**Minutes of Friends of Spencer Park and Recreation Ground Management Committee** **Wednesday Dec. 3rd.2014**

**Present:** Paul Smith (Chair), Karen Berry (Secretary), Helen Elias (Treasurer), Tim Brooke,Zilpha Reid (committee members)

1. **Minutes** of the meeting of Nov. 3rd. accepted as true record.
2. **Play Area**: The meeting with Durasport and Council officers Ces Edwards and Dave Lewis in the park went well. Ces outlined the action needed now that the Council has to be the signatory to the contract with WREN. He has sent out the minutes of the meeting and will contact WREN to sign the contract. It appears that a concrete base will be installed under the equipment to which it will be attached rather than concrete pipes to enclose the attachments.
3. **Gardening in the Park:** Dec. 6th. and Jan. 3rd. Zilpha has been told that the donated elm tree would have to go in a border of the park as it is so small. We would prefer it to go in the Recreation ground probably as part of the grove at the beginning of the footpath. Zilpha will keep it in a pot in her garden till it is big enough to plant there. Zilpha, Paul and Karen met with the gardening team on Monday Dec. 1st. Because of the cuts, the council will be filling in the flower beds. We could maintain the bed that Richard planted out with roses. As these are old, Simon suggested that we dig them out and replace them with dwarf roses and more top soil. In time the plants will spread out and obviate the need for a lot of weeding. We will pay for the rose bushes and the new gardener Michael will do the work.
4. **Earlsdon Ward Forum Dec 11th:** Consultation about the proposed council cuts will be taking place to which we need to respond. It is proposed that the parks budget will be cut by one third - £1 million. Paul reported that the flat green bowls players want to retain the flat green and fell that access will improve with better parking arrangements. The marginal costs of maintaining the flat green given that the team have to come to maintain the crown green would not be high. Closure of the flat green would only save about 20% of the costs. Paul suggested a bowls week and will approach Scott of the crown green group. Tim suggested applying to Awards for all for funding.
5. **The Challenge:** This was very successful. All the bulbs were planted and the group produced a flier about the park, which was distributed at the Railway Station. They also made a banner, which they have given to us as well as some more bulbs for planting. We hope to repeat involvement with the Challenge in the Spring. Helen has spoken to her contact with the Duke of Edinburgh Award at Henry V111 who has added us to the list of choices the students make.
6. **Earlsdon Festival** : NENA did not have a stall last year as they did not see the point of advertising to people coming from outside the area. Paul suggested having the three stalls – NENA, SENA and us with the theme of Spencer Park a City Park with the theme of green open spaces in Earlsdon. On our stall we would have the tombola and plant sale but for hygiene purposes, not the cake sale. We would sell cakes at the Big Lunch.
7. **A.O.B. :** i. Coventry Voluntary Action have invited Karen and Helen and three other committee members to a celebration event. Helen will forward email to the committee.

ii. Although no one had volunteered to join the Friends committee it was felt that there was quite a bit of interest in the park and people would be interested in helping out on an ad hoc basis. It was agreed that when we are panning activities we should phone round people we know who have shown an interest.

iii. Paul has seen joggers going round the park and thought it would be a good idea to have a sign up telling people the distance round the park to encourage fitness. It could be incorporated into the Council’s Healthy Walks programme but it was felt that the distance might be too small to be of interest.

lv. The idea of a tennis ladder was discussed. This is a good idea in principal but needs someone to do the work. Karen will put an item in the next ECHO in February.

v. More groundwork will be needed for the memorial bench in the corner of the park as Dave Lewis had said that the bench could not be put in front of the path for safety reasons. The path area would therefore have to be extended if the bench is behind it to allow enough room for people to walk by. Zilpha will get costs from Dave Lewis.

vi. We will do the Big Lunch, possible in conjunction with NEAN as they area now interested in involvement. Paul will contact Pete Mitchell of NENA about a Treasure Hunt.

1. **Next meetings:** Wednesdays. Jan. 7th., Feb 1st., March 4th., April 1st. and April 29th. (to organize the Earlsdon Festival events and stall)

Helen Elias 5.12.14