

Friends of Starbank Park

Third Committee Meeting 7.30pm

Tuesday 4th March, Starbank Inn

Minutes

Present: **Alastair Robertson (Chair)**
 Janet McArthur (Secretary)
 Graham Buckley (Treasurer)
 Sandy Logan
 Liz Nicholson
 Stuart Gardiner

1.	Apologies were received from Richard Scott.
2.	<p>Plans:</p> <p><i>Short term: immediate tasks for work parties</i></p> <p>This will continue much as before:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tidying, edging, weeding, etc. • Planting as appropriate. Some colourful vegetables will be interspersed between flowers. Suggestions included rainbow chard, purple carrots, purple broad and runner beans, yellow beetroot and purple carrots. • Wild flower seed planting • Poppy planting, including at north wall. Investigations indicated that although the soil is poor at the north wall it should support poppies and other wild flowers. The areas between the buttresses have all now been dug over. <p><i>Short & Medium term plans</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Janet had prepared a planting plan for the four central, crescent-shaped borders around the magnolia tree. The plan included box hedging, and several types of herb. It has been passed to the Jen Johnstone and Ritchie Fraser for comment. None have yet been received. • Some borders contain only dead and dying roses. It was agreed that these should be planted with annuals. (Special thanks to Graham for raising loads of sweet peas and other annual seedlings for us.) In the middle of these annual borders we intend to plant sweet peas and other climbers. Obelisks would be good for this. Alastair will ask Ritchie Fraser whether the Council may be able to supply these. • Trellises or other supports are needed for climbers on the east wall. Alastair will ask Ritchie Fraser if the Council could supply these. • The use of pesticides was discussed. Alastair noted that Friends of Starbank Park could not use pesticides. The application in the park would not be defined as domestic use and we had nobody who was appropriately trained as defined under the pesticide regulations. The use of Nemaslug was discussed.

	<p>Nemaslug is based on nematodes, minute worms, and is apparently an effective alternative to chemicals that is safe to use and harmless to children, pets, birds and wildlife. Alastair will find out if there are restrictions in its use in public places.</p> <p><i>Long term plans and improvements</i></p> <p>Long term plans were discussed at length. Various items were discussed and noted. The gaining of a Green Flag award for the park is a prime ambition. This award is based on judgement against key criteria, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a welcoming place, • healthy safe and secure, • clean and well maintained • sustainability • conservation and heritage • community involvement • marketing • management <p>Park Management Plans are laid out to meet the requirements of the Green Flag assessments. It was agreed that a draft document on plans should be laid out in the same format as is used in Park Management Plans (Alastair). This draft will cover both medium and long term plans.</p> <p>The Botanics are running a scheme in which rare tree species and cultivars are being planted in Edinburgh Parks. Janet will approach the Botanics and Alastair will mention it to Ritchie Fraser.</p> <p>Signage at the park is inadequate, particularly at the top, Laverockbank Road, gate where the entrance looks more like the entrance to a large private house than a park.</p>
3.	<p>Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) Grants and Community Involvement:</p> <p>Little progress on the HLF WW1 grants has been made. Ritchie Fraser had no particular ideas in mind when he encouraged us to apply. Alastair has failed to contact his main “history” contact who has been away on holiday. Various themes and related issues were discussed at the meeting, including the impact of the Gretna train crash on Leith, the impact of WW1 on food in the local community, linking a memorial garden to the theme we eventually select, the difficulty in developing an interesting project and involving the local secondary school. It was agreed that Janet would explore links with Newhaven History Group and Alastair and Sandy would endeavour to contact our “history” contact.</p> <p>This discussion extended to wider community involvement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stuart will facilitate a sunflower growing project with the St Serf’s guides. • The Wardie Church youth officer is interested in a park project. Janet will be the main contact but Alastair will approach Newhaven Church to find out if they would also wish to be involved. • Alastair wrote to Michael Blair of Martin Curry regarding ideas for a project away day. Alastair will sort out details, possibly involving the construction of a composting area. • The Asda Easter event will not proceed after discussion with others inside and outside the Friends. A summer event will be arranged (All).
4.	<p>Insurance: Jen Johnstone, Park Ranger, provided us with a document on insurance that essentially noted that gardening activities will come under the Council’s insurance so</p>

	long as the Council is informed of the Friends' plans. Alastair has written to Jen and Ritchie outlining what work and is going on and when. Alastair will ensure that the Council continues to be informed of our activities. Note that other events would not be covered and that the Friends will need to ensure that there was appropriate insurance in place before such events took place.
5.	Saturday Volunteer sessions: Sandy circulated a short note for members and others who may be interested in coming on a Saturday morning. The time suggested was from 10.30-12.00, the starting date is to be decided. Comments are to be sent to Sandy by 14 th March (All). A poster campaign in local businesses and lampposts will support this initiative. Sandy will revise the note on receipt of comments and circulate it as agreed.
6.	Minutes and Actions: Two Actions were carried over. Janet will contact Beechgrove Garden and Alastair and Janet will set up the calendar of events.
7.	It was agreed that we need more wheel barrows. Sandy will ascertain the price of heavy duty wheelbarrows.
8.	Next meeting: 7.30pm, 8 th April at Starbank Inn.

AR
1st May 2014