

FRIENDS OF HUNTINGDON TOWN PARK

A meeting of the Friends of Huntingdon Town Park was held in the Commemoration Hall, High Street, Huntingdon on Monday 31st January 2011 at 7:00pm.

In attendance: Nick Bradbury, Chairman of Friends of Huntingdon Town Park; Claire Tunnicliffe, Deputy Town Clerk, Huntingdon Town Council; Peter Jackson, Chairman of Huntingdon in Bloom; Ann Colbert, Secretary of Huntingdon in Bloom; Hazel Kenyon, Huntingdon in Bloom; Trish Bradbury, Resident; Beryl Demaine, Resident; Mike Turner, Resident; Cheryl Fitzpatrick, Resident; Michael Turner, Resident.

Apologies: Councillor Brian Luckham; Katy Sismore, Town Partnership Manager; Dennis Smith, Parks Manager - Huntingdon Town Council.

CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

The meeting began with an introduction from the new Chairman, Mr Nick Bradbury (NB) who thanked the group for attending the meeting and asked those present to give a brief introduction about themselves and what they hoped to achieve from joining the group.

NB spoke of what he hoped to accomplish as Chairman and how he believed that with enough support from local residents the aims and goals of FOHTP could be reached. However, if the group continued to meet and no results were seen, despite all the hard work and effort, NB explained that he would not be prepared to continue as Chairman.

NB asked if he could be kept informed of any projects / works that had been planned to take place in the park.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

NB then presented the minutes of the previous meeting of the group and asked for their comments, it was unanimously agreed to approve the minutes.

HUNTINGDON IN BLOOM

NB welcomed Peter Jackson (PJ) to the meeting, who expressed his support to FOHTP and explained how he felt Huntingdon in Bloom (HIB) and the FOHTP could work together to achieve their own aims and objections, without duplicating workload of both groups.

PJ gave a brief history of HIB and how it had taken fifteen years to get to the Gold standard award in the Anglia in Bloom competition, 2009 & 2010. PJ reported that that this year the town would be competing in the prestigious Britain in Bloom as well as Anglia in Bloom, which meant that there would be two separate occasions when judging would take place. As part of the Britain in Bloom portfolio the judges would look at community involvement in the improvement, enhancement and protection of green open spaces in Huntingdon, all of which FOHTP would be working towards.

Ann Colbert (AC) showed photos of the voluntary work that HIB had carried out, such as the work at Hinchingsbrooke Hospital where a team of up to 12 volunteers had worked for 2 hours each month since January 2010, to successfully regenerate the rose garden.

PJ advised the group to start strong, identify a list of objectives and the solutions required to meet those objectives.

OBJECTIVES AND CONSTITUTION

NB presented the FOHTP objectives and constitution that had been completed by himself, Trish Bradbury (TB) and Claire Tunnicliffe (CT) who had taken into consideration the following:

- Roles and responsibilities
- Targets and aims
- How to achieve targets and aims
- Sources of funding

NB explained that changes could be made to the constitution at any time and welcomed comments from the group as he went through each subject heading and the reasons why they had been added. It was suggested that the financial year would run from April to March in conjunction with the financial year of the Town Council.

The group agreed to the Mission Statement and Objectives, and discussed ways in which the park could be improved, ensuring that it would be a place that could be enjoyed by everyone.

ELECTION OF A TREASURER

As it was the group's aim to bring in an income, BD volunteered to be become Treasurer, a role which would develop over time.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The group agreed that the painting of the railings along Brookside would greatly improve the appearance of the park. CT agreed to contact NACRO and other community groups to seek volunteers for this project (**ACTION DS**).

It was suggested that fencing off the stream would improve the safety standard and may encourage more parents to bring their children to the park. The necessity of this was questioned as no accidents had been reported of children falling into the stream and a fence could encourage children to climb over it. It was agreed to look at this further at a later date as this was not regarded as a priority.

NB asked if the park needed more play equipment. It was suggested the only additional equipment should be four swings, specifically for babies, to encourage young mums into the Park, but there was no real need to install further equipment.

It was suggested that the park would benefit from CCTV to deter antisocial behavior. Beryl Demaine (BD) informed the group that the installation of CCTV at the back of Parkside flats to monitor the car park had significantly reduced the vandalism to residents' cars. The scheme had been so successful that static CCTV cameras had been installed on the front of the building.

BD, a Director of the Parkside Residents Association indicated that she could not see why residents of the flats would have any objections to two of the static cameras being replaced with mobile cameras to monitor the park. Quotations would be sought for the cost of the cameras and installation **(ACTION BD)**.

In conjunction with the cameras, signs could be installed on the gates to warn members of the public that the park was being monitored by CCTV, even if CCTV was not in operation. It was agreed to contact local businesses in the area to seek sponsorship for the cameras and signage once the quotes had been obtained.

NB asked the group if they thought that FOHTP should have a logo. Members agreed that a logo would give the group a separate identity from Huntingdon Town Council. It was suggested that the group run a competition to design a logo which would need to be unique, simple and fresh **(ACTION NB to contact Hunts Post)**.

The group heard that additional funding or support for potential projects was being looked at to see if FOHTP would be eligible. This included contributions from local businesses, Sainsbury's Community Grants, Tesco Charity Trust, Barclays Investing in the Local Community, Greg's Foundation, Home Base and the National Lottery which could help provide for additional benches, provision of chess / draft boards, a BBQ facility and a notice board to advertise what's on in the park.

CT reported that the outdoor summer performances were currently being planned for June through to the end of August. Last year, bands performed in the Town Park from the bandstand but there had been little interest from members of the public. Members were asked if they felt the performances should go ahead in the Park this year and what could be done to improve the situation.

BD offered to supply tea and coffee which could be sold to the public during the performances. Another suggestion was to have an ice cream van in the park and children's workshops before the performances began.

Everyone agreed that the Bandstand was a welcome feature of the Park and local theatre groups, bands and dance troops should be encouraged to hire the bandstand as a performance space.

The group then looked at possible fundraising opportunities that could take place in the park over the spring and summer.

Members were informed that the car boot sale had stopped taking place at the railway station on a Sunday morning and this offered an opportunity for the group to offer an alternative, such as a table top sale and charge a set price for a pitch. CT agreed to enquire if any kind of licenses were needed for this type of event **(ACTION CT)**.

Michael Turner (MT) suggested that an additional form of promotion was to produce a booklet on the history of the Park which could be available in local shops, council offices, information centres and the library **(ACTION MT)**

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

7:00pm 15th March 2011, the Minerva Room, Commemoration Hall.