

Mirrlees Fields Action Group AGM 2010

Thursday 25th November, Great Moor Primary School, 7.15pm

Meeting Agenda

- Reports from the Chair and Treasurer
- Proposal to create Deputy Chair and Assistant Secretary
- Election of officers and committee of the Action Group
- Proposal to form a trust to own and manage Mirrlees Fields
- Proposal to form a Friends of Mirrlees Fields Group
- The role of the Action Group in 2011

Please note that we are looking for two people to get involved with the Action Group who would be willing to become Deputy Chair or Assistant Secretary. Please contact David Gosling on 0161 612 5234 if you are interested.

MAN agree to setting up trust for the Fields

The current owners of Mirrlees Fields, MAN Diesel & Turbo UK Ltd, have stated that the company is ready to work with the Mirrlees Fields Action Group and other interested partners to set up a trust to own and manage the fields. In a meeting with the company on October 21st, Louise Durose gave her support to the idea that alternative forms of ownership should be explored including, for example, an industrial providence society (IPS), company limited by guarantee or community land trust (CLT). Although the process to set up a trust could take six months to a year, the prospect of a solution to the future of the fields is now in sight. The statement of intent, to set up a trust in partnership with local residents and other interested parties, is likely to be included in the planning master plan for the future of the factory site and the green space, which will be submitted to the Council early in the New Year. The company's proposals will be opened for public consultation at the end of November. The trust would be empowered to make decisions about the future of the fields and would be registered as a charity so that applications for grant funding could be made.

Proposal to form a Friends of Mirrlees Fields Group

A suggestion to form a Friends of Mirrlees Fields Group will be proposed at the AGM of the Action Group, scheduled for Thursday 25th November. There are already over 60 Friends Groups in Stockport. These are voluntary groups who work to maintain and improve public parks and other green areas (see their website at <http://www.stockportgreenspace.org.uk/>). In the case of Mirrlees Fields, the scope for a Friends Group has been limited because the Fields are currently privately owned and legal right of access is limited to the public footpaths. Now that the company has declared that it has no long term aspiration to retain ownership of the Fields and that the Fields will become publicly owned (for example by a trust as reported above) there will be a role for a Friends Group in the future. The Action Group could remain in existence until the Trust is formed and represent the interests of local residents in any negotiations that will take place over the future of the Fields in the coming months.

Public Consultation on Planning Proposals

MAN Diesel & Turbo UK Ltd will consult on their proposals for the future of the factory site and for the Mirrlees Fields at the end of November. Local residents will be able to view the proposals at the new industrial unit. All members of the Action Group will receive notification of the consultation by post.

Children from Great Moor School visit the Fields

On two occasions, in May and October, children from Great Moor School have visited the Fields as part of their curriculum. In May, the whole year group in Year Five were working on a local democracy project. Three members, Alison, Tony and Jim told the children about the role of the Action Group in representing local residents and about our goals to retain and enhance the green space. In October, it was the turn of Year Threes to come to the Fields to learn about its history. Tony, Sue and David told the story of the fields - how the fields were once used for arable farming and grazing, then became the site for the Sports Associations of the Mirrlees Blackstone employees and local friends and residents. The children learned about the closure of the sports clubs in 1986 and the attempt to sell the land for housing and the ultimately successful fight by SCRAM to retain the green space.