

Friends of Pittville Trustee Meeting**Tuesday 3 September 2019 6.15pm****Present:**

Trustees: Judie Hodsdon (JH), Fiona Clarke (FC), Paul Benfield (PB), Gloria Jones (GJ), Chris Archibald (CA), Andy Hopkins (AH), Philippa Howell (PH), Janina Kay (JK), Sandy Marshall (SM), David Richards (DR)

Non-voting representatives: Dennis Parsons (DP, from 7.50)

Minutes: Jocelyn Potter

1 Welcome and apologies JH welcomed everyone. Apologies were received from HW and DP.

2 Minutes of 16 July 2019 meeting These were accepted as a true record.

3 Finance report JH commented on the slightly confusing use of brackets in the income column. PB summarised the financial situation, which is healthy, although not as healthy as it looks due to income relating to the previous year. JH noted that website hosting will cost more in future, but membership fees should still cover the costs. At SM's request, it was agreed that the extra £30 asked for by Pittville History Works (PHW) for their website is still within the £230 budget available to the group each year. PB will bring the budget to the next meeting. It was agreed that JH will ask Joe Mar if he will examine the accounts again, in the middle of October.

Action: JH

4 FoP communication (paper circulated) JH had received no comments from trustees on her paper, and after some discussion asked for any further comments in the next few days so that the document could be finalised (with deadlines – see below).

The FoP website needs to be reasonably current, with all trustees recording activities which they organise. CA and JH pointed out that the person in charge of the website would then just need to design and post information, not write it. AH asked for a deadline for contributions to the website, to appear a month before the newsletter so that they inform the newsletter content.

FC reminded JH that press releases will be needed; JH thought this could be part of the task of running an event. FC will provide a list of contacts.

CA will ask Adrian Allen to continue posting Green Space updates, as he agreed to do when he retired from the committee.

Action: JH, FC, CA and other trustees

4.1 Email communication (paper circulated) FC reported that FoP email is now communicating with hotmail/outlook/live mail, but after two months of problems it is time to change the host. AH asked that trustees be able to look at the new email provision to ensure it interacts with address books, for example. FC will ask Dan Epsley to lead a tutorial on the new system, especially for people with FoP email addresses. Trustees agreed that they will be happy to pay more for a better service, with the same host for email and the website, when there is more information.

Action: FC

4.2 Newsletter It was agreed that the newsletter will go to the printer in early March, June, September and December 2020. AH pointed out that more copy would have been welcome for the September 2019 newsletter. JH suggested that longer articles be written, to be used when needed, but AH said that articles tended to be topical. AH and SM will discuss possible

PHW articles, which could be written when copy is needed. JH suggested that interviews could include perspectives of dog walkers, grandparents etc. GJ pointed out that this month's newsletter includes a card calling for volunteers at the Holst Birthplace Museum (HBM). She distributed newsletters for delivery.

Action: AH, SM

5 Town Lottery possibility JH reported, prior to a meeting about the new lottery which she will be attending, that Cheltenham Borough Council (CBC) is planning a weekly lottery to benefit local charities. When people subscribe, they will nominate the charity they wish to support. FC said that if FoP wants to be a possible recipient, it must register. SM expressed slight concern at FoP's involvement with gambling, but was reassured by the purposefulness of participants having to subscribe, and their stakes being capped. In principle, the committee expressed their support for participation.

Action: JH

6 Regular activities (GSV/PHW/PRAG) – highlights

6.1 Green Space Volunteers (GSV) CA reported that there was an average of 21 GSVs per session this year; a few new people are interested, and a few have had to drop out. Only one work party had to be cancelled because of weather. CA asked trustees to give feedback on their work and to make suggestions. He reported that the corner bed facing No. 31 needs work; he will circulate a rough plan, but ideas are welcome. PH suggested contacting the Lucky Onion Group (owners of No.31) for support, since they face it and have done a lot with plants in their hotels. CA will take up the problem of the dying yew tree with Malcolm Walls (MW), and the commemorative plaque on the other, leaning cherry tree could be moved to a replacement one.

CA reported that Linda Thomas will organise a planting plan for the rockery, with a view to planting in early spring. DR suggested that more rocks are needed.

CA said that Japanese knotweed has returned by the bridge, and will need to be sprayed. AH asked about the missing pillar in the stone balustrade on the bridge; CA will find out if it has just been removed prior to repair.

PB suggested that more trees should be planted to join the fabulous cherry trees on Evesham Road, and that people might sponsor them if small plaques were added. JH agreed that it would be worth asking the CBC team.

PB said that an audit of plaques is needed. CA agreed that he could circulate a plan or aerial photo from CBC, and that volunteers could then find plaques and record what is on them and their condition; he will discuss this with MW or Adam Reynolds (AR).

Action: CA and other trustees

6.2 PHW SM had nothing more to add to the minutes of the last meeting, which had been circulated.

6.3 Pump Room Action Group (PRAG) FC thanked 'mystery shoppers'. The audit ends on September 8th, and Hilary Simpson's report will then be submitted to The Cheltenham Trust (TCT). Comments on a very poor draft leaflet have already been sent to the Trust. Hilary has also been comparing the actual situation with TCT's own customer service charter. Other trustees mentioned: Pump Room closures for even minor restoration work; closure because of staff absence, even when there is no event; limits to the number of times the lift can be used each hour, and the clutter on the way to it; clutter in the volunteer room. DR believed he had met the new manager and will find out her name. FC reported that there is now a PRAG Facebook page with opening hours and other information, and that comments can be left on it. CA said that the planned Pump Room website must be comprehensive and definitive, and that more volunteers are needed. More will be learnt about TCT's plans at a meeting with Laurie Bell on 17 September.

Action: DR

7 Past events

7.1 Curry Corner visit/Cheltenham Horticultural Society Summer Show/Volunteers

barbecue JH reported that Curry Corner aren't interested in becoming a corporate member, but might possibly run an event for a fundraising campaign. She thanked JK for her response to the abuse, in the park, of a woman from the restaurant.

FoP's presence at the horticultural show went well, and FoP would like to be part of the Spring Show if invited.

The barbecue probably would have been cancelled due to weather conditions – so should be held earlier in the summer next year – but it was clear that while HW focuses on the catering, someone else needs to deal with invitations for greater efficiency. JH suggested that next summer's social events should be considered at the December meeting.

7.2 Voluntary and Community Service Forum FC reported that FoP representatives had attended relevant meetings in the past. At the next one, topics are the town lottery, the redevelopment of a Leckhampton church, and the issue of public toilets. DP assured the trustees that CBC won't be removing toilets from the park. Since CBC don't wish to manage toilets, shops may be paid to make theirs available. There are also plans for a climate emergency declaration by CBC (leading to, eg, tree planting).

7.3 Butterfly Walk, 21 August 2019 CA reported that Mike Brierley brought caterpillars, talked about butterflies, and was knowledgeable about suitable plants for butterflies. It might be possible to remove some turf from the west side of the park next year to sow yellow rattle seed to control the grass and allow for more wild flowers.

8 Future events

8.1 Drop-Ins FC suggested that if FoP are going to support these, FoP should also organise them and at least one trustee should attend each time. The previous Thursday there had been ten people there. The events are mainly social, but questions are asked about FoP and the park.

8.2 Annual General Meeting, 24 October GJ proposed a preparatory visit to Dunalley School in mid-October. JH noted that help will be needed with setting up (from 5.15), the membership table (JK and GJ), refreshments and clearing up. FC will put the papers on the website; in the meantime, trustees standing for election or reelection will need to fill in forms. JH said that Robert Hyatt-Williams would like to be a trustee (to be elected at the AGM), but for various reasons will not attend committee meetings until next year.

Action: FC and all trustees

8.3 Rotary talk, 31 October JH will be giving this talk.

8.4 Races car parking (November/March) CA will find out whether insurance is an issue or not. (See 10.6 for more on this topic.)

Action: CA

8.5 Possible social events, 2020 PH will talk to the Feathered Fish to find the best date for a Quiz Night on a Monday in February (but avoiding half-term). It was agreed that it would be advertised in the December newsletter, with follow-up reminders.

FC reported that in November 2020 there will be a joint fundraising event (a talk by Steven Blake) with the HBM in Pittville School. This has been agreed in principle only, with costs, liability and profit shared. GJ suggested a FoP display, as at a previous, similar event.

8.6 CHS Spring Show, 5 April 2020

8.7 FoP Plant Sale, May 2020 It was agreed to hold this on Saturday 9 May. AH commented that a lot of people would like to buy hanging baskets, or plants for hanging baskets. JH thought it worth investigating whether a supplier could be found. PB suggested a small nursery near Winchcombe.

Action: DR

9 Future meetings (4 committee meetings/1 strategy) In 2020, committee meetings will be held in early February, early May, late July/early August and the end of October. There will be a strategy meeting in late June. AH suggested that this could be in a more relaxed venue.

10 Any other business

10.1 Secretary's role SM will be taking on some of it. FC will meet her, and then both will meet JH to decide on the division of responsibilities with the chairman.

Action: SM, FC, JH

10.2 Chair JH said that she would be happy to hand over the position at the AGM, but will in any case definitely only do one more year.

10.3 Duck feeder FC has talked to PB about this, but is waiting to see if there is any response to the request for help in the newsletter.

10.4 New noticeboard CA asked for suggestions of what to put on it. It is for all charities to use, and he has already put up a Samaritans poster and one for the tree walk.

10.5 Phone box on Central Cross DP reported that although it looks as if it has been vandalised, the panel has been removed and will be replaced.

10.6 Pump Room car park DP reported that a paper will recommend no charge for the first two hours; £1 for a maximum of four hours. The charge is to cover the cost of enforcement, and restrictions are to prevent parking by commuters and university staff and students. There will be no charge for events. Before implementation, the car park will be tidied, with parking bays marked. The plan is for the West Approach gates to be closed permanently, but open for major events. There was no time for further discussion of these two issues.

11 Date of next meeting, 22 October 2019

The meeting closed at 8.00pm.