

Red House Park Friends Group
17th September 2007
Annual General Meeting

Steve West as acting Chair opened the Meeting at 6.45 p.m.

1. Present

Bill Gunn	Jackie Ward
Christine Horton	Guy Hale
J.Bannister	Sonia Vaughan
M. Sanders	Jean Jones
Cllr. Tony Ward	Charles Shepherd
Stephanie Page	Graham Carlin
Roger Shipton	
Eileen Wilkinson	

2. Apologies

Sarah and Jason Cross
Anthony Lewis

3. Nominations

Steve West opened the meeting and made a vote of thanks to Sarah for all her hard work during the last year. He also congratulated Sarah and Jason on the birth of their son.

Nominations were sought for the position of chair. Stephanie Page was nominated but did not feel she could take on the job. No-one else came forward. Steve thanked Bill for stepping into the position while Sarah has been away and asked him if he would be prepared to act as caretaker until a new chair can be found. He said he would and it was decided to review the situation in three months .

Bill Gunn was nominated and voted in as Vice Chair
Christine Horton was nominated and voted in as Secretary
Graham Carlin was nominated and voted in as Treasurer.

Anthony Lewis who currently maintains our website sent his apologies for not coming to the meeting . He also said that he was happy to continue updating the website and if anyone has any comments or news they would like put on the website please e.mail him.

4. The Pools

Steve reported that work is imminent on the pools. The Friends asked if the fallen trees, broken off branches and rubbish could be cleared from the edge of the pools. The improvements will be carried out to the lower pool, and to do this the water will be lowered and the edges repaired. Also they would clean and repair the seats round the pool. Signs will be put up for water safety.

5. The Monument

The report carried out recently on the monument stated that it was not falling over. It was the steel infrastructure that was at fault . The protective fencing also needs to be extended. Steve West stated that any excess of 106 monies could be used to repair the monument. The Group asked if a replacement plaque could be made. Apparently they are not expensive now as they are made of resin.

6. Acacia Tree and Roses

Ray said he would get the bed that was intended for the Roses rotavated and manured at the end of October. He will notify the Group when the roses will be ready to plant so that members and anyone interested can go along and help. The health of the Acacia Tree that has been purchased is in some doubt at the moment.

7. The Red House

David Brown e.mailed us re an application to obtain a grant to improve the Red House. Unfortunately this grant is only available to groups who take on the responsibility of the Building so it is not applicable to us. However we did wonder if anything could be done re . the Changing Rooms which badly need renovating so we have e.mailed David to ask the question.

Anthea Rawlence has sent us an. e.mail on the current situation with the House stating the following:

The roofing repairs have been commissioned and also 2 new doors and steel plates installed at ground floor. Removal of graffiti has been carried out and Sandwell Council have offered to contribute towards the cost of these works – Officer is Helga Lutz.

Quotes have been received for an asbestos report on the building and an Electrician has quoted for minor electrical repairs.

An agent has inspected the Building - BCTV are awaiting his market report.

8. State of the Park

The state of the Park is still causing a lot of concern. It has been pointed out that with so many new Apartment Blocks going up in Great Barr the 'green space' in the park is more important than ever.

As a park in Sandwell it is entitled to the following:

Maintenance of the flower beds - every two weeks

Maintenance of the rose beds - every month

Maintenance of the hedges - once a year not before August

1 permanent Gardener for two hours every day

Grass cut in the ornamental areas every week

Grass cut elsewhere every fortnight and in the low maintenance areas three times per year.

Paths swept every two weeks,

Litter bins emptied three times per week and dog bins twice a week.

Apart perhaps from the grass cutting it was pointed out by the Group that we are not receiving any of these services at the level needed which is why the park looks as it does.

9. Litter Pick

The Group arranged a litter picking day on Saturday 16th September to try and clean up the park. It was reported that round the tennis courts particularly evidence of drug taking was found. Steve West said he would report this.

Tony Ward made the point that we must try and obtain more publicity when events like this take place to highlight the problem.

10. Any Other Business

Richard Branson had been approached by one of our Members to see if he would be interested in giving some funds to the Red House but he politely declined.

It is felt that the gate must be locked at the entrance to the Park. Bill Gunn is going to ask the police to get in touch with Steve West.

11. The Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Monday 29th October 2007. This meeting will be held at the Horticultural Training Centre.