



Minutes of the Trustees' Meeting Monday 9 November 2015, 6.30pm

Present

Trustees

Hon Chairman Judie Hodsdon (JH)
Hon Secretary Fiona Clarke (FC)
Hon Treasurer Wendy Acres (WA)
Chris Archibald (CA)
Mike Evans (ME)
David Richards (DR)
Rob Rimell (RR)
Hilary Simpson (HS)

Non-voting representatives of other organisations

Desmond Fitzgerald - Park Watch (DF)
Cllr Adam Lillywhite (AL)

Abbreviations used in Minutes

Cheltenham Arts Council = CAC
Cheltenham Borough Council = CBC
Friends of Pittville = FOP
Gloucestershire Environmental Trust = GET
Green Heritage Site Accreditation = GHSA
The Cheltenham Trust = TCT

1. Welcome, introductions and apologies

JH welcomed the two new trustees present (Michael Evans and Rob Rimell) and gave apologies from the third (Sandy Marshall), who has a regular Monday evening commitment. Gloria Jones had also sent her apologies. JH also welcomed two of the three invited non-voting representatives of other organisations, Desmond Fitzgerald (Pittville Park Watch) and Pittville Ward Councillor Adam Lillywhite. Trustees and DF and AL introduced themselves.

2. Selection of office bearers 2015

It was recorded that, immediately after the AGM on 19 October, the following office bearers were selected by nine of the ten elected trustees: Chairman: Judie Hodsdon; Secretary: Fiona Clarke; Treasurer: Wendy Acres. FOP members on e-mail had been informed and short biographies of all the trustees are on the FOP website. Gloria Jones agreed to continue in her role as Membership Secretary.

3. Minutes of the last meeting, 5 October 2015

The Minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting.

4. Matters arising

4.1 Refer Para 3.1 Pittville Gates restoration project – the saga of final payment continues as RRA Architects has still not submitted the final certificate for work completed. **Action: JH to chase again**

CBC will not pay the last 2.5% retention fee, about £1000, until this has been received. CBC will then pay the final invoice and, in due course, FOP will reimburse them. FOP has received the 2015 Gift Aid refund which covers the outstanding amount. RRA Architects has, however, submitted a nomination for the Gates restoration to Cheltenham Civic Society for a Civic Award. Winners will be announced in April 2016.

4.2 Refer Para 3.2 Cheltenham Arts Council – FC has had no luck in joining CAC as the e-mail was returned. HS offered to investigate. NOTE HS provided a membership application form and it has been sent.

4.3 Refer Para 4 Constitution change at the AGM, ENTRUST and Charity Commission – the FOP Constitution had been amended at the AGM, adding a sub-clause 6 (3) (d) and amending 6 (4). JH is about to send details of the trustees to ENTRUST and also the annual documentation to the Charity Commission. **Action: JH**

4.4 Refer Para 16.1 Plastic bag sales and good causes – DR agreed to pursue this. **Action: DR**

5. Annual General Meetings and choosing office bearers; terms of office

JH noted that, because of shortage of time and space, choosing the office bearers at the 2015 AGM had not been as comfortable as it could have been. As all the trustees step down annually, and the office bearers chosen from among the trustees, we need to decide how to do this in future. Another option is to hold a trustee meeting the next day, or within a week. It was agreed preferable to choose at the end of the AGM, and to better prepare current and new trustees by noting in advance who wished to be considered for office. It was unlikely there would be more than one candidate and the names could be mentioned during the AGM.

The other issue is terms of office. As set out in the FOP Rules, trustees are elected for two terms of three years (standing down at each AGM notwithstanding). FC, with input from CA, proposed a system to provide continuity as we do not want everyone's six years to end at the same time. It is based on length of time on the committee already. It was agreed to accept this proposal. See Appendix 1. Proposal for terms of office – discussion paper.

HS and WA noted that the Rules are for guidance. WA gave early notice that she would not stand for treasurer in 2016. There are two vacancies on the committee and all were encouraged to think of people who might be asked during the year (Refer Constitution clause 18 (2)). **Action: all**

6 Financial report

WA reported that £1817.29 had been received in Gift Aid. This amount is being held for the final Gates payment and the balance will be transferred to general funds or allocated to a new project. Membership secretary GJ had done a glorious job chasing up lapsed or under-paying members, and there were many new members. Membership subscriptions to date amounted to £1116. There is £4063.31 in the bank, of which £1844.04 is in the Gates Fund.

7. FOP Budget

JH, FC and WA have drafted a FOP budget which will be circulated by e-mail to trustees. After comments, additions etc. a final budget will be presented at the next trustee meeting. The History Group requires a minimum of £5 per month for hosting the www.pittvillehistory.org.uk website. HS will send further details to WA and JH. **Action: HS**

8. Pittville Park Play Area rejuvenation project

CA had circulated an update. See Appendix 2. He thanked those who had worked on the project while he was away. The proposal was submitted to planning on 23 October. FOP is submitting grant applications. Cllr Chris Coleman wants to set up a fundraising task force and this will be the main subject of a meeting tomorrow to which CA has been invited. AL noted that CBC hoped to complete the project by May 2016;

phasing it will incur additional cost so raising the funds now was crucial. JH thought that FOP's role had been rather hidden up till now and our part should be made quite clear.

She also thought FOP should be seen to publicly support the project. ME thought that the messaging had to be carefully thought through. The £540,000 cost was being met with incredulity and the reasons, e.g. health and safety, security, refurbishing the aviaries, were not understood. The recent refurbishment of the west side play area could be highlighted to show the commitment of CBC to other play areas. CA pointed out that the play area was expected to last for twenty years and considering the use that will be made of it, the cost would be quite reasonable per head. AL said there were some design issues as some of the structures were very tall.

DF wondered if there could be exercise equipment for older people. FC explained that this had been investigated by the previous chairman but CBC had wanted much more elaborate and expensive equipment which she did not think was necessary and there were no funds anyway so the idea was shelved. It was agreed to raise this with CBC for the ten year Pittville Park management plan which was being written now. Such equipment could be placed near the Albemarle Gate car park for easier access.

JH asked if trustees thought that FOP should comment on the planning application. RR wanted to see the plans before committing himself. He had seen new play areas in south London where older children had forced out the younger ones and parents stayed away. AL said that a lot of thought had gone into these types of issues; it is zoned by age group; the vulnerable equipment will be stored overnight, e.g. zip wires; café staff will be there during the day so the play area will be supervised. It was agreed FOP might comment and it would be voted on. **NOTE** comments have to be submitted by 17 November.

9. Green Flag and Green Heritage Site Accreditation

CA spoke to his update which had been circulated before the meeting (Appendix 3)
Ex-Chairman Judy Langhorn is helping him draft the Heritage section of the Green Flag and a first draft will be circulated to trustees by the end of the month.

The community ranger is beavering away on the rest of the GF documentation. This park is much larger and more complex than the others in Cheltenham with a wider variety of uses. The addendum to the 10 year Management Plan needs to be reviewed as things have moved on since the first revision.

Former chairman JL, HS and CA had met Julie Finch (JF) of The Cheltenham Trust (TCT); the walk she requested was held on 3 November with CBC's Adam Reynolds and CA. TCT's first priority is the Town Hall but they will start a feasibility study on the Pump Room in 2016. JF will write some words of support for the submission together with a summary of events that take place in the Pump Room. She offered to meet the judges in the Pump Room when we brief them on the site visit.

A priority for GF is adequate welcome signs at the main park entrances, as well as information boards about the Pump Room. The current repainting of the entrance gates will enhance the approaches. These were erected in 1949. JH wondered if replacement of the main entrance on East Approach Drive could be included in the ten year management plan. It was agreed that both east and west approaches should be included.

Proposed DR, seconded RR

The planning application for the 2007 plans has lapsed and the costs possibly gone up. However, the drawings were probably still largely valid.

HS noted that the play area may be still a building site at the time of judging and also, if the GHSA is granted, TCT may say the Pump Room is alright. JH reassured her that this would not be the case as the Pump Room issues were more to do with access and usability. CA said we could demonstrate use of the Pump Room for events but there needs to be more information, and improved accessibility during event preparation. There needs to be a vision for the Pump Room and our ideas would be welcome.

10. Web site review

FC reported that three web designers had submitted proposals and one chosen. The contract is being finalised. She had drawn up a list of content in priority order and the designer was already working on this. She had checked on DF's and HS's concerns about security. After the contract is signed, the next stage is

a meeting of the web team with the designer to review progress so far. HS was interested in taking a lead role on the website and she is becoming an experienced WordPress user. One or two more key people need to be able to enter content directly. Training will be provided. **Action: FC to get contract and meeting set up**

AL said to be careful with WordPress that current news items were not superseded too early and ME offered the services of a photographer, though it was noted that FOP could not undertake to pay for this.

11. Pittville History Group

HS reported that the house listing will be completed early in 2016. ME noted it could be a good recruitment tool; the History Group was intending to write to house owners in due course. No charge would be made for information. She will send the most recent Minutes of the History Group to FC to circulate. **Action: HS and FC**

12. Heritage Open Days 2015 and 2016

HS had attended a Cheltenham review meeting in October where most were satisfied with HODs 2015, although there were some problems with booking arrangement through the Tourist Information Centre. The History Group members may take on managing HODs but JH would want it to continue to be badged as a FOP activity.

HS noted there could be new things to try. It was agreed to put on the agenda in March. May is a key date when it is ideal to submit events details to the national organiser. In the meantime, FC will make arrangements for mailings from CBC (which provides the secretarial services) and the national organiser, the National Trust, be moved to HS. **Action: FC**

13. Newsletter and sponsorship

FC alerted trustees to the next newsletter in January 2016. All trustees were expected to take on a route and she would work on these with GJ. The remaining large routes would be divided. January's is to members only so will not be onerous. FC would like to increase the area to include the Bloor Homes, which RR confirmed were 176 dwellings. This would not increase the printing cost by much. FOP had had sponsorship for the newsletter from local businesses and she would like to try for one. ME offered to help draw up a sponsorship proposition. **Action: FC and ME**

14. Past events

14.1 Autumn tree walk, Wednesday 7 October – this had only attracted eight people so may not be offered again. This was a pity as it was very interesting and enjoyable, but may have been due to the late starting time.

15. Forthcoming events

15.1 FOP Quiz Night, Monday 16 November – this might have to be cancelled because the minimum number of 40 had not been reached. All trustees were asked to do their best to find more people. **Action: all** **NOTE** this number has been achieved

15.2 Joint Holst Birthplace Museum/FOP events in 2016 – the first event is on Thursday 18 February and is a talk by Steve Blake entitled 'Who built Pittville'. It will focus on the tradesmen who built the houses, and sometimes bought the plots of land as well. Pittville School's main hall will be rented and although it will cost £120 will accommodate many more people than Berkhamstead School (which was free). It is a charged event and the estimated profit is £160 for each organisation. HBM is providing most of the logistical support. (Although not voted on, it is assumed that trustees agreed to go ahead as there was no objection). DR suggested that the PTA be informed; AL that those participating in the HODs events be included in the publicity and ME wondered if there was any mileage in an item on TV. **Action: FC**

There has been no further communication from Rosa Productions as of 19 October. **NOTE** but one has been received subsequently. This may be on the agenda of the next meeting. **Action: FC**

15.3 Plant sale – as time was running out, both at the meeting and to start the necessary paperwork, JH asked for two more people to help DR plan this event and to contact her, copied to DR. WA has already offered to help on the day itself. **Action: all**

15.4 Open Gardens 2016 –there was not time to discuss this so it is to be brought forward to the next meeting. **Action: FC**

16 Clarence Square Neighbourhood Watch

FC has been reacquainted with a Clarence Square resident who has now taken on the role of NhW co-ordinator. She has taken on other roles and liaises with the community ranger on litter picking including obtaining the kits. ME added that drug dealers had been moved on and hedges tidied. FC said that she had hoped in the past, and now, that FOP volunteers could work alongside Clarence Square residents, if they wished, on days that suited them. However, this does not seem to be wished. JH noted that both squares are part of the original Pittville Estate so are of interest to FOP.

17 Planning related matters

AL said there were no applications of potential concern to FOP apart from the Play Area rejuvenation project.

18 Any other business

18.1 DR asked if FOP knew that **Cheltenham Tree Group** will be planting about thirty trees on the back behind the Leisure Centre on 10 November. FOP did not know.

18.2 DR informed trustees about a new **HLF** fund which was advertised in the RHS magazine. **Action: JH**

18.3 HS asked if FOP knew about the **new wooden seating at Central Cross Café**. FOP did not and most trustees did not think it was appropriate for the site. **NOTE** AL is checking whether permission was needed and obtained.

18.4 AL mentioned the **cycle track** which may be opened up between Bishop's Cleeve and Cheltenham involving the Honeybourne Line <http://www.gloucestershireecho.co.uk/Cycle-route-Bishop-s-Cleeve-Cheltenham-map-route/story-28069453-detail/story.html>

18.5 RR was approached at the AGM by a Wellington Square resident who wanted FOP to do something about the **parking arrangement** in the square. The enquirer should be referred to Dave Prince as the Pittville Division county councillor, as he is the appropriate person. FOP does not generally deal with parking issue. **Action: RR**

18.6 DF noted the discussion at the last meeting about FOP possibly recognising the efforts that some house owners had made to improve their properties. He wondered what could be done about residents who did the opposite. The **footpath along Pittville Lawn** (56-59 approximately) is being encroached upon by the hedges and grass growing in the unswept-up leaf mould and soil. FC said the volunteers might agree to clear it. **NOTE** subsequently DF clarified that he wanted the county council to address the issue and FC offered to raise it with the community ranger. **Action: FC**

18.7 JH and FC will compile a list of all the jobs where help is needed, especially as FC will be away for some time next year. This will be circulated before and discussed at the next meeting. **Action: JH and FC**

19 Date of next meeting, trustee meetings and holidays 2016

The next meeting was scheduled for Monday 21 December but it would be good to change this if possible so new trustee Sandy Marshall (SM) can attend. JH could manage it on 15 December if the meeting starts at 17.30. **Action: FC to check with Municipal Offices after confirming if SM can make it on 15/12.**

Most trustees were happy with a 17.30 start for 2016 but other venues are to be checked because of parking charges and traffic at the earlier time.

Action: FC and JH

Possible dates for 2016 will be circulated; it has to be a Tuesday as Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays are not possible for some trustees and no-one wants a Friday. Noted that HS is not available for six Tuesdays in 2016.

Action: FC

The meeting finished at 20.30!

Appendix 1 Friends of Pittville Trustee meeting Monday 9 November 2015

Proposal for terms of office – discussion paper

FOP's Rules 2015 say

2.1 Trustees may be elected for a maximum of two terms of three years. After a person has ceased to be a trustee for a minimum of one year they will be eligible for re-election.

2.6 A temporary system for ensuring continuity will be devised by the trustees to avoid existing trustees reaching the end of their terms at the same time.

Details of 'old' trustees (not counting the time they have been observers)

Elected 2006 – 9 years to date FC

Elected 2010 – 5 years to date CA JH DR

Elected 2012 – 3 years to date WA

Elected 2014 – 1 year to date HS

'New' trustees (not counting the time GJ has been an observer)

Elected 2015 – ME GJ SM RR

If we start the two terms of three years from 2015, everyone will have to step down in 2021 for a minimum of one year. Obviously this cannot happen.

Proposal

I propose a retrospective scheme for the 'old' trustees as follows:

2016 FC stands down

2017 CA JH DR stand down

2018 WA stands down

2020 HS stands down

And the 'new' trustees will operate under the 2015 Rules

2021 ME SM RR stand down

It gives all of us 'old' trustees an extra year (bar me who already has three extra years!!)

According to the constitution, we all have to stand down at each AGM. It's the Rules which specify the terms of office.

FC 9 November 2015

Appendix 2 Minutes of trustees meeting 9 November 2015

The Playground - Update

Eibe have been appointed as the contractor for the project. They have held consultations with CBC, FOP and the public and from these have developed a design that was submitted for planning on the 23 October.

There was a press release on 29 October, on which FOP were consulted, and made the front page of the Gloucestershire Echo. There is a promotional video available that takes you round the playground and shows the various equipment.

FOP with the assistance of CBC have submitted grant application to Summerfield, GET, Gloucestershire Disability Fund, Gloucestershire Community Fund, and True Colours to try and make up the £190k shortfall. We will be applying for number of grants in the next few weeks.

FOP supported CBC at the Local Business Roadshow at the Pump Room on the 4 November. CBC were offered a stand for the Playground which was manned jointly by CBC staff and FOP volunteers together with Chris Coleman, councillor and cabinet member for the Environment. This was a networking event for small businesses and a good number of people showed interest and left business card which CBC are following up on these contacts.

I have been asked to attend the CBC Project team meeting tomorrow. Much of the discussion will be on fundraising and Chris Coleman told me he wants to form a small task force. I understand the Echo want to do a follow up article more from the FOP point of view which will give us the opportunity to publicise the fundraising. Judie has been asked about an article for the Gloucestershire Directory for which the deadline is mid January. We are looking at Crowd Funding /Just Giving which we hope to get going by this Wednesday. We will also be putting up details on the notice boards in the park.

I will keep you all informed about the meeting tomorrow and no doubt be asking for help. Thanks to all who have helped over the last few months, including Graham, to get the project to this stage.

Chris Archibald.

Appendix 3 Trustees Meeting 9 November 2015 - Green Flag and Green Heritage Site Accreditation update

CBC and FOP are committed to submitting for the awards for 2016/2017. The applications have to be submitted before the end of January and judging will be in April/May.

Janice has been writing the GF part and I met to go through the first draft on the 21 October. She is using the document from Wellington Park as a template, this was given to us by the judge who came to advise us in June. This has involved some rewriting of the CBC documents for other GF parks in Cheltenham. There is of course a lot more to be included for Pittville Park.

I am drafting the Heritage section of the document which is based on the Conservation Management Plan 2008 and our Addendum 2008-2014. It has to be brief as possible but enough to tell the story of the history, how the heritage is being looked after and how the public interacts and enjoys the park. Judy has offered to help and when we have a first draft, which I hope will be by the end of the month, I will send it round for comments/ideas.

From the Heritage Section actions will need to be taken and incorporated into the 10 year Management Plan which Janice is writing. We started this in the Addendum but this needs to be reviewed to see if we have any new thoughts. I would propose we go through this at the next Excom meeting for final approval.

Since the judges visit we have made good progress but there are items for which we need to have a more detailed plan to put into the submission, such as the rockery, the Pump Room gates and the Scout hut.

After the FOP meeting with Julie Finch of the Cheltenham Trust she requested a walk round the park with Adam Reynolds CBC and myself. This was arranged for the 3 November. I followed up on the issues discussed at the previous meeting and contained in our briefing note. She said the Town Hall was the Trust's priority at present and they would start a feasibility study on the Pump Room in 2016. I said again we are going in for GF/GHSA, which she supports, and asked for words for the submission together with a summary of events that take place in the Pump Room which she agreed to provide. She offered to meet the judges in the Pump Room when we brief them on the site visit.

Chris Archibald.