

Friends of Middleton Park Steering Group Meeting

16 October 2012

Apologies:

Ken, Val, Sherieda, Shirley, Gayle, Rachel, Graeme, Claire, and Cllrs Blake and Groves

Matters Arising

- Interpretation strategy – Nick explained that the Friends had been working with Graeme on the interpretation boards for the park
- Access from Newhall Rd and Winrose Dr is not wheelchair accessible. The Trustees agreed to investigate whether this had been in the original HLF plans

Leeds City Council Update

Graeme gave an update on Parks and Countryside activities in the park since September.

- Volunteer work included the Middleton Park Estate Volunteers who got involved with horticultural work and de-littering. School visits included a seed gathering event from 9 – 11 October and a visit by the David Young Academy.
- Events in the park included the bat walk that attracted more than 20 visitors.
- Things of note in the near future include the Bonfire Night celebrations on 5 November; a fungal foray on 18 November; a Leeds Schools Athletics Association run around the Clearings on 24 November; the Leeds 10K Christmas Run on 2 December; and Christmas Craft Making on 9 December.

Parks for People Project Update

- The building work is due for completion on 19 October
- The landscape work has suffered a 15-22 day delay due to bad weather over the early summer and although P&C have assigned 8 additional staff to the project will only be completed in December.
- As Nick has indicated he has had a series of meetings with FOMP to start to develop the interpretation strategy for the park
- Following feedback from FOMP the landscape contractor is to do further landscaping around the bandstand
- Ongoing work at the Visitor Centre includes internal decoration, the fitting of the window shutters, cladding around the building, and roofing of the bandstand
- Ongoing landscape work includes: entrance features on the Ring Road; the knee rail around the car park; entrance features and re-walling at the Historic Entrance; new vehicle barrier and stone setts at Middleton Grove

Other points of interest included that Basic Food Hygiene Training which will be attended by two Trustees on 30 October (Nick and Frances), and the replacement for the rope climbing frame in the playground where Graeme is still awaiting a reply from another section of Leeds City Council.

Ice House Proposal

Carol gave an update to Friends about the proposal to run an archaeological dig to investigate the location of the possible ice house for the Lodge. This would be in February or March 2013 and possibly take place over three days with public viewing of the site and findings on the Sunday. Carol said she hoped that they would be able to publish the findings and that she would keep the Friends and LCC informed of the developing plans.

Past Events

History Walk (23 September) – approximately 20 people turned up and enjoyed a chilly walk around the park

Friendly Band (29 September) – Alan reported that this had been a very enjoyable last event of the summer programme despite the rain which had forced a change of location into drier accommodation – members even enjoyed singing in the rain and that we had taken £50 on the day! Alan agreed to write and thank the band for playing in adversity (due as much to illness as the weather).

Future Events

28 October – Move in to the new Visitor Centre

11 November – Winter Walk

25 November – FOMP Autumn Party in the new Visitor Centre

Leeds Parks and Countryside Forum

Nick and Alan gave some quick feedback from the second Forum event, reporting that it had been agreed that the Forum should have a roving Chair who would not be fully accountable for all Forum activity but would just Chair one meeting. The Forum also agreed that LCC should continue to provide background support in running events. The new Middleton Park Visitor Centre was suggested as the next event location.

Treasurers Report

Richard reported that there was no change in the balance that FOMP had in the bank from the last meeting, although we still needed to pay for Groundwork. Frances reported a successful year of fundraising, which included grants from Wades, the Sir George Martin Trust, the local Councillors, Berman, Playpals, and Communities First totalling £14,380.

Newsletter

Steven reported that he had started the Newsletter, which was planned to run quarterly. Alan agreed to write an update on the HLF project underway in the park.

AOB

Richard suggested that we could possibly get 'Fearmasters' (a Middleton based company) to run an event in the park next year. Friends suggested that he ask about costs, insurance, and risk assessments and bring some information to a future meeting.

Steven reported that the web based registration form for new membership was now live on the website.