

Jesus Green Association AGM

Date: Wednesday, December 2 2010

Location: Wesley Methodist Church, Christ's Pieces

Chairman's welcome

18 people + five committee members (chair Peter Constable, vice-chair Martin Thompson, secretary Jack Grove, treasurer Richard Price and Jesus College rep Anthony Bowen). Two councillors, Rod Cantrill and Daminen Tunnacliffe, also noted as present.

Apologies

Sarah Tovell, also received via email from Alf & Edith Styan, Elfrida Heath, Neil Anderson, Anne Bromley and Margaret Wright

Approval of minutes of AGM 2009

Brief run-through of topics for discussion by PC, including the issue of membership change and the move from subscriptions to 'voluntary donations'. JG explained the reasons behind the change, unwieldy and bureaucratic etc. After an inquiry from the floor, it was agreed to send out an email detailing the changes and asking for members to contribute towards funds.

Treasurer's report

RP outlined the accounts and noted the deficit for this year.

He also congratulated those who have taken part in efforts to beautify the JG lock island

David Edgar explained how the island had been tidied up under the supervision of Cam Conservators, with Pip Noon. Planting of shrubs and plants, etc

RP noted Dan O'Donnell had cleaned out JG ditch and thanked him. Anne Garvey asked if Jesus College could contribute towards cleaning of ditch given the utility it receives from it. AB said bursar was aware of problem and was looking at joint working with council to improve its appearance.

David Edgar also reported on efforts to stem the number of BBQs on JG, with notices distributed to various shops outlining the rules against lighting of BBQs. Suggested an official sign is sent from association to stores in spring to warn people against lighting them on public spaces.

Chairman's report

PC addressed tree issues, paths and HLF bid plans for the Rouse Pavilion, which would include the creation of a community cafe run by the community. Drainage of grass behind the lido would also be included in the bid, as would improvements to pathway and better bins for the summer time.

HLF bid is a collaboration with council, with the short term goals of improvements to the park, skate park and tennis courts also in the system. Bowls pavilion is due to be demolished soon.

Noted the council are good at clearing the green, though not always immediately on Sunday. Efforts should be made not just to clear up mess, but to stop people dropping litter through more bins, etc. Litter bins should be replaced as summer bins were unacceptable and get kicked about

Reported on work of JGA working group, which has adopted a joint strategy with Friends of Midsummer Common, which will be posted on the website. Future working parties would include FOMC.

Tree plan was noted, call for volunteers, including a replacement for JG as secretary. None was forthcoming and JG agreed to continue in interim while other is sought. JG explained the duties of the role.

Committee was nominated and accepted to continue in positions.

AB talked briefly about the input of skating community and parents into the JG working group, while Rod Cantrill, executive councillor for communities, explained the shakeup of management of city council and how it would improve JG with departments coming together. It is now controlled by Toni Ainley in charge of services and estates for open spaces.

General debate

Bruria Shachar-Hill said drainage should be a priority as waterlogged grass could impact on trees. Added she had approached several groups about BBQs with some 'responding better than others'. Also notices about BBQ were not very clear

Point about inadequate notices was seconded by another member, adding that notices would only be adhered to if there was also enforcement

Anne Garvey said plane trees were fine in water, according to Cambridge tree expert Oliver Rackham. Signs were also too cautious about BBQs, creating confusion about what was a fire and what was a BBQ. AG also said she had contacted the council about BBQs to be told a BBQ was not a fire. Also objected to the large slab-like signs erected by Love Cambridge. Called for less ambiguous signs and said bins are often empty while litter is strewn on green.

PC said it was now understood that BBQs were fires and this had been made clear to police and council. Action could be taken but the enforcement issue had to be taken forward. Raised issue of designated BBQ areas like in Wandlebury or Lammas Land

Joye Rosenstiel supported idea of designated site, saying it was unrealistic to stop people from barbecuing on the green.

Other comment saying BBQ should have six inch legs to minimise damage, though PC commented that this did not stop the smoke issue.

AG said picnickers were losing out to a few BBQ people because of impact of smoke and chicken smells

Daniel Zeichner said BBQ facilities should be made available because many people lived in flats and JG was only open space available to them

Vote on BBQ issue. 8 in favour of designated zone, one for status quo and five against any BBQing on green

Richard Taylor raised issue of tree works on JG and whether the final plan proposed was that approved by west/central committee.

PC said only works were removal of three leylandii near tennis courts and reduction in height of leylandii at swimming pool by 3m a year for five years ahead of new hedge going in. Added that plans for planting trees near Lower Park Street had been removed because it would block out the view of the cottages

AG said leylandii removal at tennis courts were unnecessary as trees were healthy and screened the Magdalene College flats, leaving that corner very bare. PC said consultation was taking place and advised those with strongly held views to comment as AG had.

John Cooper said state of paths was a disgrace and he had written to council six years ago about the need for improvements and nothing had happened. Damien Tunnacliffe said he was meeting the county council officers on the issue this week and would report back. AB had pursued the path question too, but with no money forthcoming from council, the HLF was now a proposed route. RT said inclusion of paths in lottery bid would allow council to wash hands of problem, as it had done in the past. PC said it was catch-22 –situation –with no money from council meaning double pronged approach was needed.

Rod Cantrill apologised to JC for lack of action, but times were hard now. However, council was delivering on skatepark improvements, which would go before the planning committee on December 9, for completion in early 2011 when ground was harder. Playground was also to be done at the same time. Was not sure about the tennis courts and would get back to the association on the details of plans/timeline

Jeremy Purseglove, environmental expert, outlined some ideas for the central plane tree avenue, including removal of lampposts with lights in the trees, nice edging of path and damp meadowland ideas

Remarks that some council vans were destroying the path and grassy areas , RP responded saying council had pledged to use their smaller electric vehicle on JG.

PC raised idea of dedicated parks officer for four central Cambridge parks, including BBQ enforcement, +idea of hammerhead hard standing turning point at Victoria Avenue to stop damage.

Joye Rosenstiel raised issue of recycling points on the green

The committee's membership of Cambridge Past, Present and Future was also raised (£35). Questioned why we were members when finances were so tight and they had plenty of money. BSH also said money could be better spent on JG because the association was not flush with money.

Chairman thanked people for coming and meeting ended at 9pm.