**Minutes of The Friends of Spencer Park Committee**

**Zoom meeting**

**Monday February 1st. 2021**

**Present:** Karen Berry, Helen Elias, Paul Smith, Zilpha Reed, Debbie Riordan, Liz Bayton, Tim Brooke, Ken Taylor, Helen Spence, Jane Donovan, Carol Bayliss, Pat Ryan, Ken Taylor, Peter Elias, Anthony Godber, Dave Chater (Albany Bowls), Dave Lewis (Parks), Nigel Johnston and Lynn Ritchie.

1. **Apologies**: Becky Gittins. Two new committee members – Nigel Johnston and Lynn Ritchie were introduced. Nigel would like to help on the pavilion sub-committee and Lynn has experience working with young people. Dave Chater will be representing Albany Bowls Club in Scott’s place.
2. **Minutes of Dec 7th. meeting and matters not on the agenda:**  Accepted as a true record. Network Rail have started work on refurbishing Spencer Park after work on the bridge. They will be responsible for all reseeding and landscaping costs.
3. **Pavilion and catering**: status of business plan and renovation process; relook at heritage status. **Paul** reported that there has been no progress since the December meeting. He has not met with Richard and has not heard from Lisa since September. **Peter Elias** had been asked to look at the survey results. He said it was good that over 250 had been returned but that it was regrettable that no questions had been asked about age, gender, ethnic identity and family structure so it was not possible to say which groups of respondents favoured the various suggestions for the park. **Paul** said the next step after a digest of the survey plans is the preparation of a business plan in February and March and invited Peter to attend the sub committee meetings. **Peter** said that we have to bear in mind how the business plan is prepared as it needs to match funders’ requirements. Paul will send Peter a list of potential funders to review for him to review. He has had contact with Michael Mogan, the fundraiser. **Jane** felt that we have enough information for the business plan – evidence on use of the park and pavilion, generally, including tennis and bowls and at our events as well as during lock down. She has investigated the costs of a coffee maker and is willing to open up at weekends. She felt we needed action rather than discussions and we need to get in applications for funding. **Ken** felt that now might be a good time to submit bids before the covid lock down period ends. **Lynn** said she was happy to help with funding applications. **Pat** queried whether funders would require matched funding. **Tim** said that we need to decide how much funding we are applying for. **Paul** said it was difficult to know the building costs till we know what the foundations of the pavilion are, which might determine the need for a steel framework. **Dave L** said he would make enquiries about the building foundations. **Helen S** suggested the sub committee puts together a generic application that can then be adapted to funders’ requirements. This was seconded by **Helen E**. **Jane** said that if there were problems getting Richard and Ignacio to meetings then, perhaps, we need someone else to advise us.  **Paul** will contact a quantity surveyor he knows. **Ken** said that as there are a lot of builders in the area it might be worth approaching them for help as they are interested in community involvement. **Ken** will approach Cassidy Construction within a week. **Peter** will codify the written response in the survey and **Tim** will send him the objectives used in the charity application. **Catering – Karen** has looked at the possibility of having a catering van like the one in Allesley Park. They hope to offer something in May. **Jane** stressed the need to open the café while people are in the park in large numbers. We could open the pavilion to serve take-aways in a covid secure way. **Helen S** offered to do a risk assessment. The pavilion is quite dirty inside so would need cleaning up. Decoration was discussed but was undecided as it might be wasted if the pavilion is restored. **Jane** said she would circulate a plan of action. The issue of a catering van was discussed further – we would not receive any income, but it would indicate demand. There would need to be a clear contract, detailing the specific time period, days etc. so we could take over the catering when we want. **Ken** said he would do this if we want but nothing was decided.
4. **Window Wanderland: Carol** reported that this is a community event involving decorating house windows. The participating houses are being mapped on a street plan so that people can wander round a see them from February 20th. She referred us to the ECHO article, and the Window Wanderland Facebook page for more information on how to register. Spencer Park pavilion will be decorated by **Carol** and **Karen** with hearts and ribbons in keeping with the local theme of “If music be the food of love…”. If anyone would like to help preparing the decorations, contact **Carol.** Offers of laminators were made by **Helen S** and **Jane**.
5. **Flat Green** – Albany bowls club plans – **Dave C** reported that Albany Bowls will cover the costs of the Flat Green till March 31st. 2021. They had planned to turn it into a Crown Green but due to covid, their income and the contribution of the Albany Social Club of which they are a part, is very limited. They will not be able to contribute 50% of the costs of maintaining the Flat Green in the next financial year and are putting the plans for a second Crown Green on hold and suggest we look at other uses for the green. **Paul** said the Resource Centre for the Blind wants to start up again in the summer, covid permitting, which might yield some income. **Paul** and **Dave** **C** are to meet later this week.
6. **Developments for the recreation ground** – David Spencer stone. This stone is at the entrance to the Recreation Ground from Anarchy Bridge in a very muddy spot. It was connected to a tree which has since been removed as it had been vandalised. Dave Lewis has not found out about the costs of moving it. There was discussion about whether it could be moved to the other side of the park alongside Spencer Avenue with a newly planted tree.
7. **National Citizens Service:** On the basis of replies from committee members **Karen** has decided not to use this group of young volunteers this summer due to covid.
8. **Any Other Business: Ken** gave a vote of thanks to Dave Lewis for all the work done by the council in the park which was endorsed by everyone. **Carol** said that we missed out on the Big Bird Watch this year but should make sure we participate next year. **Helen E** said that after the sad death from a heart attack of the man exercising in the park, the installation of a defibrillator had been discussed. They cost £800-£1000 and no training is necessary to use them. Kindy Sandhu had expressed support so Helen will liaise with her.
9. **Date of next meeting:** Monday March 1st 7.30pm

Helen Elias4.2.2021