Works (PHW)** SM reported a significant milestone: after six and a half years of research, PHW have finished investigating Pittville residents up to 1945. All the information is on their website, and the group are now investigating post-1945 residents.

**11.3 Duck food dispenser** PH reported that since there has been no contact from St Vincents since March, she has been managing the dispenser single-handedly, and suggested that all income should now come to FoP. This was agreed, and JH thanked PH for her work.

**11.4 Drop-ins** SM reported that numbers are falling outside the Pump Room as it gets colder. JH said that there is a plan for temporary weatherproofing of the portico over winter. SM will ask the organisers of the drop-ins to give notice of dates, for the website.

**Action: SM**

## **12 Future events**

The February quiz won't happen. Other events, like the plant sale, will be considered in January.

## **13 AOB**

**13.1 Cedar tree** SM had circulated comments on this issue, which she will distribute more widely, and will send round more if she receives any. It was agreed that FoP will contribute £100 to the fund for legal fees to support the retention of the tree.

**13.2 Information cards to distribute** CA suggested that information for a proposed leaflet could also be printed on cards instead, and that the cost of printing cards only – £40 + VAT for 500 cards – seems reasonable.

**13.3 Video** CA reported that Fiona Clarke has sent a link to a presentation on the trees in Jephson Gardens, Leamington Spa, and suggested that FoP could do something similar, but perhaps on the history of the park. JH agreed that this would be a good resource on the website – although perhaps on trees rather than history – and that a writer/presenter and camera operator would be needed. A volunteer will be needed to lead the project.

**Action: a volunteer**

**13.4 Membership renewals** JK reported that more than a hundred members haven't renewed their membership – perhaps because no renewal form was sent out with a Pittville-wide newsletter – despite the great popularity of the park over the last six months. She suggested that newsletters need more clarification of how to contact the membership secretary. Contactless payment would help, but setting it up would involve a lot of work. She will contact individuals, and will also start an Excel list of businesses and organisations who could be approached to join; others can then add to the list.

**Action: JK and others**

**14 Date of next meeting** Tuesday 17 November at 6.15 (a short meeting).

SM will suggest dates for 2021; the first two, at least, will be on Zoom. *[After the meeting, SM suggested the following Tuesdays: 12 January, 13 April, 13 July, 12 October, and a strategy meeting on 8 June.]*

The meeting ended at 8.00pm.