

## Friends of Dollar Park - Chairman's Report Annual General Meeting 21 July 2015

Last year I stated in my report that although we had had a busy year it was with limited success, I am pleased to report that this year has been equally busy but with considerable success on a number of fronts.

### Falkirk Council

- Earlier in the year a meeting was held with representatives from the Community Trust, who outlined detailed proposals for the refurbishment of the tennis courts at a cost of £288,293.00. This would consist of 4 all weather double tennis courts, new fencing, floodlighting and all year round coaching.
- I attended a Councillor and Stakeholders seminar with regards to Councils Policy Development Panel regarding the Open Space Strategy and Parks Development Plan. My main concern is the Councils increasing reliance on voluntary groups to run parks and source funding, and the lack of skilled core staff with no apparent program to train young people in horticultural skills.
- The Councils Capital Program allocated 10k for improvements within the park and in conjunction with Council officers a program of work was agreed, a notice board was installed, an avenue of beech and copper beech trees was planted on the drive bordering the play area, and the shrubbery adjacent to the rear of Arnotdale House was refurbished using plant material introduced to this country in the nineteenth century from China by the plant collector George Forrest born in Falkirk.
- In June a meeting was arranged by the provost inviting all stakeholders with an interest in the park to discuss future working arrangements and joint funding. This was attended by representatives from the Cyrenians, Falkirk Community Trust, Falkirk Council FDAMH and Fof DP

### Falkirk Criminal Justice

- Over the course of the year the committee has met with staff to discuss progress and I am pleased to report that a certain amount of work has been achieved. In March the Minister for Justice visited the walled garden and discussed the overall concept with the various parties present.
- Last year in my report I stated that the Cyrenians had prepared a Feasibility Plan for the Walled Garden, but unfortunately this did not materialise. However the good news is that they are back on board revising the original plan and looking at ways to fund a café and toilets.

### Falkirk Association for Mental Health

- A number of meetings and discussion have taken place with staff from FDAMH over the year with regards to the use of Arnotdale by the organization and while the Friends had no real concerns strong opposition from neighboring residents has caused FDAMH to reconsider the use of Arnotdale. This is unfortunate as the possibility of a café and toilets could have been achieved.

In conclusion this has been a more fruitful year, planting improvements to the park and with the development of the tennis facility and the Cyrenians hoping to further develop the walled garden we may at last get our cherished toilets. Further improvements to the infrastructure of the park will be ongoing and I am confident that the year ahead will see concrete results.

I would like to thank my fellow committee members for their support over the year, and to all the Friends of Dollar Park

*Leslie Pryde*

*Chairman of Friends of Dollar Park*