

MINUTES OF FRIENDS OF THE TRIANGLE MEETING held on Monday 4th November 2013

Present: Dave Brookes, Peter Callingham, Mike Swan, Geoff Easton, Gillian Allen, Martin Luke.

1. Apologies: Jane Swan, Sheila Bliss, Kathy Barton, Clare Gould.

2 & 3. Minutes of last Meeting: held on 7 October 2013 were approved and there were no matters arising not dealt with below.

4. Recent Developments: none to report other than those in items detailed below.

5. Lease Documentation: The solicitors are still awaiting confirmation of registration from the Land Registry. Dave has received copies of all other lease documentation.

6. National Non Domestic Rates: Dave reported that following a meeting on site with a Rating Officer it was accepted that the workshop (corner buildings and site) are currently empty / not in use and therefore not liable for rates until brought into use. As a charitable body we qualify for 80% rate relief and can also apply for discretionary relief on the other 20% which would reduce the annual charge to zero.

7. Site investigation: as previous minutes - we still need to investigate foul drainage further to see if there is a soakaway for the demolished toilet which may need sealing off.

8. Workshop repair: finishing off around the new single door (two bricks to be mortared in and rendering over exposed brickwork either side) plus pointing around windows still to be done. Dave to ask Duncan if can suggest a builder or whether we tackle it ourselves.

9. Notice board: two quotes of around £900 from local joiners for making and installing (?) an A1 size notice board (for which Lancaster Green Spaces has offered a grant) were considered along with the choice of hardwood or plastic wood . Dave showed samples of the latter, one of which was chosen as preferable due to its finish, vandal proofness and longevity. Dave to check with supplier, Conservation Officer on colour, and Paul Speight on its construction and possibility of gas struts for propping open when necessary.

10. Planning application: Dave referred to comments from other Council departments before Peter reported on a phone conversation with a planning officer this morning who had approved the application for Change of Use of the Triangle subject to a number of conditions. (The Council's planning website has shown these to be several standard conditions plus more detailed information on tree work and tree care, and provision of a detailed landscaping plan, to be approved before work commences).

11. Finances: the balance of Triangle monies still stands at about £800 with £350 earmarked for tree work recommended by Bowland Tree Services (though this will need to be increased due to the more rigid planning condition imposed).

12. Funding: other possible funding sources were discussed:

Green Partnerships, part of Lancs.C.C. offer grants up to £500 for tools. A list was started of 2 metal wheelbarrows, 2 forks, 2 spades, a pruning saw, loppers, secateurs, handfork, trowel and yardbrush. Dave to follow up. (We should be able to borrow a strimmer from FA).

United Utilities small community grant: Dave to try for a small solar panel for lighting (subject to detailed planning permission?).

Cumberland Building Society, recently opened in Lancaster, offers funding to community groups. Dave to get details and consider for detailed landscaping proposals plan now required. (Georgina Peacock estimate of £740).

Awards for All (part of National Lottery funding) with grants from £300 to £10k. Peter reported having read through much of the long eligibility and guidance notes, and the lengthy application form and felt we could apply provided the requirement of holding a lease that cannot be terminated within 5 years was not an obstacle. Dave thought it should not be and Peter agreed to start completing the online form to cover demolition of the two corner buildings and work to the towpath wall, which has to be submitted 3 months before any works included in the bid start and which then have to be completed within a year.

Lancashire Environmental Fund can give grants for appropriate projects up to £30k provided there is other match funding. This could be provided by the Awards for All grant application if necessary.

13. Events: as in previous minutes felt not to be practical until workshop fully cleaned out and improved inside, so deferred for consideration until early 2014.

14. Volunteer sessions: Dave to arrange a session in the coming weeks, to include more tree stump removal, more investigation of old foul drainage and more clearing out of workshop.

15. Any other business: Mike reported a request from three volunteers (Claire G, Kathy B and Ruth D) to have a community bread oven within the Triangle but the meeting ran out of time to consider the practicalities involved and so deferred the item.

16. Date of next Meeting: Monday 2nd December 2013 at 7.30pm in the Robert Gillow. All welcome.