

# Friends of the Inch Park First Annual General Meeting

October 30, 2014

Present: Bruce Duncan, Sarah Smith, Neny Milne, Mike Shields, Margaret Faichney, Annette MacBeath, Neil Hay, Christina Smith, Peter Davidson

Apologies: Mr Bonner

Neny Milne opened the meeting at 6:40pm

## **1 Constitution**

Neny Milne welcomes all to the meeting. Describes history of FoIP as a core of interested people meeting in July to agree a draft constitution. This is the document to be discussed and signed today. It will enable the group to make the park a nicer place for everyone, especially those interested in gardening/horticulture. There is a keen interest in sustainability. This will be achieved in liaison with the council.

Today we need to adopt the constitution and elect a committee.

We have people in mind for the roles of convener and treasurer, but more involvement is encouraged! We have to decide on any membership fee and the projects we would like to start with.

Neny Milne offered to be the Convener of the group.

Neil Hay offered to take on the post of Secretary.

Sarah Smith offered to be the Treasurer of the group.

All present agreed. The draft constitution was signed by the committee and witnessed by those present

## **2 Aims**

### **2.1 Safety**

Annette began with concerns about safety. The speed of the cars using the road was considered excessive, and the amount of parking inadequate. Annette gave two examples. Mike summarised action taken so far: meeting with the sports clubs and David Doig, agreement from the sports club to chaperone vehicles, improve signage. Christina contested that there was not enough car parking in the park. Mike explained that more space is going to be made available in the future when funds become available. Peter opined that it is crazy to put more parking in the park when the nearby shopping centre has ample parking. All present agreed that this was a viable solution. Annette and Mike discussed the possibility of using the cricket ground hard standing [ed: where is this?] for parking. Mike expressed the hope that education could be used to reduce the number of people driving into the park.

### **2.2 Paths**

Christina asked for paths between Glenallan Drive and the park road, and insisted that consultation was ineffective such that paths which have been implemented are unsuitable for residents.

Christina explained that the route from Glenallan Drive to the park makes the park unusable, especially for users with prams, wheelchairs, etc. Mike explained that funding is available and that friends groups will find it much easier to access funding.

### **2.3 General discussion**

Nenya suggested a consultation with parks users: “what would you like to see in your park?” This led on to a discussion about wildflowers and more strimming of nettles. Christina expressed disappointment about the cut grass being left to rot on the greens, which leads to a lack of family users.

Annette asked Mike about the debris site behind the sports centre, which reduces the aesthetic value of the bench sited there. Peter added that crab apples and maple trees had been planted there to improve the site, but that the ground is hard to work and will take time to bring up to standard.

Neil contended that the speed bumps on the park road are not fit for purpose. Mike explained that the roads officers have inspected the bumps and deemed them suitable. Christina asked for the roads officers to converse

directly with the residents. Mike responded that the friends group was the ideal forum for passing comments officially to the council officers.

Nenya suggested a friends group street art day to bring a sense of ownership to the park.

Everyone agreed that a meeting with the roads manager Alan Dunlop as a group would be the best way to progress the safety concerns.

Margaret expressed concern at dog fouling in the park. Bruce suggested that the correct response is to phone the police, and Christina offered that environmental health will take complaints and will gather evidence in order to take action. Christina suggested more bins in the park and those present agreed that there were some places which were lacking. Mike offered to look into placing more bins, but explained that the parks budget is very limited.

Bruce inquired about the possibility of dog bag dispensers but most agreed that vandalism would restrict the viability of such a proposal. Vandalism was agreed to be a problem in the park, with certain school groups being particularly problematic.

Sarah raised the problem of litter around the border with Cameron Toll and suggested a broader "litter pick". The sports centre has a dedicated bin to reduce the impact of events.

## **2.4 Plants**

Sarah suggested planting edible plants around the park. Various grants are available for plants and seeds. Mike has offered materials and the time of his rangers to assist with planting. Margaret suggested turning some of the dead trees into sculptures. There was lots of support for this and Mike suggested that suitably-vetted amateurs would be able to achieve this with the help of the group.

Mike suggested improving the interpretation boards in the park to help users to identify wildlife and plants.

Sarah expressed an interest in the woodland path next to the central park road, and in obtaining more bulbs (not just daffodils!) to extend the woodland path.

Sarah mentioned sunflower day and an aspiring plan to work with the school plant sunflowers around the border fence within the park.

Nenya and Christina suggested a willow tree next to the play park in the flooded area.

Sarah hoped for a coppice of willow trees.

## 2.5 Other

Mike described the availability of outdoor gyms in other areas in Edinburgh and explained that plans are being made for similar installations in conjunction with the sports club.

Mike mentioned that on the 26th of November at 1830-2100 in City Chambers, Edinburgh Friends groups meeting with talks about what groups have achieved, James Davidson will talk about the living landscape. Two members allowed per group.

## 3 Summary

Nenya summed up the discussion:

- Parking and passing places signage and markings.
- Desire lines for new paths and features: An event to gather requirements from the public. Mike offered a large map.
- Street art competition for the park road, including closing the road for an event. Nenya to make some initial investigations into the viability.
- Planting interesting things in the park, especially orchards, to feed into the “plan your park” event. Nenya offered to take responsibility for organising the event in January.
- Sculptures made out of dead trees. Christina offered to take lead on organising the event.
- Wildlife/Plantlife signage to be part of “plan your park”.
- New bins. Funding perhaps available from tidy Scotland. Bruce to take responsibility.
- Antisocial behaviour: Phone police.
- Litter pick. Invite a corporate group to team building. Sarah to make investigations into businesses which might be interested. Christina to involve the sports club.
- Contact Cameron Toll and Sainsbury’s to make them aware of the group and to find out how interested they are to help.

- Friday 1st May: Sunflower day. Get kids involved. Sarah to organise and look into seed procurement.
- Willow trees and coppices. Christina to investigate funding sources.
- Nature walk and group exploration of the park. November 23rd 1230 with Peter, meet at Community Centre

## **4 Membership fee**

Consensus was to not charge a membership fee and instead to rely on donations.

## **5 Close**

Nenya closed the meeting at 2015.