



FRIENDS OF CHaT PARKS.

(Reg. Charity no: 1166255)

Minutes of the 14th Annual General Meeting

18 May 2023 at 7.00 pm

- 1 Present:** 22 members of the Group
- 2 Welcome:** The Chairman welcomed everyone to this re-convened AGM following the cancellation of the first arrangements due to weather issues.
- 3 Apologies** have been received from Janet Deighton, Geoff Wood, Jean Chaplin, Kevin Trickett, Margaret Dodd, Jean Reeve, Kate Honeyman, Liz Wildey, Lynn and Terry Coen and Rachel Winstanley
- 4 Margaret Morgan:** Before starting the meeting Ian asked all to remember Margaret Morgan, one of our founding members, who died earlier this year. He called for a minute's silence in her memory.
- 5 Minutes of AGM 2022:** these were agreed as a correct record.
- 6 Matters arising:** There were no matters other than those covered by the Agenda
- 7 Chairman's Report:**

Ian reminded us that after the previous year's disturbance from Covid, we had hoped that things would improve, but he said life was not yet back to normal, there are still issues to be dealt with. He commented on various matters;

- a) Penny Appeal. They have submitted an appeal against the Council's refusal of planning consent. Ian thanked all members who had sent in objections to the planning application and to the inspector for the planning appeal. We are now awaiting the inspector's decision. There is no deadline for this. We just have to wait and see whether the inspector upholds the Council's refusal, grants the original application, or puts conditions on any approval. Ian pointed out that our objection is not against Penny Appeal as such, just against their proposed use of Thornes House.
- b) Fireworks. This has for many years been a major event in the Park. When the Council decided to stop holding the event the Friends Group managed to get a grant from the Council to enable Melvyn Eddy to put on a display. The Council have now decided that they will manage the event. They have realised how much people value it. It will be promoted as a joint venture between the Council and the Friends Group.
- c) Games of Thornes. Another venture which the Friends have kept going. Again this has proved very popular with Park users. It takes a lot of

volunteer time and Ian said how grateful he was to the volunteers, and to Janet Deighton for organising the rotas every week, even when on holiday in Cyprus. We have managed to get the tennis courts rebuilt and then the ticket office, with new windows and back doors and the roller shutters. We have obtained a grant to provide tennis coaching, especially for young people to introduce them to the sport. Extra benefits from the opening of the ticket office include the sale of Thornes Park Honey and the Book Exchange.

- d) The Aviary. Thanks to Jason who manages the aviary it was kept open through the Covid problems and the Bird Flu issues. This is another well-known addition to the benefits of the Park and is greatly appreciated by visitors.
- e) Ian referred to what is probably the favourite part of the park for most visitors. The Secret Garden. The team responsible deserve (and received) a round of applause from everyone. Their tremendous hard work is very much appreciated. The Garden suffers a degree of vandalism, but the team just keep going despite all difficulties.
- f) Conservatory in the Rose Garden is suffering major issues at present. There have been several attacks by vandals and the heating system is broken.
- g) Bedding Plant display. Another feature of the Park which the Council decided to abandon. The Friends took on the challenge several years ago and there is now a riot of colour at the height of summer. This constitutes one of our major expenses which we need to raise funds for. The Family Services service users play an invaluable role in looking after the plants prior to planting out. The Council has now realised the benefit they offer and has recruited them to help restore some town-centre displays
- h) Children's Play Area. The Friends Group has been campaigning for this for some time, and it is good to see it come to fruition. It is extremely well used and is yet another addition to the Park facilities.
- i) Finance. Ian set out some of the financial issues we faced, having to combine four accounts into one and then changing to a new bank. He thanked Brian for his work as Treasurer ever since the Group started. Ian introduced Margaret Kershaw as our new Treasurer.
- j) Publicity. Ian thanked Jean Reeve for her work on our website and other social media. This is becoming more and more important as a way of letting people know what is planned and what is happening

Ian concluded by once again thanking all the volunteers involved in the wide range of projects. He hoped that we can look forward to more successes next year.

8. Financial Report:

Brian introduced the subject by describing the change from having four bank accounts with HSBC to having just one and then transferring that to Virgin Money. The main reason for the changes was HSBC starting to levy a monthly charge on each account and also a charge on every transaction.

Chris then explained the financial statement for the year which had been distributed to the meeting.. He said that the finances for the tennis coaching project had been kept as a restricted fund with income and expenditure kept as a separate “pot” because the fund came from a grant and we would have to show how that grant had been spent.

Similarly the accounts for the Games of Thornes were kept in a separate “pot” because we had agreed that the profits from the project would be passed to Wakefield Council to offset their maintenance costs

The remaining income and expenditure is kept as an unrestricted fund.

The accounts showed a year-end position just over £3,000 below the 2021 year-end figure.

9. Means of Verification of Accounts

The accounts have been examined by Mr John McCarthy and found accurate. It was agreed to pay Mr McCarthy £50 for his work, but he immediately gave that back as a donation to the Group.

Agreed that we ask Mr McCarthy to examine the books again for 2023

10. Membership of the Committee

Our Constitution requires that one third of the Committee stands down at each AGM. They are then eligible for re-election. In accordance with this, Ian, Margaret Dodd and Peter Stokes stood down.

These three members, together with the remaining members were elected unanimously.

The Committee now comprises nine members; Ian Deighton, Margaret Kershaw, Margaret Dodd, Jean Reeve, Peter Stokes, Merewyn Sayers, Brian Else, Brenda Ashurst and Chris Welch

Ian asked for any other volunteer to join the Committee to share the workload.

11. Any other relevant business;

- a) David Pickersgill referred to the wide range of grants which are available for charity bodies such as the Friends Group. It was noted that we had received a grant from the Co-op last year valued at £1,375.93. It was agreed that we should be aware of all grants and apply for those deemed appropriate. David undertook to monitor the availability of grants
- b) David asked about an A-board for the bowls within the Games of Thornes. Agreed we should try to obtain one.

12. Thanks to Chairman

In conclusion Chris reminded everyone of the tremendous work which Ian does for the Group. He has led us since our foundation and everyone agreed that, without him, we would not have achieved the successes we have. Ian was given a round of applause.

The AGM closed at this point.

Unrestricted funds

TOTAL

Friends of CHaT

Closing Balance

Cash in hand £64.2m