

## **Friends of Pittville Trustee Meeting 13 July 2021 at 6.15pm at 49 Pittville Crescent Lane**

### **Present:**

**Trustees** Judie Hodsdon (JH), Paul Benfield (PB), Chris Archibald (CA), Andy Hopkins (AH), Janina Kay (JK), Sandy Marshall (SM), Sally Thomas (ST)

**Council representative** Stephan Fifield (SF)

**Minutes** Jocelyn Potter

### **1 Welcome**

JH welcomed everyone to the first live meeting since January 2020, and particularly welcomed SF.

### **2 Apologies**

Apologies were received from Philippa Howell (PH), Henry Williams (HW) and Robert Hyatt Williams.

### **3 Minutes of the trustee meeting, 13 April 2021**

The minutes were accepted as a true record.

### **4 Matters arising**

#### **4.1 Information boards replacement**

A Community Pride grant has been awarded for half the cost of replacing the three new boards, and £150 from the Arts Council. The updating of information is a more comprehensive task than anticipated, but should be completed (by JH's daughter, a professional editor) within the next month.

#### **4.2 Cheltenham Cultural Strategy workshop**

ST reported that two representatives for each sector have been appointed, and that for heritage matters one is Hilary Simpson, with whom she will liaise.

**Action: ST**

#### **4.3 Bandstand**

CA reported that a contractor has been appointed to repair the bandstand, and will start by the end of the month. A more specialist consultant is needed to assess the water at the Pump Room.

**4.4 Meeting with police (JK, CA and HW)** The possibility of resurrecting Parkwatch was considered, but the issue of encrypting email addresses would need to be resolved; in the meantime, people should be asked to be more proactive in reporting anti-social behaviour, and be given a number to ring. PB pointed out that problems need to be on record, so reporting is important. A campaign has begun to record the DNA of dogs (at a cost of £73.99 per dog). Quad bikes are a persistent problem in the park. Applications for money from the Police Commissioner's Fund have closed; PB suggested applying anyway, but what should be applied for? SF said that in his experience, permission for CCTV is difficult to obtain, especially near children's playgrounds. JK will look at the list of what can be applied for and consider what might be useful. CA said that Adam Reynolds (AR) should then be consulted before an application. JK and CA will discuss ways forward in liaising with the police.

**Action: JK, CA**

## **5 Finance report**

Following the circulation of the accounts and his report before the meeting, PB noted expenses for Bed 38. (CA said that more shrubs would be needed in the autumn.) £350 has been paid out for the restoration of paving at the gates, and this will move to the Miscellaneous section of the accounts, but JH expects to be reimbursed by Severn Trent. AH noted that the healthier balance is accounted for by not having to pay for a paper newsletter during lockdowns.

**Action: PB**

## **6 Park developments**

### **6.1 Masterplan**

The rockery has been planted. Plans for the steps and gates at the Pump Room are ready for applications for planning permission and listed building consent. CA and JH will meet to discuss fundraising.

**Action: CA, JH**

### **6.2 Skatepark**

ST and CA met the petitioners, and have floated ideas with AR, who would be happy to meet them. The skateboarders have started to raise money, and CA has given them a list of issues to consider but hasn't heard back from them. The current skate park is safe, but needs updating and improving, which would be a project for CBC, not FoP.

### **6.3 Frisbee golf**

There has been no update.

### **6.4 E-scooters**

SF reported receiving many emails, especially about the location of drop-off points and the lack of structures for housing the scooters; he is talking to colleagues about ways forward. JH said that just as FoP needs permission for paving etc, e-bike companies should need permission for the locations of parking. SF said that, with the approval of CBC, the County Council approved a trial for the whole county, but with no clear complaints procedure or channel for submitting evidence. It isn't clear who in the council will decide on changes. JK drew attention to a full page on the matter in Alex Chalk's newsletter, which mentions injuries to children locally. Each bike can be identified by its number if dumped in an anti-social manner.

### **6.5 Garden damage by the gates**

JH reported that plants have been uprooted by Netomnia, when installing a fibre network there, but that FoP will be compensated for new ones.

## **7 Regular activities**

### **7.1 Green Space Volunteers (GSVs)**

CA reported that two members of the CBC Green Space team are leaving, but replacements will be sought and Pittville Park GSVs can continue their work in the meantime. He has written to CBC about knotweed at the west bridge. Badly worn patches of grass in the Long Garden seem to have been caused by students playing a ball game from a trampoline repeatedly in the same spot. CA has discussed with AR the need for a copy of the by-laws to be posted on a noticeboard, since they aren't displayed in the park. AH pointed out the volume of complaints on FoP's Facebook page about legitimate activities. GE [?] Aviation have kindly offered £200 and volunteers for a morning to clear vegetation on the upper lake; CA will suggest that they buy and donate the tools that they need. CA reported that despite Covid, an average of 29 GSVs at each session completed about 400 hours of work between April and June.

### **7.2 Pittville History Works (PHW)**

SM had circulated minutes of the last meeting. ST will attend the next one.

### **7.3 Duck food dispenser**

Systems are working smoothly.

### **7.4 Drop-ins**

These have restarted, with about 15 people attending each time and the Pump Room a popular venue.

### **7.5 Newsletter**

AH said that it was too early to decide the content of the next newsletter, but that the deadline for contributions would be mid-August. JH suggested that this should be a wide circulation edition, to bring in new members. JK agreed, and will ask the 40 or more deliverers if they would be available. Paid delivery alternatives were considered; SF ruled out the Royal Mail, and mentioned Hallway Distribution (£120 for a ward). AH suggested that content should be addressed to potential new members, specifying what they could be involved in.

## **8 Future events**

### **8.1 Plant sale?**

This is likely to take place on 2 October, restrictions permitting. SM will have a planning meeting with PH, if she is happy to help. Consideration needs to be given to getting plants (including, with DR's help, from nurseries), means of payment (PB will organise cashless payment devices), licences from CBC, a Covid risk assessment, emails to members, and liaison with Scout leaders for use of the hut. (CA can pass on the details of a contact in Bristol.) ST pointed out that it would be a useful way of acquiring more members.

**Action: SM, PH, PB, DR**

### **8.2 Strategy meeting revised date**

A date will be chosen to suit as many people as possible via Doodle. SM will talk to AH about the program. *[After the meeting: This will be held at 6.15 on 21 September.]*

**Action: SM**

### **8.3 Heritage Open Days 10-19 September**

RHW's talk is progressing. JH has some notes to pass on to him. It will be important to ensure the date and content don't clash with offerings by Pittville Pump Room Revival or PHW.

**Action: SM, RHW**

### **8.4 Quiz Night**

This will be held on 4 October. It was agreed that the price would be raised to £7.50.

### **8.5 AGM date**

JH recommended that this should be live. SM reported that the school doesn't want to commit to lending the hall at this stage. JH said that an area of the Pump Room could be available if everyone paid for refreshments. AH agreed that the venue would be appropriate, but there were concerns about charging members. JH suggested that FoP might pay and ask for donations, but will negotiate with The Cheltenham Trust.

**Action: JH**

### **8.6 Car parking for races**

This was added to the agenda at HW's request. CA agreed that it could be done, depending on charges at the racecourse. PB would make card machines available.

## **9 Honorary membership**

There was agreement with JH's suggestion that Mike Beamish should be made an honorary member indefinitely, as should JK's elderly neighbour following her donation to FoP.

**Action: JK**

## **10 AOB**

### **10.1 Membership matters**

JK reported that 35 people underpay via their standing orders (and have done for years), and haven't responded to three requests to update their membership fees. JH pointed out that all membership fees are really just donations, since there are few benefits for FoP members. JK said that at the Wilson, underpayments are treated as donations and people lose their membership. AH emphasised the need for an inspirational article in the newsletter saying what fees enable. It was agreed that JK should no longer chase these payments, but will highlight them in her list.

#### **10.2 Cotswold Sculptors Association**

AH suggested that a two-week summer exhibition of sculptures organised by the CSA (of which he is a committee member) in a secure place in Cheltenham could be a fund-raiser. Venues take 20% of the profits. There is currently an exhibition at Berkeley Castle. The previous one was at Abbey Gardens in Malmesbury.

#### **10.3 Build Back Better fund**

SF suggested that FoP could bid for a contribution to projects. £40,000 will be available to distribute. CA thought information boards about wildlife might be a possibility and will pursue this with CBC staff.

**Action: CA**

#### **10.4 Highways budget**

SF is advocating more zebra crossings (eg in Tommy Taylors Lane, Wellington Road and Evesham Road) and would appreciate ideas for increasing safety in Pittville. CA pointed out that the footpath along West Approach Drive is in poor condition, and that cars turn across it.

#### **10.5 Applications for the post of Treasurer.**

PB has been approached by someone who may be interested and will be talking to her in the near future.

**Action: PB**

**11 Date of next meeting** Tuesday 12 October 2021.

The meeting ended at 8.00 pm.