

Friends of Hedgemoor Park (HPF) Annual General Meeting

Thursday May 12th at 18.30hrs
The Crypt Meeting Room, St Swithin's Church, Walcot

Chair: Graham Groom

Present: 16

Agenda item	Key Points
1. Welcome & Agenda	Graham welcomed all and introduced HPF Officers, and also Jane Robson who was attending from BaNES Parks Department
2. Context	Graham gave brief background to Hedgemoor Park, BaNES and HPF – The land is owned and maintained by BaNES, with a management plan in place, and maintenance provided by the grounds team. Graham thanked Jane Robson and the team for their ongoing work. HPF was constituted in 2019 with a committee of 7, a bank account and a vision to assist in keeping the park looking tidy and welcoming. Given the financial constraints on councils, there is an increasing role for Friends Groups like HPF. We are fortunate to have this resource on our doorstep with its blend of trees and history, and it is important to maintain it.
3. Chair's Report	Volunteer work continued as able, following Covid guidance. Total volunteer hours estimated at 1200 – much of this admin, with about 25% physical activity HPF currently has 45 members, 39 individuals and 6 groups Core activities: Two gardening sessions per month. Litter picking – split by a small team to 2-3 sessions a week. These activities gather a lot of compliments and encouragement Communications: Active website, posts on Facebook, Instagram & Twitter. Do not record how many "hits" on website, and unsure how much benefit there is from, for instance Instagram despite "likes" being posted. Recap of the last year in Hedgemoor Park: Green Flag award – granted again this year Gardening (about 320 volunteer hours) Wildflower areas – meadow area at London Street railings has been a joy to see develop. Abundance of bees and other invertebrates. The roundels in the area to the left of the HPF noticeboard have also been worked on and expanded. Woodland bed – area below battlement/tower planted with native plants. Some development this year, and hopefully will increase year by year Vegmead – Set up over 10 years ago by Transition Bath as a community vegetable plot. They have not been able to maintain it in its original form for several years now and approached HPF take on the area. After d/w them and BaNES Parks Team it was agreed that HPF would work it on the understanding that it will be a low maintenance plot. Some planting will be kept, e.g fruit trees and bushes, and added to with herb bed and wildflowers to encourage bees and other propagators. One of the members attending suggested bed could be used to grow vegetables to help feed people in need as he was concerned about food shortages.

	It was discussed that he has a valid concern but probably not practical for the Vegmead plot. It is a small area, and there is no water supply which is an ongoing problem. When used as Vegmead, latterly the vegetables did not get used. Invited to meet volunteers at an HPF gardening session if he wishes to discuss further. Parks Dept liaison: <i>A walkabout with members of the Parks Teams</i> helpful in clarifying HPF role and hopefully contributed to the management plan <i>Infrastructure</i> New handrail leading to London Street gates and noticeboard. Nigel Pollard HPF Treasurer provided historical information for the 2 interpretation boards now installed Replacement bench near entrance from Lower Hedgemoor Road well used. <i>Heritage</i> Battlement and Tower – HPF have liaised with Parks Team and the Bath World Heritage Enhancement Fund about a survey and repairs to these structures. Survey completed, and a preliminary planning application has been submitted by Parks Dept. Damage to London Street railings and gate Sad loss of the 120 year old Holm Oak by the London Street gate which in falling caused considerable structural damage, and gate closed for safety. HPF informed that this will remain closed until the work is undertaken, possibly at the end of this year. Jane Robson has asked Property Services if the damaged post and gates could be removed to allow this important entrance to be used pending completion of the work. <i>Visiting attractions to park</i> Bath Flower School selected the bandstand as the focus for their students' end of course flower arrangement Bath Spa University students set up an installation "The Listeners" – appalling weather but it was appreciated and praised by the public
4. Treasurer's Report	Nigel presented report (available on the HPF website) £1300 carried over from end of last year. No questions re report
5. Motion: Proposed change to HPF constitution	Constitution, Section 5, Governance – f. The Committee shall meet on at least four occasions per annum. Proposal to reduce to three occasions per annum Proposed by Graham Groom Seconded by Nigel Pollard Vote taken. Carried by required two thirds of members voting
6. Election of committee members	Committee members serve for a maximum of 3 years, after which they stand for re-election if they wish Two committee members will not be standing for re-election Graham thanked Joan Rotherham and Julia Sherwen for their valuable contributions over the last 3 years. The five members standing for re-election: Graham Groom – Chair Nigel Pollard – Treasurer Caroline Groom – Secretary Nick Tobin Edwina Vardey

	Chair proposed 'en-bloc' voting to save time. Proposed for re-election by Keith Stuffins Seconded by Stephanie Pollard Vote taken and carried by majority of members voting New proposed committee member, Claire Rosier was unable to attend but provided a biography to support her interest. Proposed for election by Joan Rotheram Seconded by Graham Groom Vote taken. Carried by majority of members voting
7. Ideas for 2022-23 8. Q & A	Platinum Jubilee decoration for bandstand – to be low key decoration with drapes, an official jubilee roundel and greenery to enhance. Decorating to take place Tuesday & Wednesday prior to the long weekend. Will send out details to all members. All welcome to help Water supply – ongoing discussions with BaNES and Wessex Water re water supply still present that fed drinking fountain in the past. Wood from Holm Oak – try and use some of the wood for stump seats for children, and possibly carved artefacts to sell Saplings – HPF in discussion with the Tree Team re planting saplings in the autumn Paint benches – for further discussion with Jane Robson London Street Gates – plans to repaint these on hold until repaired Lansdown Road Entrance sign – needs refurbishment. Jane Robson acknowledged this but the team may not have time at the moment. Ideas invited from those present: Lighting the park at night – concerns about safety for those who use park as thoroughfare at night. Jane Robson stated that light pollution can be a problem. Low lighting of paths possible to do, but in discussion it was felt that low lighting does not provide safety at night, and police would recommend walking in well-lit areas. Several female people present did not choose to use park at night for this reason. Jane Robson agreed to take suggestion to BaNES for discussion. A concern expressed about not making the park too "neat". Some residents would like slightly wild nature of park maintained. Discussed balance between keeping park well maintained and allowing some areas to grow. A resident who is keen to contribute to the park after many years of enjoying it and who is a sculptor would be happy to offer his work. To be followed up with him. Children's Play Area – concerns that none of the equipment is suitable for younger children, or for children with disabilities. Jane Robson noted this and talked about some of the areas in Bath, particularly Alexandra Park where new equipment has been installed to accommodate all abilities
9. AOB	HPF have introduced new leaflets about its work, and an attendee commented that these were stylish and professional. Joan Rotheram wished to express thanks to Graham for all his hard work for HPF Nigel Pollard asked if there was a consensus for a further print run of his book "The History of Hedgemoor Park" and this was agreed Meeting closed at 20.05 hrs