**Minutes**

**MEETING OF FRIENDS OF SCHOLES PARK**

**1st March 2022 8pm**

Venue: Piccolo’s Restaurant, Gatley

1. Attendees.

Jo Outterside, Simon Goldthorpe, Victoria Harris, Keith Holloway, Iain Hunter, Alison Jones

1. Accounts – Simon Goldthorpe. See separate sheet
2. The access points to Scholes part are very muddy and almost in assessable after the recent wet weather, particularly at the Firs Road entrance (near new trees) and Borrowdale Ave/Fairway entrance. Laying of wood chippings only helps temporarily and as they are sold for biofuel they are in short supply. Keith has raised this problem with the Council as well. Proposal to fundraise to improve these access points/ create paths. Ward Flexibility fund could be an option. To be considered after the funding for the trim trail play equipment is complete. Simon already has plans with our proposed path routes on. Ask Gatley Primary for the costs for their new entrance path and which contractor they used **JO**
3. Request from Stockport Talking Newspaper for written and spoken piece about the Parks History and Tree Planting Project. Ask **BH** for an update.
4. The Cheadle Post newspaper are looking for articles on local organisations. Mel and Amanda are the contacts. FOSP happy to provide an article. **VH** to speak to them.
5. Concern over cyclists on refurbished park path. Replacement/ additional no cycling/dismount signs. JO and SG raised this with Richard Booker and he said this was still to be done but will be done.
6. Trim trail play equipment funding update. Amount to raise is £11,250. Total funds available from fundraising so far is currently £8001

We have three funding applications we are waiting to hear back from:

* Tesco's which will be at least £500, but may be £1000 or £1500 if we earn the most tokens
* Forever Manchester Fund CDL which will be £1000 if successful

Contact made to Richard Booker to see if the council will fund the shortfall and whether we can now place the order for the trim trail. He has agreed to this and hopes the install can be done before the long summer school holidays. The price may go up as some time has passed since the original quote. FOSP will still continue to apply for grants to minimise the shortfall. **JO.** We will look to reduce the cost with a different type of surface for the install. Rubber bound mulch or matting has been suggested.

1. Gatley Hill House Refurbishment. Potential for sign and new bench. Speak to Simon Fennell Asset Manager. **RK.** If not included in the refurbishment we may be able to fundraise for these.
2. Urban art project with Kingsway School under railway arch at Foxland Road Entrance to Park
   1. 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.
   2. Application made to Brookfield Trust to fund the project, which was successful, so we now have funding in place.
   3. We are now going through the clearance process with Network rail as they check for any problems with the railway arch, or any future work required on it. This is due to be complete in March, after which we can organise the design workshops with The Kingsway School and get the artwork commissioning and produced, and then installed. Plan to hold the workshops after Easter. **JO**
   4. Plan to send out a message asking the community for their ideas for the artwork, to help give the Kingsway students ideas. **JO & VH**
3. Fundraising calendar.Plan to ask people to submit photos for each month and do an online vote. To start in Jan 22 collecting photos. Could do jointly with Gatley Carrs. 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. Any requests for photos can be advertised in Councillor newsletter. Send request to Iain Roberts. **VH**
4. Income is over £5000 per year we need to apply for charitable status. Simon has spoken to financial advisor who may be willing to help us at no cost. The format of our accounts will need to be changed. **SG**
5. Running track refurbishment update.

Notes from last meeting- 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. 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.

Update from Keith. He wrote to Vicky Bates, head of legal services with the council to understand the covenant and see if a community body can make improvements. **KH** to continue enquires.

1. Recent Events
   1. Christmas Lantern Making Workshops and Lantern Parade with the Scouts Christmas stalls
   2. Christmas Robin Trail
   3. Bulb Planting on Gatley Hill 19th Dec – Gatley URC Sunday School
2. Upcoming events to Plan
   1. Spring tree identification trail and painting and re-planting planters with school groups. We have permission from Daryll Falkner at the council to paint the planters and he said he may be able to provide paint brushes. **JO** to organise.
   2. Community task day on the running track. Cleaning/clearing weeds from sand pits, reinstating cover, cutting back of shrubs/low tree branches. Get local groups such at the Cavillers football team and Good Gym involved. **SG** to organise. Potential to use power tools if a FOSP member goes on the councils power tools on task days course. **JO** to put **SG**’s name forward to the council to attend the next course.
   3. Plan another litter pick **JO**
   4. East trail **JO & VH.** May put out chocolate on trail for one day. New locations for the trail points to be chosen in places people may not know about.
   5. Other potential events in longer term,
      1. Christmas 2022. Plan to do lantern parade again, working with Scouts for their Christmas stalls. Ideally to be done on Light Switch on day. Hold meeting with Bethany Church well in advance.
      2. Bat identification. **VH** knows an expert, Bobby that would do a session and will contact him to book. Needs to be in the summer. **JO** to apply to Stockport Hydro or another fund to pay for this.
      3. Task day to tidy entrance to play park, improve wildflower area and plant fruit bushes. Involve Gatley Flower Rangers and blooming local.
3. Any Other Business.
   1. Involvement in Gatley Festival. Contact Alex **SG**
   2. Provisional date for next meeting date 24th May