

MINUTES

Friends of Apex Park Improvements Group

Wednesday 6th December 2006 at 7.00pm

At

Trowbridge Close communal hall, Highbridge



Present: Joyce Beard Chair
Fay Burston Vice Chair
Jenny Manners Acting Secretary (Sedgemoor District Council)

Other Members:

Patrick Stokes, Vi Maidment, Jack Burston, Maurice White, Clive Cheesley, Vi Chick, Stan Smith, Harley Cook - Sedgemoor District Council & Chris Bees, Supervisor, Clean Surroundings.

1. **Apologies** – Tony Lynham, Derek Chivers, Mary Draper, Eileen Picton Sandra Pain, Doreen Barratt, Dave Aggett, Clean Surroundings

2. **Notes of previous Meeting** - Wednesday 18th October 2006 were agreed as a true and accurate account.

It was proposed by the Chair to bring forward item 6 - Breathing Places/ Big Lottery Application due to the impending submission date for the application.

6. **Breathing Places/ Big Lottery application** – Copies of the draft form sent to all members for comments. Deadline for applications is noon Wednesday 13th December.

Queries raised:

- Why Yellow Rattle seed? This is a recommendation from Wessex Ecological Consultants who recently prepared an Ecological report of the Spinney and Meadow. Due to the fertility of the soil grasses have taken over the existing wildflowers, so seeding with Yellow Rattle will help reduce the grass vigour and allow the wildflower plugs to flourish.

- £9,000 is a lot of money for flowers and seed. How is this calculated? – The amounts stated in the application are based on prices obtained from Wildflower specialist per square metre. If the group are successful, there may be the opportunity to source the plants etc through a local supplier such as Sanders, who may be able to offer better value for money.

JM has written to various groups and organisations to establish support for the campaign, although unable to contact Highbridge Scouts, Brownies/ Guides and Gardening clubs etc through lack of contacts.

Fay stated that the Highbridge U3A were already committed to the Highbridge War Memorial Trusts application to the same fund, to create a similar garden at Southwell Gardens, but suggested contacting Ken Hindle – Burnham on Sea U3A.

Action: JM to arrange completion/ signing off of the forms for submission to the Big Lottery by noon Wednesday 13th December.

3. **Wildlife Guide Leaflet** – It was generally felt that the leaflet was good, although the following amendments needed to be made:

- North Symbol to be added to Map
- New cycleway link by skatepark to be added to map
- The amendment of the text regarding the number of brick and tile works at the site.
- The amendment of the text regarding The Friends of park.

It was also suggested that information regarding Grey Squirrels and Foxes could be added.

Action: HC to make the recommended changes and liaise with the leaflet designer.

4. **Grounds Maintenance Customer Charter** – It was agreed that this was a good charter, although concerns were raised about the need for a permanent staff presence in the park, to address day-to-day issues.

Chris Bees advised the group that he had made plans to free up a member of staff in the North area to cover the Apex Park one day a week until a Park Warden could be appointed. This is due to be considered by SDC in the New Year.

5. **Dog Walking in Apex Park Leaflet** – It was unanimously felt that this leaflet was very good and informative, whilst being light hearted. Doubts were raised whether certain dog owners would take heed of the advice and to continue to allow their dogs to foul in the park.

Chris Bees felt that dog fouling had decreased in the last 6 years and that most dog owners cleared up. He also advised that the dog bins that were vandalised recently had been replaced.

JM – requested for members with dogs to contact her if they wished to be photographed to appear in the leaflet. Vi Maidment and Stan Smith agreed to be models with their dogs..

6. **Breathing Places/ Big Lottery application** - Already discussed – see above.

7. **Website Development** – The setting up of the website is progressing well and should be ready to go live in January 2007. JB requested that the Parks Byelaws be added to the site.

Action: JM to progress with the website and add Byelaws or summary of the byelaws as requested.

8. **Skatepark Update** – The final phase of construction has now been completed in partnership with Burnham on Sea and Highbridge Town Council following consultation with the skaters and young people.

It was raised that the lights which should turn off by electronic time switch at 9 to 9.30 pm were currently staying on to late at night.

Action: JM to speak to Ralph Smith to arrange for the switch to be adjusted/ repaired.

9. **Park Ranger Office Update** – HC has arranged for SDC Facilities Management to draw up plans to convert the store behind the toilet block into a Rangers office/ Information point. However the works will have to comply with Building Regulations and will be subject to Planning Permission being granted. It is anticipated that works will commence Spring 2007.

It was raised again whether a water fountain/tap could be incorporated into the design/ layout, as it was strongly felt by the group that free water should be available to park users.

Action: HC to speak to Environmental Health again to establish their views.

10. **Winter Works/ Conservation Group** – JM raised the idea of the group carrying out conservation works/cutting back in the park in March 2007. Works are required to cut back the overgrown hedgerow on the embankment adjacent to the car park and it was felt the group could achieve this, with the assistance of other volunteers. Possible dates for the event are Saturday 3rd or 9th March.

Action: JM to contact BCTV or Sedgemoor Volunteers to see if they will be available to assist with such an event.

11. **Proposed Residential Development at Delta Engineering Site** – After a lengthy discussion it was agreed that members would submit their comments on the proposed application to JM, who will collate a response from the group to the consultant. The overall feeling from the group was that the development should not be allowed to encroach into Apex Park.

12. Any other business

12.1 **New store for Model Boat Club** – A sea crate/ metal container has been purchased by Sedgemoor District Council to re-locate the Sedgemoor Model Boats clubs kit from the rear of the toilet block. This container has been situated adjacent to the BMX clubs track and will allow better access for the boat club when launching their boat.

Clive Cheesley queried whether the container would have an electricity supply. HC to investigate and report back to the club.

12.2 **Multi Language signs/ leaflets** – It was suggested that due to the increase of foreign nationals to the area that the signs and leaflets may have to be adapted to meet there needs.

12.3 **Spring Bulb Planting** – The Friends have been allocated 4 bags of daffodil bulbs to be planted at the Apex Park. It was agreed that the bulbs would be planted adjacent to the Lakeside Track by the children's play area on Saturday 16th December at 10.00am. If you wish to help out, please meet by the play area and bring a spade.

12.4 **Tree for Brian Wiles** – Clive Cheesley queried when the tree in memorial for Brian Wiles will be planted. JM to speak to Dave Aggett to sort out as soon as possible.

12.5 **Dog Warden** – It was requested that the Dog Warden attend the next meeting, so that the groups concerns about dog fouling, loose dogs on the cycleway and dog attacks could be discussed.

Action: JM to contact Tina Kick, Dog Warden.

12.6 **Management Plan Projects** - Updates on the status of projects to be added on the agenda for the next meeting. I.e. Outside Tap, Visitor Centre, shelter, etc

13. Date & Time of next 2 meetings

- Wednesday 24th January 2007 at 3pm at the Gospel Hall, Highbridge.
- Wednesday 7th March 2007 at 7pm at Trowbridge Close Sheltered Housing Communal Hall, Highbridge