

Friends of the Meadows and Bruntsfield Links

Annual General Meeting

Croquet Pavilion, Leven Terrace

26 June 2014 at 7.30pm

preceded by introduction to croquet and refreshments

Chair: Heather Goodare

1. Heather welcomed all 31 present, including councillors Melanie Main and Jim Orr.

Apologies: Anna Shepherd, Jimmy Robertson, and Linda Hendry [who joined later]

All present were requested to sign the attendance register, and the petition to the Transport and Environment Committee on 26 August about events on the Meadows, reducing the maximum length of an event to 15 days and charging commercial events a commercial rate. Recently the "Evening News" reported that the summer Ferris wheel rent of £250,000 will help to fund maintenance and repair to Princes Street Gardens monuments, establishing a precedent. The Membership Secretary was present to renew membership.

2. *Minutes* of the last AGM already circulated were accepted as an accurate record.

Matters arising: a) could names of attendees be recorded in minutes? Nina Fedenczuk advised that a record of numbers was sufficient.

b) Heather is still to write a job description for the post of Convener and Vice-chair, which she will do for the next newsletter.

c) Under SCIO rules, the membership year does not need to coincide with the financial year.

d) Maczek memorial: Sadly Lord Fraser died shortly after addressing last year's AGM, so the memorial bench proposed has not yet been progressed, but will go ahead with the support of FOMBL and the Polish community.

e) Jawbones update: Graeme Cruikshank and Heather attended a meeting on 25 June 2014 at Edinburgh World Heritage, who are doing the fundraising. Of the target £50,000 half has already been raised, of which half is pledged from Edinburgh City Council. Graeme is concerned that when the resin is removed and the bones dry out there may be a problem of restoration. They will be carefully removed shortly by a specialist conservator. At AGM 2013 the meeting voted for replacement [e.g. fibreglass] Jawbones if restoration was impossible. Graeme and Fiona Rankin [Edinburgh World Heritage] are pursuing Historic Scotland for scheduled listing of the Jawbones as a local and national monument. Graeme wished to withdraw any implied criticism of Councillor Cameron Rose for not taking more part in the fundraising.

3. *Annual Report 2014* was accepted, proposed by Richard Ellis and seconded by Karina McIntosh.

4. *Annual Accounts* Hamish McKenzie [Treasurer] explained the accounts as examined by Brian Murdoch, and said a recent payment for the artwork project has reduced the funds currently held. Richard Ellis proposed that the work of retiring committee members should be more generously rewarded in future. Acceptance of the treasurer's report was proposed by Eileen Holtum and seconded by Brian Harris.

5. *Election of officers.* Heather stepped down as Convener while Jim Orr chaired the meeting; he thanked Heather and the FOMBL committee for persistent committed care for the park, putting worthwhile pressure on the Council. Heather Goodare was reelected as Convener, nominated and

proposed by Andy Devenport, seconded by Richard Ellis, there being no other nominations. Heather resumed the Chair: she requested that younger members become more active in FOMBL.

Hamish Mckenzie Treasurer for 12 years stood down; Jennifer Thomson agreed to take over, proposed by Hamish Mckenzie, seconded Nina Fedenczuk.

Liz Jogee minutes secretary stood down, Nina Fedenczuk agreed to take over, proposed Andy Devenport, seconded Audrey Simon. Nina has already given invaluable advice and support on becoming a registered charity with SCIO.

The rest of the committee agreed to remain: Andy Devenport, Neil Roger, Alec Mann, Linda Hendry, all to be reelected: proposed Nina Fedenczuk, seconded Eileen Holttum.

6. *Charitable status application*: the constitution needs to change to comply: the proposed new constitution has been circulated to all members. Nina has looked at it and it now conforms to SCIO requirements. Reasons to become a SCIO: funding grants are often awarded only to charities, subscriptions and donations can be gift-aided, all committee members will be trustees, and the corporate status of FOMBL will give legal protection. Question about any additional costs: no charges/fees e.g for audit until threshold of £250,000 reached.

7. AOCB

a] Greening our street: Lauriston Street and Lauriston Gardens. Sarah Tolley described the project's work in planting a wildflower plot on the Meadows to encourage biodiversity, helped by FOMBL volunteers: possible help from local scout groups was expected. Mike Shields [Community Parks Officer] has agreed to this work and arranged with grasscutters to protect the plot.

b] Artwork Project on Scottish Power substation wall is almost completed. Children from Gillespies primary school will assist with planting protective cotoneaster horizontalis in front of the art work, after school holidays.

c] Rental rates for commercial events on the Meadows: the Council had compared rates with other Scottish council rates, however the Meadows is in central Edinburgh, has heavy use, and has a fragile soil structure. Recent repair to drainage cost £100,000. Heather attended a recent meeting of Friends of Parks representatives, all of whom supported the petition and wished for all parks to be treated with respect.

d] Volunteer work parties coordinated by Richard Ellis: next on 27th June 10am at Pavilion Cafe, bring gloves.

e] Thanks given to the webmaster Philip McDowell and to Richard Ellis volunteer coordinator.

8. *Designing and managing green space for health*: Talk by Jennifer Thomson postgraduate student. Jennifer described the preliminary findings of her study. Questions raised about the wildness of parks being desirable and the benefit of woodland, thus more tree planting needed.

9. Hamish was warmly thanked for his long commitment to FOMBL as treasurer. He contributed particularly to the restoration of railings in Leven Terrace and to the restoration of the Pavilion.

Minutes: Liz Jogee