Friends of Selly Oak Park

Minute of the Committee Meeting
held in the Ariel Scout Hut, Gibbins Road on Sunday 18 September 2011

Present: Andrew Schofield (Chairman), Dave Barker (Treasurer), Ann-Marie McCarthy (Vice-Chairman), Ken Pugh (Secretary), and Bob Curry. Nicola Clarke (Quadron) and Adrian Langley (Chairman, Ariel Scouts) were also present. Iggy Smith (BCC, Playground Design Group) attended for Agenda item 4.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting, thanking them for giving their time to the Friends Group

1. **Apologies** were received from Michael Chu, Bridget Ferris**,** Simon Cooper (BCC Parks Manager) and Cllr. Alasdair Dow.

2. **The Minute of the last meeting** was accepted as an accurate record.

3. **Matters arising** – were all considered under subsequent agenda headings.

4. **Zip wire.** Having observed zip wire use in its horizontal (zip-less) mode during the past few months it was decided that the apparatus should be modified to ensure a gradient was applied to the wire and thus more "zip" introduced. Iggy Smith agreed to investigate whether it was cheaper to i) move the entire structure to a new position in the park where there was a natural gradient, or ii) build up one end of the structure in its present position. IS was urged to proceed with the modifications as soon as possible (**Action: IS**). IS confirmed that there are reserved funds to enable this change.

   IS drew attention to new sources of (matched) funding which might be available through the initiative that Cllr. Mullaney, BCC Cabinet member for Leisure and Sport, was championing, and which was sponsored by the Olympics Movement and Addidas. NC confirmed that Simon Cooper had already included the infrastructure (paths, etc.) needs of Selly Oak Park in his response to Cllr. Mullaney. It was thought that this would also be an opportunity to follow up on the proposals to purchase and install exercise equipment in the park (**Action: AS**). In this connection AS and DB reported that they had viewed such equipment in Sandwell Park, where between £30K and £50K worth of equipment had been installed in a single zone focussed at the late teens / early 20s age group (the single zone enabled Addidas to use their logos to highlight their sponsorship of the scheme – perhaps a priority for them). In contrast IS indicated that similar equipment had been installed as coupled units around Lightswood Park. A discussion arose about the relative merits of a single exercise zone or components distributed around the park. There was concern that a single zone might result in the gathering of larger groups of young people which might be a perceived threat to other park users. It was noted that some members of the public had a traditional view of what a park should offer – a quiet space – and that distributed exercise equipment might not be compatible with that view. It was decided – as a happy compromise - that if exercise equipment is to be installed it should not be installed next to the existing playground, but single or coupled units should be distributed in a sector of the park, not across its entire area.

5. **Willow Sculpture.** There was considerable disappointment at the mal-treatment of the willow sculpture and the extensive damage it had sustained. Despite repairs made by AS and Derek Foley, Cyril looks very poorly! Tracey Hewitt is contacting Bob Green seeking advice about some autumn repair; albeit a considerable number of new willows may be required to restore the squirrel to health (**Action: TH**).

6. **Memorial bench for Geoff Bartlett.** Arrangements are in hand for Dickie Tilley to fashion a bench reflecting the late Geoff's engineering interest, the bench to be made from 2 sleepers and be similar in size to the one near the willow sculpture. The sleepers have been sourced,

but delivery will cost more than the sleepers, unless free collection can be arranged (**- any volunteers?**). £500 is budgeted and available for this project.

7. **Organisational structure for Festival.** AS, anticipating the continuing growth of the Selly Oak Festival, proposed various organisational roles for future events:

    Overall Manager (– AS willing to continue in role)
    Site Manager (– would Malcolm Smith might be willing to continue in role having done a good job informally last year?)
    Entertainments Sub-Committee
    Stalls Manager (?)
    Organiser of the FOSOP stall
    Sports / football Organiser
    Publicity / Advertising Manager

    and suggested that Committee members might consider which roles they could adopt (**Action: All**). It may be possible to co-opt helpers to specific tasks even though they may not want to be FOSOP Committee members – the Festival is a general local community event.

8. **Robert Wilkinson invite to November meeting.** AS reported that he has invited Robert Wilkinson to the next meeting to meet members, to talk about his and the Friends needs for the festival, and consider dates for future events.

9. **Meeting frequency.** It was agreed that the frequency of meetings should be maintained at alternate monthly throughout the year with the exception of the mid-summer period. It was agreed that i) an additional (mainly Festival organisation) meeting was needed in the Spring, ii) another short ("flight check") meeting a few days before the Festival**,** and iii) a Festival feedback meeting within a week or so of the event. These arrangements will be taken into consideration when arranging future meeting dates at the AGM.

    Inadvertent circumstances had prevented the post-Festival social / feedback meeting proposed for this year. AS asked that any important feedback be emailed to him (**Action: All**).

10. **Priorities for 2011/12.** It was agreed that provision of exercise equipment – focussed towards the older age group – as discussed under agenda item 4 - should form the main priority for 2011/12.

11. **AOB** KP exhibited a replica (resin based) plaque as a replacement for the brass plaque from the stump of the "Selly Oak" in the park so that the latter could be kept safe from loss now that it is identified in the Art, History and Nature Trail. Later in the afternoon the replica was fastened to the stump. The preparation of the original plaque for safe display will now be arranged (**Action: KP**).

12. **Date, time and place of next meeting. (**Agreed after the AGM – see that minute.)
    Monday, 21 November 2011, 6pm, Ariel Scout Hut, Gibbins Road.