

Red House Park Friends Group
3rd March 2008
Meeting Notes

Bill Gunn Chair opened the Meeting at 6.45p.m.

1. Present

Keith Wild	Josh Bannister
Christine Horton	Mark Sanders
Ray Wheatley SMBC	Eileen Wilkinson
Steve West SMBC	Roger Shipton
Jean Jones	Jean Fisher
Graham Carlin	Jackie Ward
Sonia Vaughan	

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Kay Alcock and Kay Clash

3. Chairman's Report

Approval was given for minutes of the last meeting.

Bill reported that he now had the keys to the Notice Board so we could get it tidied up and the notices renewed.

Bill told the meeting that he had been in touch with the Heritage Protection Dept which deals with the protection of land and buildings. He wants to get the Red House listed and the Park as well.

4. Secretary's Report

CJH said that after some discussion the Agenda has been accepted as it is. It is felt that although it is long a lot of the headings would be only briefly mentioned and at least it acted as a reminder so all items were covered.

'The Aims of the Friends' has been revised and is attached to these minutes. Once it is accepted by the Group more copies will be printed and it can be given to new members

A database of members was discussed and it was decided that all members currently on the list would be sent a letter asking if they still wanted to be consulted re. the Park and if they were willing to help with any matters to do with the park. Steve West said that if we presented him with a list of members the Council would send out the letters. Mark Sanders said he would write the letter and e.mail to CJH.

5. Treasurer's Report

Graham reported that the funds stand at £5840.37. Two donations have been received for fifty pounds each towards the Fun Day.

Steve West said that it would be advisable to get the accounts checked and Keith Wild said he knew someone who would probably do that for us.

6. Council Report

Steve reported that 'Ground Care' had now become 'Maintenance Care' and Martin Brayford is now Grounds Manager of the whole borough.

Steve also reported that we would have a Gardener back in the park for the summer which was well received by the Group.

7. Use of the Park

Concern was raised that cars are still accessing the park by the gates in Hill Lane. Steve West reported that an order has been given for the gates to be altered so that they can be half locked.

Forthcoming Events – It was suggested that we held a Car Boot Sale or a Table Top Sale in the Red House. Steve West explained that there were a lot of issues ie. damage to the Park if the weather was bad and if a Table Top Sale was held in the Red House there would be a security problem and we would have to get BCTV's permission first. These issues would have to be explored in detail first before we make a decision.

Fun Day – Jean Jones reported that plans were coming on well. The committee had yet to decide if we extend it for the full weekend to include a beach party for children. An outside company would take on the responsibility for security on the Saturday night and they would run the Saturday, our events would take place as usual on the Sunday. Steve West said that a similar weekend had taken place in other parks in the Borough and been a success.

Jean Jones and Mark Sanders reported that the biggest problem is still recruiting manpower. Mark has contacted all names on our database but has still been unable to recruit any significant numbers to help on the day.

8. Features of the Park

The House - The Group voiced their concern that the House was a sad sight with all the graffiti on the doors. Nick Williams from 'Sportswise' unfortunately feels that they cannot go ahead with their plans for the Red House without other organisations to share the responsibility. Steve West said that he felt that if BCTV could not make it work it was not a financial viability for any organisation.

As 'Jumping Jacks' have now moved out of the Red House, the Group asked if their facilities could be used for the Fun Day

The Monument – This is now a priority for the Council and as it will have to be rebuilt it was felt that it would probably be better done after the Fun Day

9. Park Environment

Acacia Trees – there is a query about these and Ray is going to follow up what the current position is as they had been returned to the Nursery.

Floral Management and Environment. Steve West told the Group that the Trees are now dealt with by the Highways Department. The Group felt that an assessment was needed with reference to the state of the trees. A lot of branches have come down and need clearing as they are a hazard. Jill Fisher reported that straw would be put on the island again for the Swans.

10. Sports Facilities

CJH asked Steve West if anything could be done to improve the Changing Rooms, Although there are two garages at the end of the building which could be changed and refurbished to give two more changing rooms it would mean a 'change of use' and there are no funds available for this.

Tennis Courts – Steve West said that the Council will provide new nets where there were posts to receive them. It is thought that there are three sets of posts on the courts.

11. Any Other Business

Funding – The Group asked Steve West if there was any funding that we could access for the above projects, he said that he would ask David Brown to come to one of our meetings and tell us what was available.

Green flag – The Group are very interested in obtaining Green flag status for Red House Park. There is a nationally recognised standard for parks and open spaces and we do not meet the criteria. It has been decided to look into it further and seek advice.

Constitution – Graham Carlin highlighted areas in the Constitution which are not correct for our Group. These will have to be amended and Steve West said that the Council had the master copy and would make the changes when they had been agreed. CJH will go through them and report at the next meeting.

The next meeting will be held at the Horticultural Training Centre on Monday 14th April at 6.45 p.m