

Friends of Palewell Common & Fields

Meeting: 26th June 2013 at 6.30 p.m. held at 49 Hertford Avenue

Present: David Evans (Chairman), Jessica Rettie, Rikki Marks, Bernard Adams, Angela Howorth.

1. Welcome new Committee Members: The Chairman welcomed Jessica Rettie and Theresa Pa as new members of the Committee.

2. Apologies for Absence: Dhun Kenny, Jacqui Pattison, Theresa Pa, Andy Sutch (delayed at a previous meeting).

3. Minutes of Meeting held on 24th April 2013: The Minutes were approved.

4. The Chairman's Meeting with David Allister: The Chairman informed the Committee that he had had a very useful meeting with David Allister, Head of Parks at Richmond Council. The meeting had lasted one and three quarter hours and they had walked the Common and woodland and discussed issues very thoroughly.

Firstly Boules: DK had e-mailed DE and asked that he note that she does not approve of the extension of the Boules piste into and onto Common land.

DE had discussed the possibility of extension with DA who was not sure where the exact line between the Common and Fields was but he did not view the extension of a pitch as adverse development. However, he thought it was essential to get the views of the local community and not just members of the committee. Without that he did not think that approval to extend the boules piste would be forthcoming.

DE suggested that we prepare a written statement setting out the pro's and con's of a third boules piste on the existing site and leaflet all local roads, Committee members should then follow this up with house calls to ascertain local residents exact views. The Committee agreed.

DE also informed the Committee that there was to be a meeting about Beverley Brook which would be held at The Wetland Centre on the 9th July from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. which he would attend and invited other committee members to do so.

DE said they had walked through the orchard and noted that it had not been mowed.

RM said that the trees were a little in need of care. The possibility of a wild flower meadow was raised, RM will speak to Tasha at Richmond Council about this.

5. Report and Update on AGM: BA thought that it had been extremely helpful to meet the new contractors and to hear their plans and have the opportunity to raise questions with them. DE thought that the meeting had gone well and that the opportunity to speak to local residents at the end of the meeting was useful and helpful.

6, Financial Update: AS had provided the Committee with a financial update. Currently there is £2,589.90 in the bank account, this includes the contributions of £200 from MESS and £250 from U3A towards the extension of the Boules piste.

7. Update on Sport:

Cricket: AS to update the Committee at the next meeting.

Tennis: The state and condition of the tennis courts is a matter of concern and JR emphasised the importance of the tennis courts on Palewell Common.

Golf: DE said that Richmond Council hoped that the issues regarding the new contractors would be sorted out very shortly.

Boules: BA informed the committee that the members of the Boules group were having a private event on Saturday 6th July, this would be an afternoon competition and they would be providing a barbecue. Some members of the committee expressed concern that a barbecue might set a precedent.

8. Development Plan for Friends of Palewell Common: DE had prepared and circulated a paper to the Committee for discussion. The overall aim is to preserve a balance in the use of Palewell Common & Fields. The priorities were listed under five headings.

Sports facilities: See item 7.

Natural Environment: Improvements to the woodland: RM proposed that we arrange to do two days a year of woodland clearing the best times being the Spring and early Autumn i.e. March/April and October. The day earlier this year had been very successful. JR suggested that we could possibly get the local schools involved, BA will raise this with his wife who is a Governor of the Richmond Academy. Improvements to Beverley Brook will wait for the outcome of the meeting in July.

JR voiced concern that Richmond Council are proposing to charge professional dog walkers using Richmond Park and that this could be a concern for Palewell Common if this increased the use of the common and fields as an alternative.

Playground and space for children: The Committee agreed that the playground was absolutely fine. DE will speak to the Montessori Nursery School.

Amenity & Security: Emptying of bins on the common had been of concern as they were not being done regularly and rubbish was piling up. A Councillor had got involved and David Allister has spoken to the contractors. DE said that there has been an improvement.

JR suggested that the committee might consider providing dog bags to encourage all dog walkers to use them, some parks provide them and perhaps we could have a supply near the notice board. DE will speak to David Allister.

JR raised the problem of the large puddle on the area near the tennis courts. The Committee acknowledged that it is a problem but that it is likely to be difficult and costly to rectify.

Security was not considered a major problem.

Engagement with the community: The committee discussed holding a similar event to last year's and agreed that it would be an opportunity to involve local people and seek their ideas of what improvements they would like to see. Saturday 27th July from 10.30 to 1.00 p.m. was proposed as a possible date. BA thought that there should be an adult fun thing! The committee might provide refreshments towards the end of the morning. This should be discussed with the café.

9. Community Police: DE confirmed that all seems to be OK

10. Any Other Business: **DK** had asked (in her absence) that the committee note that membership has fallen and currently stands in the low 40's, a number of members have not renewed and we need to try to encourage support.

JP wanted to inform the committee that she had spoken to David Allister at the AGM and he had told her that if The Friends wanted to continue to work with Simon of BTCV we can do so and pay for BTCV. We need to meet with Glendale. She also wondered if the café would help to advertise The Friends.

BA will draft a note about the new Boules piste for circulation by the committee to the local residents.

Date of Next Meeting: To be confirmed