

## **MIRRLEES FIELDS FRIENDS GROUP**

### **MINUTES FROM THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON 24<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2015 AT WOODSMOOR TENNIS CLUB.**

#### **MEMBERS PRESENT**

ATTENDING were 12 members of the "Friends Group" and 7 committee members.

David Kemp opened the meeting. David welcomed everyone present and introduced the committee members. The format of the meeting was explained.

#### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

J. Mottram, J Wright, C Gallagher, R Gardner, A Machin

#### **2. MINUTES OF 2014 MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising from the previous minutes.

#### **3. CHAIR'S REPORT**

David Kemp and Jim Gilligan share the role of chairman as agreed at 2014 AGM.

Jim Gilligan introduced himself. He reported the friends group during 2015 had organised a number of events. January 2015 sadly saw the demolition of Bramhall House. A number of members had tried to save this old farmhouse from being demolished unfortunately they were not successful. The building was not listed. However a commitment had been given by Man Diesel and the House Builders following completion of the housing estate a notice board and seat will be provided to remember this building. Some of the stones from Bramhall House would also be saved and displayed by the seat/notice board.

Details were given on the new housing development. The friends group is very hopeful that residents moving into these properties will not wish the fields to be built on and will look at the fields as an asset to the area. The footpaths along the right of way leading to Woodsmoor Station are to be upgraded.

The farmer who usually cuts the grass on the fields annually has not been able to gain access due to the housing development. Cutting the grass helps the ecology of the fields and wildlife.

Although Man Diesel allows the friends group permissive access for a number of days during the year to hold task days/events the fields are still on private land and members of the public should keep to the right of ways private land Access and being allowed to walk on the fields still remains difficult.

Permitted events carried out on the fields during the year were:

tree planting of 135 saplings - species Black provided by Redrose Forest and Cheshire Wildlife. Over 35 volunteers plus children from Great Moor School came along to help with the planting.

Organised a birding walk where 23 species of birds were seen.

The Fun Dog Show unfortunately had to be relocated at very short notice due to the grass being too long and no access for this to be cut. With the help of councillor Linda Holt the dog show was able to move to the Woodsmoor Playing Fields. This event was very well attended and raised £409 towards the new notice boards.

Himalayan Balsam can be found on the fields. This is very invasive and thanks go to Alan and Peter for keeping this plant under control.

The committee continue to communicate with Man Diesel via meetings or email.

The Greater Manchester Spatial Plan Framework was explained and up to date information circulated to all present. Due to the shortfall of housing in Stockport this plan is to identify areas where new houses may be built and may include green belt areas including the fields. It is estimated Stockport will require 7,000 new homes.

The chairman on behalf of all the friends of Mirrlees Fields would like to thank Richard Gardner for all his help and support, especially in preparing major bids.

Proposed David Gosling  
Seconded David Kent

#### **4. TREASURERS REPORT 2014-2015**

Antony Byatt presented the accounts, and circulated copies of his report showing income and expenditure. The bank account balance is £2,300. A lot of income has been received from member's subscriptions, donations and organised events held. Small charity constitution explained.

Proposed Sandra Croft  
Seconded Gene Allen

It was agreed by all present that this motion was accepted.

#### **5. ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

Chairpersons:	Jim Gilligan and David Kemp
Secretary:	Alison Marsden
Treasurer:	Antony Byatt

Membership: David Gosling

Continuing members of the committee:

Gene Allen, Bill and Sandra Crofts, Brian Waddington, and Charles Gallagher

Anyone wishing to join the committee or be a volunteer on a work task day or an organised event would be most welcome. Please contact a committee member or visit the web site.

Committee meetings are held approximately every 6 to 8 weeks and are held at The Shady Oak on New House Farm Estate.

[info@mirrleesfields.org.uk](mailto:info@mirrleesfields.org.uk) or [www.facebook.com/mirrleesfieldsfriendsgroup](http://www.facebook.com/mirrleesfieldsfriendsgroup)

## **6. Motions for Charitable Status and Revisions to Constitution**

The Treasurer circulated information on small charity constitution. He explained the benefits of being a charitable organisation including gift aid from members and the general public. Charitable status requires an annual income of £5,000 the groups constitution will require amending if members agree to this.

It was agreed by all present that this motion was accepted.

## **7. PLANNED UP-GRADE TO BRIDLEWAY**

David Gosling explained the proposals to upgrade the footpaths on the right of ways that includes the Fred Perry Way. Most of the footpaths are very poor. Following completion of the house building the footpaths are to be upgraded so they are suitable to walk on in all weathers – compacted surface. It is proposed they should be 2 metres wide and low level lighting will also be installed. Light pollution will be taken into account and the ecology officer consulted. Unfortunately the trees planted a few years ago in front of the new factory building where planted on the right of way footpath as these trees are well established everyone is reluctant to take the trees down. Prior to any work being carried out SMBC is to place a “diversion notice/ order”- advising members of the public of the diversion of the footpath around these young trees.

In principle the committee have no objections to the up grading of the footpath or diversion. The committee have expressed concern over the lighting due to the presence of bats and other wildlife. Also need to ensure hawthorn hedge and trees are not taken down as this may upset the ecology of wildlife.

## **8. PRESENTATION ON FUTURE ACTIVITY: MAJOR FUNDING BID AND SPECIFIC VOLUNTEER PROJECTS.**

A number of grants have been applied for. Unfortunately we have had little success to date. This may be because the fields are in private ownership. We have received money from SMBC ward funding and raised money from organised events, - dog show and bat walk. Due to not being able to secure large funding we have been unable to create wetland areas, meadow project hedgerow restoration community growing areas. It is possible, therefore, that smaller scale projects would be undertaken.

## **9. SUMMARY OF QUESTIONS TAKEN FROM THE FLOOR**

Still limited access to fishing pond from public right of way this causes problems to members who may have mobility problems. Fishing Society is still paying annual rent to Man Diesel.

Incidents still occurring on fields and damage to neighbours fencing.

CWT still have contract with Man Diesel to carry out work on the fields with volunteers.

Due to cost of postage information about the fields can be found on the web page, Facebook or is emailed to members.

The History book of Woodsmoor and mirrlees fields has been well received

## **11.DATE TIME & PLACE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next Annual General Meeting will be held on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2016 commencing

At 7.15 pm Venue to be notified.

The chair thanked everyone for attending.