



Minutes AGM Friends of Ashby Bath Grounds

22/05/2017

PRESENT

Committee Members: Clare Birch (Chair)

Vince Mott (Secretary), Geoff Bibby (Treasurer), Annie Ingram, Jeremy Birch, Dave Bigby, Brian Everitt

Also present:

M. Bennett, J. Bibby, L. Mott, R. Everitt, B. Elston, B. Lawrence, C. Shaw, J. Shaw, N. Baker, M. Coley

1. APOLOGIES

Nil

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES 2016 AGM

Approved with minor grammatical changes

3. OFFICERS REPORTS

a. Chair

The Chair thanked everyone for coming and briefly outlined some of the events and activities that the Friends had been involved in over the last 12 months. She also explained that these would be covered in more details under Project Reports.

b. Secretary (Vince Mott)

Informed everyone that we had held 9 committee meetings, with an average of 5 committee members attending. We also held a General Meeting in April where 5 members attended.

c. Treasurer (Geoff Bibby)

Friends account

Expenditure and balance (April – March)

There was an update by the Treasurer – financial year accounts April 1st 2016 – March 31st 2017

Total income 2016/17 - £2,293.09 (£1600 donation from Hicks Lodge Trust and the local Police, £675 from membership and £18.09 sales)

Balance at end of 2016/ 2017 - £1,024.16

Major spend was for planting

Accounts have not been audited but that will happen within the next couple of months



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Heritage Footpath project account

Balance at end of 2016/17 - £1,656.55

Membership

2014 – 62 members

2015 – 79 members

2016 – 136 members

2017 – 90 members to date, including 9 new

4. Project reports

Heritage Footpath (Dave Bigby)

Pleased to report our £60,000 Footpath and Heritage Project was successfully completed in February this year.

You will recall that £20,000 of the £60k came from the District Council and £40k from the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Project started in September 2015.

It was great that, as well as providing the new footpath, mosaics and heritage trail, the Project included loads of community activities associated with the Bath Grounds history.

Since our last AGM, these included:

- The events at last year's arts festival such as:
 - The premier of Pudding Bag Productions film – Polkas and Pustules – about the Ivanhoe Baths, which was packed.
 - The unveiling of the Ivanhoe Baths mosaic by the mayor.
 - Incidentally you have probably seen that the mosaic was vandalised a couple of weeks ago and has been taken away for repair. Fortunately, we have some funds left from the Project which we hope will cover the repair cost and we are also looking at means of protecting both mosaics from future damage.
 - There was also the community mosaic event, where we made a start on the Fish mosaic for the other end of the Bath Grounds, and
 - Of course, the performance of the Ballad of the Bath Grounds which was dedicated to the memory of our late Committee member, Lorna Titley.
- Throughout the summer, our ex Committee member Chris Smith organised some fantastic community archaeology sessions on the Bath Grounds, using geophysical techniques to explore the areas near the site of the old castle ponds and, also the memorial and castle fields over the road.
 - We managed to get a lot of people involved in this. 122 separate individual volunteers were involved in at least one Community Archaeology session, including the introductory sessions and results talk, 81 of whom took part in at least one practical session.



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- The final report of the Archaeology work was produced by our professional archaeology team, Mercian Archaeology, and this can be downloaded from our website.
- Another landmark was Jim's Tractor Rally, last July. This saw the official opening of the new footpath, the heritage trail and unveiling of the Fish mosaic.
- To go alongside the Heritage Trail, we have produced a Heritage Guide. I have some here for anyone who hasn't seen it yet. They are also available from the Tourist Information Centre, the Museum, the Royal hotel and other local spots including Hicks Lodge and Tesco. The Project paid for us to have enough printed to last at least through this summer and probably longer. It can also be downloaded from our website and the Town Council website.
- Other activities financed by the Project during the year included:
 - Several walks and talks conducted by Ken Hillier from Ashby Museum
 - A new edition of Ken's book on the Ivanhoe Baths and the Bath Grounds
 - Production of 2 education boxes by the museum which are available for schools and other groups to help teach youngsters about the spa and Bath Grounds.
 - And of course, we held a final exhibition at the Library for 3 weeks at the beginning of the year, to close the Project.
- Almost finally, I have a few comments to make about the new path.
 - Firstly, I can confirm that the Town Council has officially adopted the path and is responsible for its ongoing maintenance.
 - Secondly, I can confirm that we are not at all happy about the Councils' standard of maintenance and this has been an ongoing battle over the last year.
 - You will have seen that the path suffered some damage from the heavy vehicles using it for the Fake Festival last year, exacerbated by the very heavy rain at that time. If the Council had carried out proper repairs at the time this would have not been an issue. Instead they patched it up in a very unprofessional manner and that led to the development of a lot of potholes which were there for many months and all over the winter. They have since done another patch up job but the potholes are again coming back. I hope the Friends will continue to press for proper maintenance of the path and although I am standing down from the Committee this evening, I can assure you that I will continue to press for this with my Town Councillor hat on.
- Finally, I would like to thank everyone involved in making the Project a success. Particularly;
 - Chris Smith for his work on the community archaeology, the walks and talks, Ken Hillier's book and the final exhibition;
 - Clare Birch for her organisation of the Ballad of the Bath Grounds, the Community mosaics and helping me with designing the heritage trail
 - Annie Ingram for also helping with the design of the heritage trail
 - Lynnda Baugh for making the mosaics and running the community mosaics sessions
 - Di Lorriman for designing the mosaics
 - Ken Hillier for his new book, the walks and talks and advice on the heritage board content



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- Wendy Freer, and her colleagues in Pudding Bag productions, for the four different films that they made for the Project; all of which can be seen on the Project website.
- Wendy also helped rescue the Ballad of the Bath Grounds after Lorna was so sadly taken, and worked with the Pat Dixon of the museum on the Education boxes
- And the Project management committee which comprised:
 - Various committee members plus
 - Brian Berry from the Museum
 - Matt Longley from the Cricket Club
 - Peter Liddle – our archaeology adviser
 - Roger Bayliss – Chair of the TC Parks Committee
- I'll finish by saying that one of my priorities now as a Town Councillor is to get a decent path across the Castle Field from the Bath Grounds to the Castle and good signage to the Bath Grounds from the Town Centre.

Castle View Wildlife Walk (Clare Birch)

The last 12 months has been very productive, with older trees being replaced by new and all the old fencing and hedge removed from the Bath Ground side. On the other side all the ivy was removed with the help of volunteers and Eden Trees. The ground was then prepared by volunteers and Hayden for whips and wild flower seeding. Our next task is to purchase bird and bat boxes, plant bulbs around the trees and have an information board.

We have had funding from Hicks Lodge Trust and Ashfields.

Pride (Annie Ingram)

This covers Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB), Litter and Dog Mess.

There have been ongoing issues since September 2016, with cars entering the Royal Car Park and ASB leading from there, including intimidating and noisy behaviour, the drinking of alcohol, leaving litter including glass and damage due to vehicles driving onto the bath grounds from these three access points. The Cricket club and south street access has been a result of missing bollards, which have now been replaced. The Royal Hotel have put boulders along the edge of their car park preventing entrance to the grounds, Plain clothes surveillance scheduled for the car park, Diary sheets of ASB to be kept by neighbours, a review of the lighting at the back of the Royal hotel carpark.

There has been damage to the Spa Mosaic and we are awaiting a quote as to the cost of the repairs.

5mph signs are on order for the Bowls club to slow the traffic on the Heritage Footpath.

After the last litter pick, there was less litter than on previous occasions. The dog bins have been removed and replaced with new bins that are to be used for all waste. Stickers have been placed on the bins to instruct people to use these bins for dog waste too.



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There will be 3 new benches that have been sponsored, in place in the next few months.

5. Election of Officers

Jez Birch was nominated for Chair, seconded by Brian Everitt and accepted
Vince Mott was nominated for Secretary, seconded by Annie Ingram and accepted
Geoff Bibby was nominated for Treasurer, seconded by Linda Mott and accepted.

Clare Birch stood down as Chair.

Election of committee members

The following people volunteered and were accepted as committee members as follows;

Annie Ingram, seconded by Brian Everitt and Brian Everitt, seconded by Annie Ingram

The following committee member stepped down: Dave Bigby

6. Any Other Business

Maggie Bennett – asked if the Heritage Footpath could be swept to allow people using walkers to get along more easily. **Friends will email the Town Council and ask for it to be swept**

Betty Lawrence – asked if it would be possible to have a local concert/brass band play on the Bath Grounds as they used to a few years ago. **Dave Bigby will bring this up with the Town Council Events Committee**

Margaret Coley – has bluebell bulbs that we could have. She would also like to donate a tree.