

**Minutes of Friends of Spencer Park Management Committee**  
**Monday Sept 5<sup>th</sup> 2017**

**Present:** Paul Smith (Chair), Karen Berry (Secretary), Pat Ryan (Treasurer), Tim Brooke, Zilpha Reed, Helen Elias, Carol Bayliss, Anthony Godber, Liz Bayton, Jane Donovan (committee members) John Plunkett (Albany Bowls)

Before the meeting started Paul stated that all the work of the committee had made the park a great success this summer. Particular thanks went to Helen Elias for her work on the installation of the playground markings. Work took place on July 31<sup>st</sup> and the area was in use straight away and has been very popular over the summer.

1. **No apologies**
2. **Minutes** of the meeting on June 6<sup>th</sup>. 2017 accepted as a true record with the addition of the missing items about the Hallowe'en and Christmas events which have been circulated through email.
3. **Matters arising:**
  - The park bench and picnic table have been installed
  - Bands in the Park and the Fun Day were both a great success.
4. **Pavilion working group:** First meeting will be on Monday Sept. 11<sup>th</sup> at 8pm at 82 Broadway. While they will concentrate on the long-term renovation of the pavilion, in the short term we would still like to decorate the right hand room for children's parties for next summer. Karen has contacted Anne Akerman but has had no reply so will follow up. The Council need to remove the deep freeze and the coat stand. Jane would also like to paint the counter area to make it more attractive. Karen will enquire about this also. A toilet rota for next summer was suggested.
5. **Charity status:** At the last meeting, we agreed on becoming a Foundation charitable incorporated organisation – C.I.O. The Foundation status means that existing committee members are the board of trustees. The alternative, an Association, is to open it up to the AGM which might give us more expertise, but we would have to keep an up to date record of membership who voted for the board which would be time consuming. Tim has contacted Voluntary Action Coventry – V.A.C. and spoken to Simon Batten. We have to agree on the wording of objects (our objectives) and then we can use a model constitution with which we would approach Andre Walston of Coventry Council. Tim will report on progress at the next meeting. The committee approved his actions. Tim felt the move to charitable status would take two to three months from the Council approval.
6. **Management accounts:** Pat presented a detailed breakdown of the accounts for the period April to July which represented a reconciliation of planned and actual expenditure and income. Our financial situation is healthy but some of the funds are earmarked for expenditure. Our balance above this is probably around £1000-£1500
7. **Funding :** Helen reminded the committee that they need to register with the Coventry Recycling Club so that we can get funding for the fence round the Flat Green. Our period for donations finishes around the middle of September so we need to act now to transfer our points to the Friends fund. Each member has 49 points this month to transfer and they can also introduce new members and play online games for more points. The Easyfundraising is ongoing . All it requires is registration and choice of Friends of Spencer Park as your designated charity. You then go via the Easyfundraising website to your chosen shops and when you order online through them you automatically contribute a small percentage of you shop to Friends at no cost to yourself.
8. **Flat Green:** Paul has put in a bid to One Stop subject to Council approval which could yield £2000 to contribute to a fence, hedges and improving the surface. It currently costs

3100 a month to cut the grass. The Flat Green is used once a fortnight by the Parkinson's group who pay the council rate of £3.60 per person. Over the summer £150 to £200 was raised. There has been no interest yet from Earlsdon Park retirement village. Paul has approached U3A to get them back to Spencer Park. The Green is in better condition but needs a fence to keep people off it. John Plunkett from Albany Bowls Club reported that they will need additional capacity within the next three years at the current rate of growth. Albany Bowls would need a £30,000 investment over three years to convert the Flat Green to a Crown Green. They would have to apply for funding from Sports organisations and would need charity status. At present, they are part of the Albany Club and would need to establish an arrangement with Friends and the Council separate from the Albany Club and would need to apply for Charity Status. John will propose this at their AGM.

9. **Earlsdon School and use of the park:** The P.E. co-ordinator Gary Gascoigne has approached us with a plan to use the park facilities for school P.E. There would be no problem with them using the tennis courts, but use of the playground marked area would be more problematic as it would exclude toddlers. The school would have to contact the Council as proprietors of the site who have to give formal permission as it involves insurance issues etc. Karen will invite Gary to our next meeting. Carol is willing to liaise with the school about gardening.

10. **Tennis:** 78 families are now enrolled. Karen asked if we could give a discount for next year to encourage continuation. This was approved. Karen has been waiting for Anne Akerman to approve pressure washing of the courts. She says this will be done in October, but the committee wondered if next Spring would be more suitable given that the courts will be closed from the end of October till April.

11. **Events:** The pumpkin parade will take place on Saturday Oct 20<sup>th</sup> from 4-6pm Jane will get some tea lights for the pumpkins. Karen will organize the bat hunt around the park. Anthony will produce a poster and Carol will make gingerbread. There need to be prizes for the best pumpkin and fancy dress. Details to be finalized at the next meeting on Oct. 2<sup>nd</sup>. Christmas Event: Saturday Dec. 16<sup>th</sup>. Paul will contact Tony Skipper, the Lord Mayor. We will also need a Santa and costume.

12. **Gardening** – first Saturday morning of each month and Thursday evenings July 6<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> and then every two weeks. We will be planting bulbs next Thursday evening Sept 14<sup>th</sup> from 6pm.

13. **A.O.B.:** Zilpha felt that the users of the park are not aware that the improvements to the park – play equipment, play markings, tennis, gardening, benches etc. are not down to the Council but the Friends. She suggested a **group photo** on a Saturday for an article in the local papers about what we are doing and the need for more support. Helen will contact the Telegraph and the Observer and Coventry and Warwick radio. We did not decide on which Saturday. Jane would like a **list of events for 2018** – to be discussed at next meeting. The **Earlsdon Festival** organisers have asked if we will be putting on events in the park on the Saturday before the Monday festival stalls. We agreed to tennis and bowls. Will Leigh said at the Fun Day that he might be able to provide a **café** at weekends during the summer and his wife might be able to do something during the week. Helen asked him to contact Paul. John said that the **bowlers** had offered to paint the back area where the equipment is stored. He will need to approach Anne Akerman. Karen is organizing the production of **lavender bags** for sale at events. The committee thanked the bowlers for helping to put out the **fire** by the brick building on our garden area. The council have agreed to demolish it. We have not got a fire extinguisher. Anthony reported that Trevor had not put the **posts up for signs** or done the stencils. Karen to follow up.

14. **Dates of Next meetings:** Oct 2<sup>nd</sup>., Nov 6<sup>th</sup>., and Dec 4<sup>th</sup>.