**Minutes of Friends of Spencer Park and Recreation Ground Management Committee** **Wednesday July 1st 2015**

**Present:** Paul Smith (Chair), Karen Berry (Secretary), Helen Elias (Treasurer), Zilpha Reid, Pat Ryan (committee members) Trevor Robinson (ranger)

**In attendance**: Graham Hood Head of Street Pride, Green Pride and Noise, Coventry City Council.

1. **Apologies**: Tim Brooke, Ken Taylor
2. **Discussion with Graham Hood about the future of the park**: **Paul** summed up the Green Spaces Forum meeting (He, Karen and Time attended) saying that co-operation between the council and voluntary groups appeared to work in 50% of cases. He said that we had set up the Friends group to supplement the work of the council’s work. We have organized one off events and cultivated the west border as well as keeping an eye on maintenance, behavior and dogs. He felt the park was looking good and anti-social behaviour was down. **Graham** said that he did not have a set plan, but wanted to see what individual groups could do. He saw our group as a possible template for others. Carol Donnelly, the Council Community officer wants to put a timetable together to plan the process before she leaves her post. Graham and Carol could set up a timetable to present to us. Carol is interested in the Heritage Fund for the pavilion. **Karen** asked Graham about the timetable for the installation of the play equipment. The council has accepted the £35,000 bid to prepare the site as it was the only one. Dave Lewis is authorised to go ahead, but because of the contractor’s prior commitments, it will not be till September. The committee regretted that it would not be in place for the summer holidays. It will cost another £32,000 plus to resurface the old tennis courts and with other costs the total for installing the equipment on the grass and refurbishing the old site could equal the £80,000 for clearing the asbestos off the old site. The committee wondered whether it would be better to go for siting the equipment on the old tennis courts, but **Graham** felt it was m ore feasible to get approval for the £35, 000 first and get the equipment in and then find the money for the old tennis court resurfacing at a later date. **Paul** felt a fence would be necessary round the playground equipment because of dogs but this would be an additional cost, which the Friends group would probably have to meet. As children will be playing in the whole park which is already enclosed, the purpose of the fence is unclear. Dog fouling is not such a problem as in the past. **Graham** felt there should be no conflict between the playground use and current dog walkers. **Zilpha** suggested we proceed without a fence and see how it goes. This was agreed. **Graham** said that the Friends group needs to define its role in responsibility for the park. He can then prepare guidelines in a service level agreement detailing responsibilities. He felt that it should not be a problem for the Friends group to have a key to the pavilion if we can ensure that it is not lost or we fail to lock up the pavilion after use. Possibly the key could be collected from a named person. **Karen** said the it is difficult to open some of the doors which would need fixing before we had a key. **Graham** said that if we generate income eg. through ice cream sales or catering we might be able to retain some. **Paul** felt that Spencer Park is a quiet area near the City Centre which could appeal to the weekday Friargate users as it complements the War Memorial Park. **Pat** said that we need to set our agenda and think about how our contribution could be co-ordinated and managed. We agreed too do this at our next meeting and meanwhile **Graham** will work with Carol on a plan. Graham then left the meeting.
3. **Minutes** of the meeting on June 3rd. accepted.
4. **Matters arising:** Coventry University rejected our application for a bid. Only three grants were awarded. **Karen** had not realized the competition**. Paul** is writing to Nottingham University to suggest that the Architecture students might want to do a feasibility study for the pavilion for an M.A. dissertation.
5. **Tennis ladder:** a small but enthusiastic group has played tennis and would like it to continue. John, the coach, is very keen. The last session will be July 18th. **Pat** agreed to distribute the evaluation forms as Paul is away.
6. **Art in the Park 11-3 July 25th :** An advert is in the Echo. **Paul** will send Helen a flier to take to the Govind Art group. The session will be low key – for children and amateurs but it would be good to have some practicing artists there. **Karen** will organise the loan of twelve tables and chairs from Community Equipment. Teas, coffees and possible drinks will be available. We could open the tennis courts at a small charge. Paul will make posters and distribute. Karen could laminate the ones for the park.
7. **Park Centenary:** **Karen** reported that the Challenge had changed so that instead of getting volunteers as a group, Individual young people will choose from a range of choices. We have to set our pitch at City College on a variety of dates. In addition this will be only a supplement to their main tasks. It was proposed that we go ahead with planning a Centenary Picnic with games and activities on Bank Holiday **Monday August 31st** whether or not we get any volunteers from the Challenge. **Karen** will contact the YMCA about their Frisbee games. Other suggestions were a singing group, cricket, the Woodcraft parachute, fancy dress as well as bowls and tennis.
8. **Green Space Forum:** Although it was only a small group it was a useful meeting. Others there wer Ray Wilson, ACnley Green space, Mike Fell from Longford, Warwickshire Wild life, Friends of Allesley Park, Gosfor Park tree wardens, Sowe Valley, Coventry Society and Council Officers. The Coucil are going to come up with terms of reference for working with groups.
9. **Bowls in the Park:** Eight members of the Coventry Parkinson’s group attended and were very enthusiastic. They want to repeat the experience and say that they can double the numbers. The grass had been cut just before the event. **Paul** will send **Helen** information about his plans to extend the bowling to other groups so it can go on Facebook and the web.
10. **Gardening dates:** Saturdays July 4th. and August 1st. Tuesday evenings 6.30 onwards: July 14th and 28th; August 11th and 25th.
11. **Bands in the Park:** Sunday July 19th and August 23rd. Zilpha, Pat and Sue will provide cakes for sale.
12. **A.O.B:** AGM date to be set at next meeting. Trevor will still be working with us after the restructuring.
13. **Next meeting:** Wednesday July 29th.

Helen Elias 3.7.15