



Friends of Firs Farm

Annual General Meeting: 20th April 2017

1. Welcome

Toni Guiver welcomed all attendees to the Friends 3rd AGM meeting.

- Reminder to all of importance in using the Councils "Report It" function, which is for members of the public to report any issues or incidents in the park.
- Any issues that come out of these meetings will be taken to the council through the PRDO Public Realm Development Officer, Loretta Hoy.

2. Agree Previous Minutes

Minutes 19th January were agreed.

The review of the constitution highlighted that there was nothing in place regarding safeguarding and data protection other than Friends Risk Assessments. We discussed and agreed to pass this to the council for consideration and advice as to where this should properly sit i.e. Friends' agreements? (see later in section 4)

3. Wetlands Update

This included some items discussed during the Friends first walkabout with Loretta Hoy (new PRDO), Councillor Dinah Barry and Ian Russell the watercourses engineer.

- a) **Access Paths:** The Friends had asked LBE to consider paths that would complete the circuit around Firs Farm for "All" in the community. It is important to include the link to the cemetery and also the one to the Zebra crossing in Firs Lane as an easier route for wheelchair users. Ian Russell updated the Friends that they are looking into this.

Wheelchair users: It was noted that some wheelchair users are struggling on the incline at the Firs Lane entrance.

- b) **Play in Firs Farm** – This was again raised by the Friends during the walkabout: "It is important that we encourage ALL children to play. It helps to reduce child obesity and the knock-on costs of this.

Not every child wants to run around the wetlands, or use the wonderful interpretation posts recently added around the wetlands. Local people WANT MORE.

A Friends focus group was set up to understand more of what parents/ families / children of all ages want, bearing in mind that the council have no money for this, so it would be up to the Friends to raise funds. It just might be that as a committed community group, we may have to take on more responsibility but then we need more volunteers. We agreed we would await the outcome of the recently set up focus group on this.

In the initial wetlands consultation, a trim trail, play on the way and open air gym were requested. This would draw more people and once again help improve wellbeing. It is understood that maintenance of items in green spaces for LBE was £3K/annum but unclear as to whether this is per item or all equipment. Will ask LBE for clarity. Possible petition to see how many people will use these facilities. David Miller, representing Winchmore School asked why we still don't have a Green Gym in Firs Farm to encourage all users to take part in activity in this green space. Many teachers take their break in Firs Farm as it is so local to the school and it is also used by school pupils as part of their country run and they could incorporate some of the Trail Gym items into this. DM also went on to say that there are funds for this in parks for example, Turnpike Lane park which has been considered a legacy from the Olympics has a green gym, and said he would look into the costs so that we could this back to LBE to reconsider for Firs Farm.

- c) **Sculptures to encourage play**

Examples of these were included in the consultation document e.g. steps, sculptured land, scrambling rocks, and a ground level slide on a bank were discussed.

The Friends are working with the council to identify what we can put in place for children's play in Firs Farm and where. The focus group (parents) have been asked to come up with their viewpoints in order include more views. We have been told in the past the Firs Farm is different to other parks as it is a wetlands and pitches space

- d) **Encouraging future Engineers! – Natural Water play.** See example - we have asked LBE to look into this / other items mentioned for play and Parks will arrange a meeting with Russell Hart from the council to discuss
- e) **We had approval to apply for funding for outdoor Table tennis** for the teens / parents - fingers crossed we get this from Tesco Bags of Help. You may have to vote in your local Tesco's for this.

Sculptures for interest – for now, LBE have agreed we can only apply for funding for these but yet to agree on the final sculptures designs which will be based on the current interpretation – wetlands themed. Agreed the Friends committee group would choose what is suitable for this.

Ian Russell (LBE) will organise sculpting of the land in the corner behind the pond (An informal play area) to remove the pile of excavated spoil that currently sits on top of the bund which was discussed on the walkabout on the 19th April 2017. Details of this and other items discussed are available on request.

f) **Tree/ plant watering**

- 1) More trees being planted this week around the wetlands Bunds, Pond, outdoor classroom and along the area between properties on East side and the path. The hedging between the gaps requires attention and IR is sorting this out with Martin Jones landscape architect from LBE.
- 2) More planting by contractors this week, which are included in the contractors care plan.
- 3) Up to us to look after the trees planted by the volunteers and friends which takes many volunteer hours and many buckets water since the 250 plus trees went in during the month of February on top of those already planted during the last 2 years.
- 4) **Good News:** Friends purchased a Water bowser but need access to water from both the compound and also by the wetlands. Potential to bring in pipe from cemetery. LBE (IR) will look into this for us.
- 5) The fields between the spinney and the car park is currently being landscaped and the orchard woodland walk tree planting will also go ahead here this week. (Apple pear, walnut, etc....)
- 6) Some of the fencing will then be removed in the next few weeks to allow time for the soil, grass trees to settle/ grow.
- 7) Noticeable improvement in fly tipping issues

g) **Firs Farm listed as SINC 2011 - Firs Farm Wood and Hedgerows**

Main habitats: Broadleaved woodland, scrub, native hedgerow

Citation " Rarer species include meadow thistle (*Cirsium dissectum*), which is normally associated with open damp habitats". *Cirsium dissectum* can now be seen flourishing all the more since the wetlands were introduced.

Do we need signage on the plants and the fact that they should not be eaten? E.g. fake water cress incident

With this news of being listed as SINC 2011 would this put FoFF in a good position to attract sponsorship e.g time or money? Could be either month/yearly or by activity? To be discussed at a later date.

- h) **Spinney Watercourse:** Moore Brook south branch water now flowing. Some pollution noticed. Reported to EA. Reminder: please report any pollution issues straight away. EA number in park notice boards the hotline number is 0800 80 70 60. They are now looking into what appears to be a number of misconnections to this and will arrange to pump out for the short term solution, the polluted water to avoid this contaminating

further into the wetlands. Future reed planting at the inlet to the south branch will help to prevent this getting so far into the established wetland pod. E.g. to use volunteer days to help plant?

- i) **Litter issues.** lack of bins for Wetlands – to be reviewed for bins on ends of every path and notices to ask people to take litter away with them. Proposed bin positions now with LBE.
- i. Issue –small bins lots of people! Possible option add large central bin during busy warmer periods. Or two bins per station in all instances.
 - ii. Footballers litter. So little money so many cuts cannot afford not to Fine them for littering or costs to include cleaning the site was suggested.
 - iii. Feeding wildlife is a type of littering and as yet no signs but LBE has agreed to help with this. Some councils are already setting fines for Sea gull feeding in coastal areas.
 - iv. Wildlife feeding Notice bread! – whole loaves thrown in fields/ pond and wetlands.
- Friends have put some notices up for now.

j) **Signage – LBE looking into this now:-:**

- 8) Dogs notices (ie kept on leads near wildlife areas. Several reports made to police of attacks on water birds and Egyptian geese by vandals and dogs. Looked into possibility of having another “Duck Island” (pond or pod?) with the group. Ian will have a think about this one. Difficult to build an island in middle of pond but not impossible, and it could provide nesting site for water fowl. Existing island by bridge needs vegetation around as duck movement eroding edges.
 - 9) Wildlife feeding Notice – as above -bread! – whole loaves thrown in fields/ pond and wetlands.
 - 10) Friends have put some up for now but LBE might have to support this initiative.
 - 11) Signage for the Rotary club as they have donated 5000 crocus corns which celebrates eradication of polio – delivery expected later in the year.
- k) **Vandalism includes tree snapping.** This has been reported and FoFF have dealt with this working with the relevant schools
- l) **141 The Oaks.** –Derelict eyesore attracts undesirables. Not safe for local children often seen playing in here after school.. Still no further news on this. Waiting to hear more from LBE as there does not appear to be anything now on planning site for medical unless I missed it. Private company not NHS medical centre.

m) **Accolades last 12 months.**

Enfield in Bloom – Gold for Best highways /open space planting.

Utilities award – Highly commended community project

Living Waterways Awards - we have just heard that Firs Farm has reached the second round of this award process. Friends and volunteers will be invited along to the assessors site visit.

Many other items that we will keep you posted of over the next few months. Get in touch if you want a list of the items discussed

4. AGM

Treasurer's Report

Inventory carried out yesterday (John Prior and Eileen Herlihy) All looks to be in order however we are running low on useable loppers as a number have been damaged beyond repair as have secateurs. Wonders of many volunteers making good use of these. So if all agree we shall replace these in readiness for our next corporate volunteer group on Thursday 27th April. All agreed.

Elected Committee See attached – agreed committee changes

Constitution Amendments agreed with existing committee:-

Few minor changes which includes safe guarding and data protection and FoFF as a group request training from LBE on this

1 Extraordinary Meeting and Attendance & Voting Sections.

Reduced number of a Quorum for General Meetings to 5.

2 Subscriptions – amended to include the following “Levels of subscription may be set to enable membership for a period of years, or for the natural life of individual Members.”

3. As above re safeguarding and data protection.

Derek Attree proposed on block and Paul Guiver seconded.

Witnesses present then signed the document: Toni guiver, Eileen Herlihy, Jo Attree, Gail Nielen.

AOB

1. 14th May – is national Children’s day

FoFF will be sending an invitation to explore the Green space and will be holding a nature trail and other activities to encourage people to join this exciting event.

2. Independent examiner has agreed to help FoFF but he is not covered by public liability insurance. Is this an issue for LBE?
3. Future meetings in Winchmore School. - David Miller has kindly said he will supply crockery if FoFF could bring tea/coffee and jammy dodgers!
4. The attendees were asked to think about the legacy for the FoFF – sculptures, recycling, water features etc

5. Agreed actions to take forward to LBE for consideration:-

5.1. Safeguarding & Data Protection for Friends groups – LBE to consider and advice if to be included in ALL Friends’

Future Meeting dates for your diary:

Dates to be agreed with WS

- Thu 13 Jul 17 Public Meeting (Winchmore School)
- Thu 12 Oct 17 Public Meeting (Winchmore School)
- Thu 18 Jan 18 Public Meeting (Winchmore School)
- Thu 19 Apr 18 AGM - Public Meeting

Elected Committee See attached – Agreed changes are in Red.

| Officers (18) | Current | Nomination | Proposer / Seconder |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|
| Chair | Toni Guiver | Toni Guiver | Gail Nielen / Eileen Herlihy |
| Vice Chair | Vacant | Vacant | |
| Treasurer | Carl Redondo | Eileen Herlihy | Toni Guiver / Gail Nielen |
| Treasurer 2 nd | Eileen Herlihy | Olga Hepburn | Carl Redondo / Toni Guiver |
| Secretary | Vacant | Vacant | |
| Secretary (Interim) | Gail Nielen | Gail Nielen | Toni Guiver / Eileen Herlihy |
| Events Coordinator | NEW 2017 | Vacant | |
| Focus Group Facilitator | NEW 2017 | Geraldine Cosh | Toni Guiver / Caroline Wilmer |
| Fundraiser | NEW 2017 | Vacant | |
| History | Vacant | Vacant | |
| Membership / Volunteers | John Prior | John Prior | Gail Nielen / Eileen Herlihy |
| PR / Social Media | Ana Ribeiro | Ana Ribeiro | Toni Guiver / Gail Nielen |
| School(WS) | David Miller | David Miller | Gail Nielen / Toni Guiver |
| School (Hfld) | Vacant | Vacant | |
| Tasks Coordinator | New 2017 | Caroline Wilmer | Jo Attree / John Prior |
| Webmaster | Nikesh Tailor | Vacant | Gail Nielen / Toni Guiver |
| Wetlands Lead | NEW 2017 | Vacant | |
| Education Lead | | | |
| Committee (4 min – 8 max) | Derek Attree | Derek Attree | Toni Guiver / Gail Nielen |
| | Alison Sutherland | Alison Sutherland | Gail Nielen / Toni Guiver |
| | Jo Attree | Jo Attree | Gail Nielen / Toni Guiver |
| | Annette Nastri | Annette Nastri | Gail Nielen / Toni Guiver |
| | Paul Nastri | Paul Nastri | Caroline Wilmer / Toni Guiver |
| | Vacant | Keith Hepburn | John Prior / Paul Guiver |
| | | | |
| Independent Examiner | Vacant | Peter Harte | Eileen Herlihy / Toni Guiver |