

**MINUTES OF THE INAUGURAL MEETING OF FRIENDS OF THE TRIANGLE,
ALDCLIFFE ROAD HELD AT THE FRIENDS MEETING HOUSE LANCASTER
18 JUNE 2012**

1. **Present:** Liz Bell, Sheila Bevan, Sheila Bliss, Dave Brookes, Peter Callingham, Gina Dowding, Geoff Easton, Janet Smith, Mike Swan, Jane Swan, David Switzer.

Apologies: Gillian Allen, Jon Barry, Kathy Barton, Brian Hodgson, Malik Salameh, Uschi Maden-Weinberger, Emma Whitlock

Agenda drawn up by Dave Brookes who chaired the meeting, Minutes taken by Peter Callingham.

2. **Update on current status:**

- a. Lancaster city council (LCC) have lease on the land from British Waterways to 2070. LCC Property Services have indicated willingness to sub-let to community group at peppercorn rent.

- b. British Waterways (BW) agreeable to above and will consult their heritage section on idea of lowering canal side wall and demolishing corner building.

- c. LCC Planning Section agreeable in principle to use of site as a 'Green Space' as not considered suitable for development. Conservation officer agreeable to lowering of canal side wall, demolishing corner building and keeping other building with pergola.

- d. Volunteer sessions – three so far, clearing rubbish, reducing vegetation and digging trenches to find only shallow soil on hard surfaces. Further such work to continue.

3. **Name of organisation:** After some discussion the name 'Friends of the Triangle, Aldcliffe Rd' was agreed.

4. **Constitution of organisation:** Two options were considered – go it alone, or attach to existing organisation as a semi- autonomous sub group with own terms of reference. The latter was preferred – joining to the Fairfield Association (FA) which has own existing constitution, bank account and Treasurer; public liability insurance (which would extend to the Triangle); the possibility of lending tools and giving more weight to funding applications. The Friends of the Triangle would need its own terms of reference, would meet separately but report back to the FA, and have an opt-out clause enabling it to become independent in future if desired.

5. **Organisational roles:** Dave B to continue as Chair of group/meetings. Peter C to see how his minute taking goes. Other posts not required at present and all interested persons able to be members of the Friends of ... group.

6. **Organisational objectives:**

Buildings – keep main building for possible alternative future uses e.g. store/ workshop/ refreshments outlet. In meantime have building survey as to work required to keep watertight and safe.

- Other building against bridge in poor condition, check not buttressing bridge and have taken down (contractor?), re-use bricks if not contaminated.

Towpath boundary wall – to be lowered though likely to need taking down to ground and rebuilding to desired height possibly incorporating some of cut down wrought iron sections and access openings.

Green space – discussion of what uses might be made of the green space to be created and how to arrive at a decision. Agreed that further wider consultation required on this though with some ideas being put forward to help gain responses. In meantime to continue tidying and making site safe plus carrying out further investigations (see below) including whether small adjacent area used for car parking is part of triangle or not (DB).

7. **Current tasks:**

- a. Soil contamination – previous uses of site have included storage of asbestos and use of chemicals. Need to get advice from LCC Environmental Health Officer and determine how many soil tests required, for what and cost. This could be helped by investigating history of site which Geoff Easton agreed to explore. Use of metal detector to locate used needles to be looked into.
- b. Lease – agreed to hold off on taking over lease until initial proposals, design, work required, costings and funding needed clarified.
- c. Design – a survey of the triangle has been done and a plan made available. Initial layout/design ideas need to be developed. Possibility of involving two French students over the Summer (DB) or perhaps Myerscough students in the Autumn (PC).
- d. Planning application – British Waterways agreeable to our making application for ‘change of use’ of their land to green space/public amenity. Need to look into forms, details etc. Site is within Conservation area. Advice on contamination and condition of work needed/ allowed on trees to be included?
- e. Funding applications – research required into possible sources of funding and how and when to apply. Includes setting up costs, initial proposals, work required and possible longer term ideas. David S to seek advice where to look.

- f. Bank account not required if able to use part of Fairfield Association's arrangements. DB to discuss this with them.
 - g. Insurance – FA's public liability insurance would cover triangle site in becoming part of them. Would need separate buildings insurance when taking on lease of site.
 - h. Website – Mike S has started on creation of website with own domain name and link to FA site. Web pages to include historical info. and photos of site, development of 'Friends of' group - its Terms of Reference and charitable aims and objectives (along the lines of FA), minutes of meetings etc.
 - i. Volunteer sessions to continue approx. 3-4 weekly with DB or FA member present. Further tidying of site with removal of sapling willow and sycamore trees, and removal of ivy from end wall up to bridge, to be included. **Next volunteer session to be on Sunday 1 July at 2pm on site.**
8. **Date of next meeting:** fixed for Mon 3 Sept at 7.30pm upstairs in the Robert Gillow (opposite Royal King's Arms hotel entrance).