

Friends of Pittville Trustee Meeting 4 April 2023 at 5.00pm at the Scout Hut, Central Cross Drive

Present:

Trustees Sally Thomas (ST), Sarah de Buriatte (SdeB), Sandy Marshall (SM), Chris Archibald (CA), John Holloway, Andy Hopkins (AH), Philippa Howell (PH), Henry Williams (HW)

Council representative Julian Tooke (JT)

Minutes Jocelyn Potter

1 Welcome and apologies

ST welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from Janina Kay (JK) and from council representative Stephan Fifield (SF).

2 Minutes of the last trustees meeting, 17 January 2023

The minutes were accepted as a true record.

3 Finance update, including budget review

SdeB circulated these documents before the meeting; there are no changes to the budget, and there were no questions from trustees. SdeB reported that the new card reader (which needs a mobile link) is being tested. Pittville History Works (PHW) will clarify the funds that it might need for managing the website and database before a final sum can be allocated to it.

4 Regular events

4.1 Quiz night PH passed on the suggestion of a Christmas quiz, which could be instead of or as well as the February one. It was agreed that it would be worth trying this year, so PH will find out whether Monday 4 December would suit the pub and quizmaster.

Action: PH

4.2 Race week parking

This was very successful, with plenty of volunteers who had an enjoyable time. There was a problem with parking signs on the first day; these were removed by the GCC Highways Officer, although all but two were on CBC land, but later retrieved from the racecourse. JH became a successful human A-board. CA and HW have a plan to prevent issues next year, and JT will write to GCC to ensure there are no problems. HW will commission banners to place in the park, but first the use of the car park in 2024 needs to be confirmed.

JT reported that overall the situation with racegoers was improved by the new measures in the streets between the racecourse and town, although there were some bad issues – for example, with road blocks manned by contractors. HW and CA noted that Tommy Taylors Lane was chaotic. The income generated (£4,792) was extremely useful to FoP.

Action: CA, HW, JT

4.3 CHS Show

ST thanked everyone who helped on the FoP stand. James Marks' technical equipment allowing people to hear the noises made by plants and fruit was very popular. We raised £27.80 from the Lucky Dip and gave out a number of membership forms and GSV cards.

5 Future events

5.1 Plant sale (29 April)

ST will ask James Marks to participate, and will ask JK if she would like to do the raffle; AH will help. Raffle prizes and donated plants should be brought between 9.30 and 10.00. PH will collect plants from one nursery and man the stall. CA will obtain a street trading licence. *[This has since been issued to SM.]* Cash or card payments will be accepted. AH will collect some of CA's plants in advance, and drive them to the sale on the day.

Action: CA, AH, PH, ST, JK (?)

5.2 Summer garden party at 53 Pittville Lawn

This will be a fundraiser for 60 – 80 people and will be advertised as being held in Oggy Boytchev's (OB) house to avoid any concern about JT being a councillor. JT suggested donations of £25 per head. OB and JT will donate enough wine for two glasses per head (after which guests will be able to pay for more), and suggested that FoP pay for the cheese. ST will approach companies like Cheeseworks with a request for donations. Possible entertainment might be a talk by Steve Blake on the history of houses in Pittville Lawn or a poetry recital by Stephen Selby. JH, SdeB and ST will form an organizing sub-group and think about marketing and tickets.

Action: JH, SdeB, ST, JT

5.3 Possible recital

Stephen Selby has offered to give a fundraising recital. This might be in the autumn.

5.4 AGM (23 October)

The date has been confirmed with St Paul's Church. ST is looking for a speaker.

Action: ST

6 Projects

6.1 Masterplan and steps

ST reported that CBC's legal team have worked slowly and therefore delayed the tender documents. ST will contact the CBC project manager for an update. The actual cost should be known by mid-May, with completion by the end of September.

Action: ST

6.2 Information boards

Copies of two Flora and Fauna boards were circulated before the meeting; CA reported that they are in production and should be erected by the beginning of May. The size is 1060 x 750mm. Visitors to the park will be able to click on the QR code to download the information, holding it on their phones as they walk or printing it off later. The work has been done by CBC and volunteers, and CBC would like to use the design as a template for other parks. Following a question from AH, CA agreed that the pdfs could be uploaded into the learning resources of the website. AH will look at the resources to see if there is duplication of information. JH suggested capitalizing on the erection of the boards for publicity. Either FoP or CBC will take photos, and it will be highlighted in the next newsletter. A grant for a third board on the Native Tree Habitat is being submitted to the Build Back Better fund.

Action: CA, AH

6.3 Sensory beds

FoP will submit an application for a grant of £2500 from the Cheltenham Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy Fund as a contribution towards these, and have the support of JT, SF, the scouts and CBC. CA reported that Phase 1 will involve replacing topsoil, new plants and signage in one bed for each sense. The existing benches could be renewed in bright colours. Bike racks might be needed, and could also be sculptural. Niki Whitfield has suggested that £600 be allocated for ideas for the space around the beds, for design and consulting. CA said that a Phase 2 grant would be sought to implement the ideas the artist came up with in Phase 1 for the sensory beds.

It was noted that Jenny Ogle organized and raised funds for a Holst statue. JT pointed out that CBC has a public art group, and they may have specific ideas on the size of any sculpture. AH reminded the meeting of resources within the Cotswold Sculptors Association, with its many artists who could provide sculptures from stone, metal, resin etc on a smaller scale than public art. CA will liaise with AH. *[However, after the meeting: CA noted that the artist may suggest something sculptural, but probably more like the additions to the community bridge than public art.]*

GSVs can do the gardening, but others will be needed to form a small team, including people knowledgeable about plants. CA will ask David Richards, Judie Hodsdon and specific GSVs if they would be interested. ST thanked CA for all his work on this project.

Action: CA, AH, volunteers

7 Regular activities

7.1 GSVs CA circulated a report on their work in advance of the meeting.

7.2 PHW SM reported that the group was reorganizing after the departure of the chair and secretary, but that there is a serious issue with ongoing management of the website, which is hosted in the U.S. Since database management on this scale needs a specialist, it will be expensive. ST will talk to John Simpson about what is required.

Action: ST

7.3 Duck feeder

PH reported that JH is now involved, sharing the tasks, but that AimUp has withdrawn its assistance; at some point the key and leftover duck food will need to be collected from the charity.

Action: PH

8 Newsletter

ST passed on compliments for the last newsletter, but AH felt that the content was rather dull. AH will need copy for the June newsletter by 8 May, and photographs before the end of May. He will write to everyone about possible articles, to include matters arising from this meeting: the information boards; the sensory beds; the summer party; an update on the steps. ST has contacted Susanna or Harriet about an article on the park cafes, but with no success, and will try again. AH suggested a piece on the fundraising for the All Saints Church organ. JH suggested something about the Festival experience this year, to include the effect of a lower number of visitors; this could come from the Jockey Club. JK or ST could liaise with them.

Action: All trustees

9 Other issues

9.1 CBC heritage strategy ST reported that this was barely referred to in the CBC Corporate Plan 2023-2027, and that she has volunteered to attend meetings but as yet hasn't received an invitation. JT said that Max Wilkinson is the relevant cabinet member.

9.2 Marketing ST reminded everyone of the great prizes being offered by the Cheltenham Lottery, since fewer people are buying tickets that benefit FoP.

ST will contact Caroline Macklin about Facebook, since there is confusion about whether she is now running it, as she hasn't responded to AH's offers of a handover.

CA said that the park noticeboard needs bright colours to draw attention to notices. ST is taking pictures and JH will be writing text about the GSVs for a notice and will send CA what he has done.

HW puts out A-boards when the GSVs are working, and CA will get more cards printed to hand out. AH suggested that a strong image should appear on both the noticeboard and the A-boards.

PH pointed out that the area around the noticeboard is a quagmire. CA agreed that that whole area needs improving, with wider paths. JT will ask CBC if it can be dealt with. Despite

renovation of the underpass by community payback workers, racegoers used it as a toilet and graffiti has reappeared.

Action: ST, JH, CA, JT

9.3 Website progress ST has had a meeting with David Hewitt (DH), the administrator, and Simon Oakley has volunteered to be the web editor. DH will check his Wordpress level (a meeting at which ST or JH should be present), and he will then need mentoring to be told what needs to be updated or added. JH will look at the site and invite other trustees to volunteer their input on particular sections; SM, AH and CA would be happy to help, and JH will coordinate the work. SdeB reported that the online membership form is still not working; she will nudge DH. It should go live at the beginning of August at the latest, and then be highlighted in the newsletter.

Action: ST, JH, SM, AH, CA, SdeB

9.4 Equality and diversity policy FoP can incorporate into its rules an off-the-shelf policy from the Charity Commission. In answer to JH's suggestion that FoP also have a policy for safeguarding, CA pointed out that GSVs never work with children or vulnerable adults unless a parent or carer is also present.

9.5 Passwords ST asked for all passwords to be sent to her so that copies of a complete list can be kept with the chair and secretary. Some were handed over at the meeting; others should be sent.

Action: AH and any other trustees with passwords

9.6 Social media See above

9.7 Strategy meeting This will be held on Monday 19 June at 10.00am to discuss the future running of FoP as there may be a lot of changes in the Executive Committee over the next 18 months. ST will talk to Nicole at the Scout Hut to see if it is available on that date.

Action: ST

10 AOB

ST suggested a leaving do for Tom and Fiona Clarke at the Clarence Square hotel (perhaps 4.00 – 6.00pm, and will talk to them about dates.

Action: ST

11 Next meeting

Tuesday 11 July 2023, 5.00pm in the Scout hut.

The meeting closed at 6.50pm.