

MIRRLEES FIELDS FRIENDS GROUP

MINUTES FROM THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 21
NOVEMBER 2017 AT STOCKPORT GEORGIANS CRICKET CLUB
WOODSMOOR

MEMBERS PRESENT

Attending: were 35 members of the "Friends Group" and 9 committee members.

1. **Apologies for Absence** Jo and Wendi Walkies.

2. **MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS AGM** The minutes from the 2016 AGM were read and approved as a correct record of the meeting. There were no matters arising. Proposed: Anthony Bryant Seconded: Bill Croft

3. **ELECTION OF OFFICERS** - Chair, Deputy Chair, General Secretary, & Treasurer.

Chairman: David Kemp
Deputy Chair Gene Allen
Secretary: Alison Marsden
Treasurer: Antony Byatt
Membership: David Gosling

Co-opted members: Bill & Sandra Crofts, Brian Waddington, Alan Sillitoe, Jim Gilligan, Andy Stobbie, & the late Charlie Gallagher.

Anyone wishing to join the committee, volunteers on work task days, or on an organised event, or have ideas for events/activities that maybe held on the fields would be most welcome. Please speak to a committee member.
Committee meetings are held approximately every 6 to 8 weeks at The Shady Oak on the New House Farm housing estate.

4. ANNUAL REPORT

Presentation included photographs of the fields, wildlife seen, work/task days and events held during the last 12 months.

The footpath (part of the Fred Perry Way) is to be upgraded - re surfaced with some lighting installed. The footpath will be 3 metres wide and at the Kinross entrance 2 metres wide. The footpath will be accessible for anyone disabled. Some of the trees and bushes will need to be cut back. The footpath will hopefully provide a safe place to walk to Hazel Grove, Great Moor and Woodsmoor including the station. The fence boundary to the new housing estate is in a very poor state and is to be replaced.

Interpretation Boards are to be placed at the entrances to the fields. Information and forthcoming events can be displayed.

Community orchard is thriving fruit may be picked.

A very big thank you to everyone who help to keep the fields litter free especially Wendi Dog Walkies who organises regular litter collection.

Fleeces have been purchased with the friends group logo on volunteers may wear these on work/task days.

Rumour going round Stockport Planning Department has been approached re: 300 houses being built. If approval were granted the rest of the land would be placed in trust. Stockport Planning Department and local councillors are not aware of any such planning application. We all need to remain vigilant to any planning applications.

Adam from Cheshire Wildlife was introduced. Man Diesel continue to contribute a membership fee to Cheshire Wildlife for 6 days of environment work to be carried out on the fields known as "Task Days." The task days are covered by Cheshire Wildlife Insurance and are usually well supported. Previous work/task days have included planting and maintaining the orchard, litter collection, clearing Himalaya balsam from the fields and tree planting. Future events are: 1. Making bird boxes, 2.wild flower planting, and 3. Scything this has become more popular from the television series Poldark. Volunteers are always needed for these events.

- ❖ The orienteering course is now installed with the help of Stockport Grammar and Ladybrook Valley Scouts.
- ❖ 3 benches have been installed near the entrances to the Fred Perry Way footpath.
- ❖ The Health Walk leaflet funded by Stepping Hill Hospital and Greater Manchester Transport is now printed and ready to be circulated. The health walks are to be lead by volunteers for the first 6 weeks. The volunteers will be able to show and explained the points of interest to look out for. All walks must keep to the public right of way around the fields.
- ❖ Following the completion of the new housing development the Fred Perry Way footpath is to be upgraded making the footpath accessible to everyone.
- ❖ Stockport Grammar has sponsored orienteering course.

Gift Aid explained by Anthony Donations of a £1 allows the Friends group to claim 25p back. All members donating money should complete a declaration form.

5. Treasurers Report

Anthony presented the accounts and circulated copies. Anthony explained the Gift Aid and Go funding page that has been very successful. 3 scythes were purchased and some more fruit trees for the Community orchard. £600 was also raised for the orienteering posts and maps. Every £1 given to the friends group allow us to claim 25p back providing the declaration form is completed. The constitution has ben updated/revised.

6. Future of the Fields Our response to Stockport's Consultation and Proposed Application for Local Green Space Designation. Presentation followed by an Open Forum.

Due to the housing shortage more houses need to be built. We need to remain vigilant. The friends Group have applied for the fields to become a community green space. Which is special to the local community, is recreation, and valuable resource for wildlife.

The friends group prepared a survey this was sent out to the local community during July and August. 400 responses were received. The committee would like to thank Peter for his help with the on line version of the survey. Results of the survey maybe found on our web page. A brief summary from the survey shows local residents, cyclist, and runner's use the fields regularly. 93% of people walked regularly on the fields 16% cycled 54% walking dogs 75% exercise and recreation. 84% the fields are very important to them and value them for the wildlife it supports in an urban setting the fields were seen as a valuable community resource unique history. Fields should be retain as green space as part of the Fred Perry Way and links to Happy Valley. Residents from Hazel Grove, Great Moor, Bramhall, and Woodsmoor use the fields. Local schools also used the fields along with other and local organisations including cubs/scouts groups, and runners.

7. Any Other Business

The Chairman on behalf of the committee thanked everyone for attending. He thanked Stockport Georgians Cricket Club for allowing the AGM to be held here. The Chairman thanked Cheshire Wildlife especially Adam for their support and help.

8. Date, Time & Place of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held November 2018 starting at 7.30pm Venue: Stockport Georgians Cricket Club.