**Minutes**

**MEETING AND AGM OF FRIENDS OF SCHOLES PARK**

**30th Nov 2021 8.30pm**

Venue: Zoom

1. Attendees. Jo Outterside (Secretary), Simon Goldthorpe (Treasurer), Bridget Hanley (Chair), Rachel Knight (Heritage Officer), Keith Holloway (Councillor), Tracey Payton (Gatley Primary and Kingsway School), Venessa McManus (Gatley Primary)

Apologies. Gary Wade, Victoria Harris (Communications Officer), Alison Jones (Kingsway School), Richard Booker (Stockport Council)

1. Accounts – Simon Goldthorpe

We have raised our cash balance by £6,598.42 over the course of the year through extensive fundraising and donations. The closing balance is earmarked towards new play equipment. It is recommended by the treasurer to keep a minimum of £200 in the bank to pay for incidentals during the year leaving £7,699.51 towards new play equipment (the trim trail).

1. Recent Events

Bulb planting, litter pick and scavenger hunt 17th Oct.

1. Upcoming events
	1. Lantern Parade Planning
* The lantern workshops at Gatley Primary, Lum Head Primary and St James’ and URC Sunday Schools went really well. Packs of paper lanterns also given to Brookside preschool. A big thank you to Jennifer Bradbury and her husband who helped with the workshops.
* Final workshop planned on Gatley Green on day of parade 1pm.
* Final plans for the parade on 4th Dec . Plan route discussed. Gatley Carrs have kindly lent us their speaker play Christmas music. Carol singing planned. Bridget to print out sheets
* Linking up with Scouts stalls on the Green in the afternoon and after parade. They are selling Christmas gifts, hotdogs, hot drinks and mulled wine.
* £100 received from Forever Manchester Community Christmas party fund, as well as the £200 from Stockport Hydro to fund this event which has covered costs. Donations taken at workshops and on parade. Amount raised to be confirmed.
	1. Christmas family trail. Install before the start of School Holidays and as soon as we can after the lantern parade. Cancelled last year due to covid but we have the robins, posters, risk assessment ready to use. Plan to get some maps printed (with new word search) and leave in shops in Gatley with donation pots and ask for £1 per map. Also make available on socials. **JO, VH, SG**. Email Iain Roberts and he can advertise in Counsellor newsletter. **JO.**
	2. Bulb planting task day. 400 bulbs received from council. Date 19th December. Could work on flower beds by Gatley Hill House and near the back entrance to Gatley Primary. Link with the Flower Ranges **BH**.
	3. St James 140 year celebration. FOSP display. 27th Nov (coffee morning), 28th Nov (after morning service), 5th Dec.
	4. Other potential events in longer term,
		1. Bat identification (**VH** knows an expert) that would do a session. Needs to be in the summer
		2. Spring, tree identification trail and gardening activity with school groups. **JO**
		3. Tidy entrance to play park, improve wildflower area and plant fruit bushes. Involve Gatley Flower Rangers and blooming local.
1. Running track refurbishment update. The intention of this refurbishment is to improve the track for the community and access for the community will still be in place at all times.

TP and VM gave an update of their discussions with RB. The council have decided they do not want to go ahead with the track refurbishment using the donation from the Gatley Primary Education Trust, as they cannot provide match funding for the tree work required and cannot commit to ongoing maintenance. They have suggested a community group, or the GP school trust could take up a lease and have responsibility for maintenance. Both GP and FOSP have concerns that we would not want this level of responsibility particularly for H&S of the general public.

Requirement to explore the legal position in terms of the covenant on Scholes Park.

There is a similar situation for Cheadle Green which has been leased to the Cheadle Civic Society which could be a useful model. Some form of lease to the GP School Trust and/or FOSP could be a possibility but both groups would not take on the legal fees to draw this up. We would need to consider responsibilities and liabilities very carefully.

**KH & TP** to take forward. Plan to arrange to meet with Shella Bailey, Cabinet member at her surgery and write to Caroline Simpson. Also put in request to borough solicitor for legal information.

1. City of Trees/The Queens Green Canopy Tree Planting. Planting taking place 4th Dec. Invitation to book slots to do planting.
2. Request from Stockport Talking Newspaper for written and spoken piece about the Parks History and Tree Planting Project. We will do this. **BH & VH**
3. Concern over cyclists on refurbished park path. Replacement/ additional no cycling/dismount signs. Need to chaise up with Council **JO**
4. Park Information Sign Update. Now installed. Funded by Ward Flexibility Fund.
5. Trim trail play equipment funding update. Amount to raise is £11,250. Aim is to raise the funds needed this financial year.
	1. £590 just giving donations, £700 SPRING group, £250 time capsules, £500 Dudley fund, £1000 Arnold Clark Community fund, £1000 Forever Manchester Autotrader Community Fund, £2500 Brookfield Park Shires Family Trust (now received). Amount available from Existing funds £1,159.51. Total funds available currently £7699.51.

This leaves £3,550.49 to raise.

Potential additional funding

* 1. Tesco Groundwork Application
	2. One Stockport Local Fund (website says applications now closed).
	3. Additional Forever Manchester Funds
	4. WSP Foundation Grant £2500 (applied for)
	5. List available Sector 3 – Stockport in Synergy
	6. Morrison’s and Waitrose funding applications
	7. Council have indicated they may be able to put an amount towards from the remaining park equipment budget at the end of this year.
1. Involvement with SEN Community. Take forward into plans with children and school groups next year.
2. Gatley Hill House Refurbishment. Potential for sign and new bench. Speak to Simon Fennell Asset Manager. **RK**
3. Urban art project with Kingsway School under railway arch at Foxland Road Entrance to Park
	1. Progress made with Network Rail and artist Eamonn Murphy
	2. Kingsway School support the proposal and are really keen to be involved.
	3. Proposal costing £2,595 which is for 6 bi-bond fitted under the railway arch which will be designed at workshops with Kingsway School and produced by Artist Eamonn Murphy. A similar installation is going in at the road railway arch by East Didsbury train station.
	4. KH advised to make an application to Brookfields Trust for the funding as this is something they may support. Suggested to also involve primary schools. **JO**
4. Fundraising calendar. **VH.** Plan to ask people to submit photos for each month and do an online vote. To start in Jan 22 collecting photos. Can include photos by Josie local photographer with her permission. To do jointly with Gatley Carrs (raise at AGM in two weeks). Victoria has spoken to Emma and she is keen. Plan to ask local businesses to sponsor a month each. Ask Sign and Display/Gatley signs for printing. All sales split between us and the Carrs. We can sell at school fairs.
5. Income is over £5000 per year we need to apply for charitable status. Advice given by TP with her experience from her application for the charity group she set up. A specialist was used to apply for them at a cost of £650 which FOSP will consider. **SG**
6. Spiritual assembly request to plant a tree. Feedback from Council Arboriculturalist Peter Pollard that the council do not allow commemorative trees which was disappointing. However, offer of a commemorative bench instead which the group are progressing which we support.
7. Voting in of committee members. All existing committee members voted in for another year.
8. Any Other Business. None.