

**Minutes of the Friends Of Pilrig Park (FoPP) Committee Meeting
Monday 14 December 2013**

Attendance

Sophie Brown, Chair (SB)
Max Brown (MB)
Stephen Penman (SP)
Lennie Sefton (LS)
Katie Wright (KW)
Liz Ballantyne (LB)

Apologies

Emma Faragher, Secretary (EF)
Irene Sweeney (IS)
Zoe Holman (ZH)

1. Welcome

SB welcomed everyone to the meeting. This was the third meeting of the Friends of Pilrig Park (FoPP) group's committee.

2. Approval of the Minutes of committee meeting 2nd September 2013

The minute of the committee meeting on 2 September was proposed by Lennie Sefton and seconded by Stephen Penman.

3. Updates

SB updated the group on the following items:

Leith Central Community Council (LCCC)

IS has been elected as a member of the LCCC and at their last meeting she was made aware that LCCC offer new community groups some start-up funding, usually around £200. SB advised that she felt insurance for the group was a priority and this was agreed. Other start-up costs were identified;

- Rubber logo stamp
- Paper
- Printing costs

Action MB: Cost these items and apply to the LCCC for this funding.

Benches

CEC have advised that they are still waiting for the purchase and delivery of the benches, but they will be forthcoming. SB noted that it would be important to have a walk round with Fiona Devlin to agree exactly the positioning of the new benches before they were installed. The date for this will be circulated in due course.

Edinburgh University School of Architecture

- SB advised that the School of Architecture are planning that their first year landscape architecture students will be asked to complete a project based

on Pilrig Park. SB has arranged a meeting with Tiego Campo, the first year lecturer to discuss these plans.

Friends of Parks Group

SB has been attending both the Leith Walk Ward and Edinburgh wide friends of parks networking groups.

- James Hunter, of CEC, has agreed to meet all Leith Walk Ward parks in January to discuss the draft park improvement plans that the FoPP commented on over the summer
- SB noted that an online forum has been established for the Edinburgh wide group to discuss issues and improve collaboration.

FoPP meetings and arrangements

SB asked the committee for general comments and observation about the mechanics of the group.

- MB confirmed that a bank Account has been opened with TSB
- The committee agreed that four committee meetings a year was adequate and provisionally agreed the 1st Monday in March, June, September and December
- The Committee agreed that there should be at least 2 public meetings (including the AGM) per annum
- SB suggested that we might like to invite other people with an interest in the Park along to the meetings to better understand their perspectives. Initial suggestions included Greener Leith; Tracy Griffen; Head of Pilrig Park School; Chair of the Sports teams.

4. Woodland Clearance

SB invited members of the committee to discuss the progress of the woodland clearance work.

Work to date

- The committee noted that the vast majority of comments about the clearance had been positive;
- A concern had been raised that the clearance had reduced the amount of birds in that area of the park. This was not an observation that was widely held but the committee felt it reinforced the need to install bird boxes. KW advised that there is a possibility that this might be a project that the school could undertake.
- The committee noted that there were still some stumps left in the cleared area, especially on the slope opposite the school and this would need to be addressed as a priority.

Action KW: To explore the possibility of the Gaelic School undertaking a 'bird box project'

Action MB/SP: To coordinate the removal of any remaining stumps and ensure that these are cleared as we progress

Next steps

- SP confirmed that the next woodland clearance date would be the 14 December between 10:30 and 13:00
- The committee agreed that we should focus on clearing the section that runs along the wall first and then see if there is time to continue further round.
- SB advised that if it was felt necessary she would leaflet the flats that sit behind the wooded areas to ensure that they were happy with the work
- LB noted that she would speak to the Environmental Wardens to have them sweep for sharps on the 13 December in the area.
- The committee agreed that we should arrange further woodland clearance dates on the 3rd Saturday of each month and we would just start where we left off.

Action LB – Speak to Environmental wardens about the removal of sharps

Community Woodland

- There was general agreement that a different approach was need for the Community Woodland area.
- We should try and retain the diversity in planting as far as possible and create paths through it. A good model is the ‘fairy woodland’ at the Botanical gardens.
- It was suggested that after the work is completed we arrange a ‘woodland event’ to encourage families with children to explore the area

Action SB – To seek support for this work form the Botanical Gardens

4. AOCC

SB invited the committee to discuss any other business

- KW advised that there had been no response from Pilrig Park School though she had made several attempts to get in touch.
- The Committee agreed that we need to think about the entrances further, in particular
 - ‘Flower buckets’ at the entrances.
 - Installation of bollards to stop cars at the Balfour Place entrance
 - Public art, sculptures
 - An action plan to improve the entrances from Leith Walk and Cambridge Gardens as these are particularly poor.
 - Improved signage and information
- KW noted that there may be funding for bilingual signage available
- A picnic and BBQ area could be considered somewhere within the park
- Concern was noted that the flower meadow funding had stopped and it would not be maintained.
- There was general consensus that the wall along Pilrig street that borders the Park is not ideal and that it would be better if there was no, or a smaller barrier, between the park and the pavement. It was recognised that this might be difficult to address.

Action KW – Investigate bilingual signage opportunities

Action SB – To further discuss with the council about the flower meadow

5. Date of Next Meeting

Committee Meeting, Monday 3 March 2014, Venue TBC