

Friends of Blakers Park

19th Annual General Meeting Thursday 18th October 2012
7.30pm Stanford Avenue Methodist Church

19:38 start

Approximately 40 people in attendance

1. Appointment of minutes secretary

Tara Rogers appointed

1. Apologies:

Gerry Faulks, Cllr Mike Jones, Dominique Giudicelli (former vice chair)

1. Items for Any Other Business

- Parking (*At this point, it was agreed that parking at the moment wasn't something the friends would be getting involved in, but thoughts were welcomed*)
- Traffic Calming around the park
- Christmas Carols

1. Minutes of 2011 AGM

One correction raised regarding the 2011 finances; it was stated that £735.19 on 2011 finances should be actually £753.19. Graham Preston proposed the minuted statements were correct, seconded by Philip Smith,

1. Matters arising

Bluebells were in fact hybrids as discovered in this year's emergence

1. Financial statement

- a) Treasurer Gerry Faulks unfortunately couldn't be here.
 - Derek Burns noted comparison to previous years balance sheets were missing, which was promised two years ago.

7. Chairman's Annual report

First, I'd like to thank Marjorie and Harold Cozens for organising the teas, coffees and, most importantly, biscuits.

What have the Friends done since this time last year?

We've had six meetings with Council officers, including our ranger Emma Keane and CityParks manager Alan Griffiths, to progress the Management Plan and have since corresponded with CityParks Project Team, including Jim Alison, to take it towards public consultation and completion.

We've organised eight free public events in the park, for young and old, attracting from 30 to 1,000 attendees. Caroline Botterill ran the Spring Clean, with live music organised by Keith McMurray. Sam Hart and Jane Skea put on Terrific Trees events for children. Sally Cranfield runs the local area tree monitoring scheme – she needs more monitors so please speak to her afterwards.

Volunteers planted two more flower beds and these plus the park's three other beds are being maintained solely by two volunteers, Marion Clark, who is on the committee, and Ed Strauss. We urgently need more. Please see Marion to offer your help.

We've published and distributed three newsletters, to 1800 homes – huge thanks to Gerry Faulks and her team of paperboys and girls. We need more deliverers to keep spreading the news so please see me to volunteer for what amounts to a 20 minute stroll.

We've planted a hedge by the copse at the top corner of Cleveland Road.

We've corresponded with local residents, Council officers and Councillors about the proposed traffic calming scheme. Dario Saracini and Dominique Giudicelli put forward our views.

We helped found the City-wide Green Spaces Network to link all park Friends groups and open spaces stakeholders and have attended two of their meetings.

We've submitted nine articles to Fiveways Directory, to whom we're most grateful for their support.

We've sent out half a dozen e-bulletins with news updates – you can sign up to receive these through our website.

We've maintained our website and posted 25 new or updated pages to keep the Community informed and involved. The website does also address a wider audience. This month it had its first visitor from Fiji.

We've held 4 committee meetings plus three meetings to organise and analyse the Community Picnic and Summer Fair. Sam Hart masterminded the picnic and successfully bid for a Council grant, for which we are very grateful, that enabled us to hire a lovely marquee and stage. Nic Straiton and Ian Lawes sorted the live and recorded performances. Marsali Stuart defended the drawbridge to the bouncy castle. Graham Preston managed the stall bookings and was helped on the day by Tara Rogers. Clearly it was a success because last week someone asked to book stall space for June 2013.

We've made available a DVD of the Centenary Fair from 1994 and Graham Preston has been rebuilding our membership records – please renew your membership tonight and also buy membership as gifts for your friends, neighbours and family.

Because that's who the park is for and why this group exists. It's a community thing.

Thank you for your support.

8. Election of Officers and Committee 2012-13

Jane Skea nominated all the existing committee members:

Caroline Botterill, Marion Clark, Marjorie Cozens, Sally Cranfield, Tara Rogers, Gerry Faulks, Max Glaskin, Sam Hart, Ian Lawes, Graham Preston and Marsali Stuart.

Philip seconded the motion. Voted in favour: unanimous.

Invitations made to Friends to put themselves forward as Chair, of which there were no volunteers. Philip made a welcome suggestion of a couple of people or friends (husband/wife) put themselves forward to share the job of chair. Marjorie wanted to put forward a vote of thanks to Max for his wonderful work as Chairman, proposed that it would be on the understanding that if he was to continue as chairmand would be in a lesser capacity than before (Seconded by Philip).

Roles to put forward for election:

- Max Glaskin: Chair (*on the understanding he will be much less active, with all the members of the friends help requested to take the Friends forward in order for it to achieves it aims*)
- Gerry Faulks: Treasurer
- Graham Preston: Vice Chair
Tara Rogers: Secretary

Roles as above proposed by Sally Cranfield, seconded by Marjorie. Voted in favour – unanimously

9. Any Other Business

a) Parking

- Chris Childs realised that following Max's clarity not to get involved in a political debate, but said there were serious implications in relation to the parking issues around the park. Chris is totally against it, and had concerns residents may be "bullied" as parking restrictions moves North. He continued by saying if the scheme did go ahead, Stanford Avenue would be the boundary. Thus the roads around Blakers Park would absorb the non-residential parking, as seen from the recent developments at Preston Park.
- Martin Cross stated his point specifically was on the effect of the park. The most obvious places are Cleveland and Southdown were the overspill would merge onto. He felt this was bound to affect the safety of children about access of the park. He would hope the committee would raise the concerns with the Council, and that consideration would be given to the safety issues. He continued if you live outside the scheme, you would not be consulted about changes which would it will significantly affect you. Martin asked if there will be consideration given to his points by the committee. Max responded by ensuring was taken to the committee at the next committee meeting.
- Chris Childs concluded by stating an exhibition next Thursday and Friday at the church which residents could attend. In addition, a Havelock Road resident shared that there is also a questionnaire on the council website for those to anonymously share views on the debate.

a) Traffic Calming

- Discussion brought up by Jo Hathaway – a local resident. This was Jo's first meeting, am a mother of a young child. Spends a huge time in

Blakers Park, and feels she represents a lot of people who anonymously use the park. She felt it seemed odd there was a road where cars speed alongside the park very frequently.

- Max responded in the following way: In 1999 the Friends ran a campaign for traffic calming. This generated 1300 signatures within 48 hours. Subsequently it was listed 9th on the council's schedule of traffic calming that year. Unfortunately it only had funds for 8 in the end. The issue was raised again a year ago by local residents, an initiative supported by Friends – they didn't drive it, but shared their knowledge of publicising and how to campaign. Again, it garnered enough signatures to get it raised in the council. This time it was proposed that initially the traffic calming would be narrowing of the road by the Montessori school and that a £30K fund was available. An email was sent by the resident who spearheaded the campaign. It seems that someone new has taken on the project at the council, and there are rumours that there may now more than £30k available. So there is something happening, as the money have been voted for an allocated purpose. Specifically the Friends would like pavement out build by the park entrances, therefore being able to see beyond the parked cars. There are discussions of there being a city-wide 20mph speed limit, however the Friends have no further information on this.

b) Christmas Carols

- There are carols planned for Friday 21 December. Any musicians are very welcome to volunteer, with two or three rehearsals planned for anyone wanting to go. The Brighton Mummers are also going to be going along. Keith McMurray of the Brighton Brass Ensemble is organising it (and notably this was Max's favourite event last year).

The meeting ended at 20:14, and was followed by a very interesting talk from Guest Speaker Alistair Peters, Aboriculturalist, about the Trees of Blakers Park and surrounding areas.

Income & Expenditure Account		Friends of Blakers Park	
Year end 31/08/12			
Balance at bank 31/08/2011			
Deposit Account	2,355.68	Secretarial Expenses	73.18
Current Account	753.19	BCTV Membership & Insurance	266.15
Membership Fees	266.00	Newsletter printing	388.77
Books	28.00	Hire of Church & Speaker	75.00
Income from Picnic	1,091.04	Community Picnic	1,228.21
Bank Interest	0.99	Printing	106.80
Btn & Hove Council Grant	1,000.00	Gift	22.50
		Sundries	2.08
		Brighton Mummers	30.00
		Clock Research	54.00
		Balance at bank as at August 31st 2012	
		Deposit Account	1,855.35
		Current Account	1,392.86
	5,494.90		5,494.90
Accounts prepared		Accounts inspected & found in accordance	
GL Faulks		with books and bank statements	

Community Picnic 16/06/12	Expenses		Income
WSP Marquees	609.48	Stall Rent	609.00
Circus Skills	100.00	Raffle	113.00
Bouncy Castle	81.80	Games	
Games & Prizes	70.64	& Bouncy Castle	289.04
Bunting etc	20.10	Sale of bags	12.00
Gazebo	87.99		
Music	290.00		
	1,260.01		1,023.04
Loss before Btn & Hove grant	-236.97		
Btn & Hove grant	1,000.00		
Profit	763.03		

The Friends of Blakers Park Constitution

1. Aims & Objectives

The Friends of Blakers Park aim to contribute to the enhancement and development of Blakers Park.

To fulfil this aim the Friends of Blakers Park will:

- a. Communicate and liaise with Brighton Council.
- b. Raise funds and invite and receive contributions by way of subscriptions, donations and otherwise.
- c. Undertake projects to stimulate local interest and awareness.
- d. Encourage local participation in the preservation and maintenance of the Park's amenities.

2. Membership

Membership shall be open to anyone interested in furthering the aims of the Friends of Blakers Park.

3. The Committee

a. The Committee shall consist of the Officers (Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer) and not more than ten other members.

Two additional members may be co-opted.

A quorum will be five, including two officers.

b. The Committee shall meet at least once every three months, at not less than two weeks' notice.

4. Subscriptions

The committee shall recommend the amount of the annual subscriptions, for approval at the Annual General Meeting.

5. Meetings

a. The Annual General Meeting (quorum 15) shall be held in September or October each year to:

i. Receive a report from the Secretary. ii. Receive audited accounts from the Treasurer. iii. Elect Officers and Committee. iv. Appoint an auditor.

b. A Special General Meeting (quorum 15) can be called at the written request of 15 or more paid-up members.

c. At least 14 days' notice shall be given of all meetings of the Friends of Blakers Park.

6. Amendments

The Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds majority of members present at an Annual General Meeting or Special General Meeting, provided that 28 days' notice of the proposed amendment has been given to all members.

7. Winding Up

The Friends of Blakers Park may be dissolved by a two-thirds majority vote of the members at an Annual General Meeting or Special General Meeting, provided the proposal has been referred to specifically when notice of the meeting is given. In the event of the Friends of Blakers Park being dissolved, the funds shall be transferred to a group having reasonably similar aims, as chosen by the Committee and approved by the meeting.