



**Friends of Meriton Road Park Group Meeting –
Meeting held – Monday 22nd September 2008**

Present: Barbara Pownall, June Lucas, Margaret Wood, Vernon Thompson, Derek Myerscough, Tracy Bratt, Sheila Rovira, Jennifer Banks, Kathy Swindells, Mr Shenton and Mike Bishop.

Apologies: Penny Millington and Rob Sawyer

Minutes from last meeting- Accepted as a true record.

Matters Arising –

Tennis Courts and goal posts –

Kathy Swindells MBC Landscape Supervisor explained that the contractor had been out begin work on the tennis courts (before Play Day) but when he saw them he realised that they were in a worse state than had been assumed and would need to be totally replaced. Unfortunately MBC had not budgeted for a total replacement of outer fence and Roy has to go to the October TAG meeting to try and get more funding. They will take down all the existing fence as it is unsafe with wires sticking out and holes in the fence.

We feel very frustrated by this as we, as a group, highlighted the issue many times before the Summer and then it had been left to deteriorate to the current state of disrepair.

Goal posts- Kathy said that the main goal posts will be put up by mid-October.

Hedges – They are behind schedule with the hedge cutting but it will be done soon. (Update since meeting – all the hedges have been cut now)

PLAY DAY 2008 –

It was a fantastic afternoon with lots of children and adults attending. Thank you all so much for helping out and making it such a great community afternoon. Wythenshawe Wheelers with their all ability bikes were a great hit and they very generously came along free of charge.

Richard and Lee (MBC Play Activity Workers) were great and brought lots of fun sports equipment.

Tracy would like to thank them for helping with the planning of the afternoon. Their play sessions in the park during the Summer holidays were also good fun, next year we need to publicize these better.

Our thanks to St. Chad's Church, St. John Ambulance, Friends of Handforth Station, Contour Housing, Shenton's Farm Shop and Cheshire Fire Service

The Play day was not a fundraising event but an awareness raising event for the group and the park. It achieved some new people interested in our work and they will sent the minutes from now on.

FUNDRAISING-

We need to work on a separate event to raise funds. We also need to think about approaching local businesses to sponsor equipment and events.

SIGN-

We have received our grant letter from the council for our noticeboard and need to decide upon the size and type of board needed and get it ordered.

Kathy said that there is a free standing notice board allocated for our park and we need to ask Roy lowndes. (Since the meeting Tracy has emailed Roy and is awaiting his response as we do not want to order a board and then get MBC's one delivered!!!)

We did think it might be an idea to fund a board in the Paddock to replace the missing one and highlight our information in it.

HORSES-

The horses are still going through the park to cut the corner into the Paddock area.

PUBLICISING EVENTS-

We need to contact the Rangers early on to get next years events in their GET OUT booklet. Also Kathy said to use Tony Barker MBC's publicity officer to get our events in the papers. Also to contact Sheila Malley for the What's On leaflets.

FUTURE FOR THE PARK-

We need to think of where we want to aim for our projects and really get a focus so that we can start applying for grants and outside help.

Short term MBC events for our park –

Community Planting Project – Kathy explained how this year MBC want to change from bulb planting to setting wildflowers such as oxeye daisy, fox and cubs and yellow rattleseed to encourage the wildlife. It will still be a community event involving the local schools and anyone available to help.

We have made the date for Saturday 1st November and suggest the time to be 10am – 12noon.

Come along, bring a spade, gloves etc. We'd be very pleased to see you there.

The Pond area – Kathy said they plan to make a kind of bog garden area and to achieve this they (Grounds Maintenance) will do a pond scrape to clear it and get the area prepared and then they will use plug plants (flag iris, purple loosestrife, sneezewort, woundwort, meadowsweet, lady's smock, tufted hair grass). We can organise a planting session for this.

Near the park entrance – the idea is to use fox and clubs which grow in the grass and can be left for a while before mowing.

Any Other Business –

Model Railway Proposal –

We have been approached by Mr Ron Dicks from the Stockport South Society of Model Engineers with the proposal to use the pavilion building and the field area next to it to set up a miniature sit on railway. They have been at the Royal school for the Deaf for 40 years but had to move to make way for new school buildings. He delivered a proposal to us and Tracy gave a copy to Kathy to give to Roy Lowndes. They would love to use the pavilion and develop the building and surrounding area over years to make the railway an attraction for people to come and use. They would be able to fund and do a lot of the work themselves. They have asked MBC to consider letting them have a long term lease of the pavilion. They are a very enthusiastic group of people who just need a new home for all their engines, equipment and library. They would love the opportunity to work with MBC and the Friends group to develop this to be a real community attraction for Handforth.

The group definitely backed the proposal as we could see the great effect it would have on the park and the wider community of Handforth, bringing more people in to the area to use the trains. Roy Lowndes was sent an email to state the above and also Barry Burkhill sent an email to also emphasise the great benefit to the community such a project would have.

We await a response from MBC but the Engineers are really keen to get moving on the project or they will need to look for another home.

Donation –

We would like to thank Mr Shenton who gave the group a very generous donation of £100 to put towards our future projects or events. We really appreciate this kind donation.

Litter Bins –

Missing bins opposite St. Chad's and St. Mary's Churches – this will be highlighted to MBC.

Older People's Play Area –

Mike explained to the group about a recent project in Blackley, North Manchester where the local council and the residents association had funded and installed a play area aimed at the elderly (but used by all ages). It had fitness equipment to exercise upper body, leg muscles, hip and stomach. Some of it was wheelchair accessible equipment. It had cost £15,000 and had been placed next to the children's play area so that elderly people taking their families to the park could also have a go at some activities. It was felt that this was a great idea and would be a great project for our park as Spath Lane Residents are working very hard to develop their facilities for the younger children and the teenagers. We would be able to get funding from several organisations locally and nationally for this kind of project.

Winston Churchill Travelling Fellowships –

Mike explained about this charity and how their were fellowships open to people of all ages, abilities to travel anywhere in the world to study community projects. He handed out a few leaflets. Closing date for this year is October 14th. Here is the link for more information - <http://www.wcmt.org.uk/>

Pathway to Grange School –

Rob explained it is still hopefully going to happen but waiting for the school to check out planning permission and C.C.C to follow this up.

Next meeting –

Monday 20th October 7pm at St. Chad's Church Lounge

Community planting morning

Saturday 1st November 10am - Noon

