

**Minutes of “Friends of Dollar Park” Meeting
28th September 2010
Masonic Hall Lint Riggs**

Present: Les Pryde, Ian Gourlay, Chris Morris (Chair), Jessica Paterson, Robert Menzies, Jean Armstrong, Maureen Smith, Alastair Smith, Shirley Johnson, Irene Lumsden, Christine Reid, Ronnie Cresswell, Barbara McConnell, Christine Christie, Linda Pacitti, Isobel Hall. Pat Reid arrived later.

Invited speakers: Barbara McConnell, from “Step Forth”, an NHS/Local Authority partnership.

Apologies: Susan Myles, Charles Reid.

Item	Heading	Subject	Decision	Action	Timescale
1	Welcome & Introductions	CM extended introductions, welcomed everyone to the meeting including Barbara McConnell from Step Forth.			
		IC welcomed us to our glorious venue. Begun in the late 1800's, the Masonic hall was completed in 1905. IC had an interesting surprise for us, in the shape of a historic certificate honouring Robert Dollar, who had himself been a very active and prominent Mason.			
2	Apologies	Noted above.			
3	Minutes of Last Meeting	Minutes of the previous meeting (22 June 2010) were accepted as an accurate record when Linda Pacitti seconded them			
4	Invited Speaker – Barbara McConnell from	Barbara McConnell outlined the work of the Step Forth organization and its efforts to encourage people to become more active in their own communities. The organisation coordinates volunteer-led walks, which now take place in Grangemouth, Bo'ness,			

	<p>“Step Forth”</p>	<p>Carronshore, Brightons, Westquarter, Airth, Hallglen and Camelon. She would like to extend the programme of walks into Dollar Park, for instance with a buggy walk where parents and/or grandparents go for group walks pushing their buggies; a novel and enjoyable way to reduce isolation and improve health and well-being. The Step Forth programme is very active in Zetland Park. Barbara would like to forge links with the FoDP. Potential ideas might include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Links with local schools • The Helix • Cross-generation project (possibly with the Burnbrae nursing home) <p>In Zetland Park, yellow footprints have been painted on the ground to mark out the suggested walking routes. IL pointed out that given the historic surroundings, the signage should be sensitively done. BM emphasized that signage would be at the Friends' discretion. JP asked whether there was any fee for the buggy walk and was assured not. AS looked at photographs of the existing signage in Zetland Park and noted that there was no telephone number, which he found puzzling. How would people know how to take advantage of the scheme? BM explained that not all of the walks are guided; some of the signage merely describes the length and features of the various routes. People are always curious to find out the actual distance that they have walked, and the signs can provide this information. AS wondered whether</p>			
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		<p>signage was necessary in such a wee park – after all no-one could get lost in Dollar Park. BM expanded on the idea that the scheme exists as a motivational force, to try to encourage exercise in people who are not usually active.</p> <p>CM thanked BM for the information and promised that the committee would get back to her about any future collaboration.</p> <p>Once BM had left the meeting, the idea was discussed in more detail. CM was concerned about the visual impact of the “yellow footsteps”. RM thought that footsteps could be seen as a dumbing-down exercise. It was agreed that there should be no signage anywhere near the historic Peking Lions. IG suggested a discreet sign at the western foot-entrance (from Camelon road). AS suggested it was “a bit Big-Brotherish” to be “telling people how to walk.” It was a conservative wee park and he didn't see the need. IL thought that having a trail to follow was quite an appealing idea, especially for children. CM asked the room to vote, firstly on whether to reject the idea out of hand. AS cast the only yes vote. When asked whether the FoDP would like to see a modified plan, the remainder of the Friends agreed. Our suggestion would be a route-map at the western foot-entrance, and possibly a discreet “trail” for walkers to follow, but no big yellow foot-prints.</p>		<p>CM to contact BM to negotiate a modified plan</p> <p>.</p>	
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5	Financial report & insurance update	<p>IG (Treasurer) outlined the current financial position of the FoDP group. Our bank balance is £820.62</p> <p>Insurance: IG reported that the Falkirk Environmental Trust (FET) have (finally) paid the £291.95 insurance premium for the FoDP public liability insurance required to hold events.</p> <p>It is hoped that when the year's cover has expired, that the FET will provide funds for a renewal.</p>			
6	Website development	<p>CM reported that Keith Matheson has bowed out of the website project due to pressures of work. JA had ideas on how to get volunteer involvement. CM also said that Michelle MacCallum of the Dunipace-based Community Green Initiative (CGI) had a good contact. CM reported that his wife, Sarah Morris, had started a Facebook group for Friends of Dollar Park which had already received much interest. In this day and age, such a page is very desirable and he encouraged the Friends to look it up. Going forward, the Facebook page will be able to do things the website can't, such as provide much more interactivity. Perhaps people will be able to upload their park photos – certainly we will</p>		<p>JA to report back to IG withink 4 weeks on the feasibility of securing a volunteer to develop the website.</p>	

		<p>be able to advertise litter-picks etc.</p> <p>CC suggested that the group needed to raise its profile, so that people beyond the committee, and even beyond the wider Friends' group, could know more about the group and how it was working for the Park.</p>			
7	Involvement of Council Officers	<p>AS expressed extreme disappointment that senior Council officials were never to be found at FoDP meetings. He thought that they should attend to get a sense of how the public feels about the park. He still had the sense that the Council were going about business in the park without consulting the public. RM said that he had observed certain works being undertaken, and had wondered whether the FoDP committee were having any input? CM confirmed that he had indeed had ongoing input into traffic management issues in the park. (Bollards / barriers etc). IG wondered whether a Community Liason officer might attend the meetings. JP observed that Community Panning officer Frank McChord had helped to set up FoDP, because the Council had desired the formation of the group. But he had soon stepped aside because the group was designed to operate at arm's length from the Council. CM said that the absence of officials meant that the meetings were a good forum to vent our feelings and make plans. IC reminded us that it is customary only to invite officials when there are specific questions that need asking. On the matter of inviting council officials to meetings, Provost Pat Reid stated that it would make sense to await the outcome of huge changes that faced the local authority. Specifically, proposals that would see</p>			

certain departments gaining Trust status. JA asked PR whether the Park would be getting Trust status. PR replied that there was no answer to that question yet; while the Trust is under consideration everything is still quite fluid, but that come the end of October, things would be clearer. However, should Community Services become a Trust, the officers in charge of the park would presumably be under no obligation to attend these meetings because they would no longer be public servants, but rather, employees of the Trust.

AS requested that the Chair ask the room to vote on whether to invite Council officers to attend meetings. CM responded that the present system, whereby a minute is taken and reported to the officials by the Friends' executive committee, seemed to be working, but that he would be happy to put the question to a vote at the next meeting. AS accepted this. MS commented that it is necessary for the Friends to have a sense of where the Council wanted to spend money on, so that we didn't replicate efforts. CM agreed, and said that it would be helpful if someone would come and speak to the Friends once budgets had been allocated. CM concluded by saying that despite the unprecedented cuts, and uncertainty, things were not in abeyance in the park, and that interesting things were underway.

8	General Update	<p>CANINE CAPERS No date set yet. CM said MM had assured him that the event would be scaled down to an appropriate size for the park. Restricted parking shouldn't be too much of a problem if the car-park at the Municipal Buildings were to be made available.</p> <p>LITTER PICK AND GDW EVENT CM said that the turn-out had been disappointing, but that the general state of the park is so much improved that the litter pick was still effective. JA and SJ, who did attend, agreed. IG and AS commended the recent improvements in cleanliness and maintenance, but CM had to report that during the litter-pick, needles had been found at the Kilns and the Doo'cot. IL observed that rough sleepers seemed to go down towards the Kilns these days, perhaps deterred from the park itself by the high level of general maintenance.</p> <p>PARKING / FENCING CM reported that following some serious problems with "boy-racers", the putting area has been fenced off as per discussion with the Council, making it now inaccessible to cars. There is still a bollard to be installed outside the Gents toilet but CM has been assured that it is imminent.</p>		JP to contact Michelle McCallum about date for next years Canine Capers	

9	Doo'cot project	<p>CM reported that a scheduled meeting with John Banks had not been able to take place. He understood that JB had gone ahead with another meeting with architects and/or planners but CM had not heard back. The historic importance of the building means that things move slowly.</p>		<p>Pat Reid said that he would get back to CM with the outcome of the meeting.</p>	
10	Walled Garden	<p>CM passed round a file containing pictures and a proposal for regenerating the Walled Garden. At present, the Criminal Justice department of FC use the space. People serving Community Service do gardening work / employment training there. Louisa Glowacki, from Criminal Justice, proposes to have the space restored by these workers. CM is interested in the plans, but has questions. How much access will the public have? What level risk are the individuals carrying out the work? It might be possible to negotiate a deal re. toilets. The Community Service workers need toilet facilities and so do the park users. Could we come to some agreement? RM was worried about mothers and children sharing toilets with Community Services people. LP was worried that the public would have very restricted access once the garden was restored. JA thought the plans looked chaotic, a mish-mash of too many ideas going on for the size of the space.</p>		<p>CM to arrange a site meeting with Louisa Glowacki, so that Friends can see for themselves and ask questions.</p>	

11	Grant-funding sub-group volunteers	CM asked Friends to consider putting themselves forward to serve on a sub-committee looking at funding applications. At the moment we are still awaiting instruction re. the Doo'cot, but the time will come when we need to start applying for money, for this and other projects.		JP, IH and RC are interested in being in a funding sub-committee. Will await developments re the Doo'cot.	
12	Logo				
10	AOCB	LOGO JA reported that Anne Marie Kelly, a graphic designer, has produced a FoDP logo, using Yasir Shammaa's winning entry from our Logo Competition. The graphics were handed round and all agreed that they were most professional. JA was thanked for her input.		JP and JA to consult with Anne Marie Kelly about final design, suitable for banners and letterhead.	

11	DONM	Tuesday 23 rd November 2010, 1900-2030 (venue TBC)		IC to confirm venue.	