

Minutes for the Friends of West Park Meeting: Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> October 2012  
6.30pm

- 1) Apologies – Sue Pattison, Tony Cooper & Cllr Grundy
- 2) Present – Andrew, Becky & Mathew Buckingham, Jackie Buckingham, Neil Brimer, Joanne, Phil Sekowski, Ben Ridley, Nigel Potter, Rob George & Pippa Smaling

3) Management Plan

PS asked the group for some dates to meet for the annual 2:2 management plan review meeting. As well as discussing the green flag management plan and if they would like to apply for the award in 2013. The group asked what the benefits were. Benefits are that west park would get better publicity as well as the award opening up other funding opportunities.

**Action: PS & RG to email group with dates. PS or NB to send green flag mgt plan to AB.**

4) Projects

Paths: - It was decided to do as many full lengths of path as possible. The path that is going to be done 1<sup>st</sup> is Comets Garth and then George Stephenson. There is approx £8k in the budget for paths so this would allow for approx 400m to be cambered. The group asked if the path plan could be put on the website.

**Action: PS to send plan to AB. AB to add to website.**

Richmond close improvements: - a design has been approved and will incorporate a horse shoe (bridleway) and rail tracks (for the Barnard castle railway line).

Green flag judges comments raised a few site maintenance issues such as the paths, play area weeds etc. The group asked if it would be worth skipping a year so that all the works could be done.

Play area: - A meeting was held with partners to discuss the weeds mainly on the banks (should be shrub areas) in the play area. Nick Leeming is looking into costings of different ideas to make these areas more attractive. Ideas include planting wildflowers (either wildflower matting, seed or plug plants) and turfing the areas. Waiting for an update from NL.

**Action: PS to contact NL regarding update.**

## 5) Site Maintenance

Motorbikes on bike track - mentioned at the PACT meeting. PACT are addressing this issue. PS mentioned that the habitat team will be installing dragons teeth to stop the motor bikes from getting on to the bike track. Will need to look at motor bike barriers at Richmond close and other entrances to the park.

**Action: RG to feedback to TC as well as getting NL to look into motorbike barriers.**

Ponds: - The steering group have approved the works to be carried out at comets garth. PS has asked the contractor if the price that was quoted still stands and when he can do the work.

**Action: PS to update group with more details once confirmed.**

Comets garth path to school – the council are planning a safe route to school a new path is planned from the corner of comets garth along the park boundary, past the pumping station and into the school.

## 6) Events

Pumpkin trail – Wed 31<sup>st</sup> October 6pm. Pumpkins will be hidden on west park to form a trail, there will be 8 pumpkins (7 will spell out a creature and the 8 will be the creature itself).

## 7) Community Feedback

It is good that people are emailing the ranger/ group with complaints & comments. The group would like information/ ideas to go into the levy letter. The letter goes to all the houses on west park so it is a good way of letting people know about the friends group. The letter needs to make sure that people know how to get in touch. The group raised some ideas such as: ideas to promote the park, skills/ expertise to share & event ideas.

**Action: PS to send last yrs letter to group as well as sending meeting dates for 2013 to AB. AB to put on website**

## 8) AOB:

Corner of comets garth/ teeswater grass area – someone has used weed killer here the group asked if it could be planted? The council haven't adopted this area so not sure if it can. PS will check and update the group.

Bike track: - A cycling club has formed called 4 motion, they are a constituted group and are looking at funding bids (sport England) to put Saturday training sessions back on at the park. The club would hold the money and buy in coaches from the council to run the sessions. The track at the moment serves a purpose at the basic skills level, however the bottom of the track is rarely used and the club would like to develop this area. They would work in partnership with the friends group regarding any improvements. All participants at council/ club run training sessions have to wear safety equipment (this is provided by the council). It is hoped that this project will bring more people into the park and help police the track. The clubs email address is: [fourmotiondarlington@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:fourmotiondarlington@hotmail.co.uk)

Step 1 – put training sessions back on in the spring once funding obtained.

Step 2 – Improvements to the track

**Action: Formal meeting with bike club and friends group regarding improvements.**

9) Time of next meeting

Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> Jan 2013, West Park Café, 6.30pm