

**Minutes of the Friends Of Pilrig Park (FoPP)  
Annual General Meeting  
Macdonald Road Library, 10 October 2016**

**Attendance**

Liz Ballantyne, Resident & FoPP Committee Member  
Sam Barron, Resident  
Sophie Brown, Chair  
Geoffrey Costello, Resident  
Cllr Marion Donaldson, Leith Walk Ward (Labour)  
Cllr Nick Gardner, Leith Walk Ward (Labour)  
Amber Jenkins, Community Greenspace Officer – Edinburgh, RSPB  
Rob Knight, Resident  
Fiona McRae, Resident  
Anne Miller, Resident  
Annette O’Carroll, Resident  
Susan Rae, Resident  
Emma Strong, Resident  
Damien Sefton, Resident  
Scott Thomson, Parks Officer, City of Edinburgh Council  
Katie Wight, Resident & FoPP Committee Member

**Apologies**

Deidre Brock MP, Edinburgh North and Leith (SNP)  
Max Brown, Resident & FoPP Treasurer  
Tracey Griffen, Resident  
Christine Hanny, Resident & FoPP Committee Member  
Stephen Penman, Resident & FoPP Committee Member  
Irene Sweeney, Resident  
Harald Tobermann, Resident & Vice-Chair, LCCC

**1. Welcome, Introduction and Announcements**

- Sophie Brown (SB) welcomed everyone to the meeting, the ninth public meeting of Friends of Pilrig Park (FoPP), and the second in 2016. FoPP holds 2 public meetings a year, and will hold additional public meetings if a need arise.

**2. Approval of the minutes of the meeting of 12 October 2015 and 11 April 2016**

- It was noted that the minutes from the last two meetings needed to be signed off. The minute of the meeting of 12 October 2015 was proposed as an accurate record by Sophie Brown, seconded by Liz Ballantyne. The minute of the meeting of 11 April 2016 was proposed as an accurate record by Sophie Brown, seconded by Katie Wight.

### **3. Chair & Treasurer's Update**

**3.1 Central Path** – The central path has now been resurfaced.

**3.2 Information Boards** – The Committee are pulling together information for a historical notice board. Scott Thomson (ST), Parks Officer - CEC, suggested that the Council's Archaeologist, John Lawson, could potentially help with this as he was part of the team that undertook the excavations in Pilrig Park in 2006/7.

**3.3 Feith Decides** – FoPP have applied to Feith Decides for £950.00 to cover the cost of two workshops and the design and installation of a mural in Pilrig Park.  
*[Following the meeting FoPP was awarded £836 from Feith Decides to take this project forwards]*

**3.4 Picnic in the Park** – Following the discussion at the April meeting a summer event was held in the park on Saturday, 18 June. This was a great success and we will look to run this again next year.  
*[Date set for this – Saturday, 17<sup>th</sup> June 2017 - 1.30am to 2.30pm]*

**3.5 Keep Scotland Beautiful** – 'It's Your Neighbourhood' again described the park as 'Thriving' following the 2016 assessment. Copies of the certificate will be put up in the notice boards in the park and the full report is available on request from FoPP.

**3.6 Small Play Park** – FoPP have undertaken a consultation process with the local community which involved an online survey (150 respondents) and a public meeting. Using the information gathered CEC have produced a play park design and a costing.

SB noted that money has been secured for the Park as part of a developer contribution from Miller Homes (Ashley Place development) for resurfacing the central path. As this work has already been undertaken, FoPP were hoping it could be used instead to help upgrade the small play park. The money must be used for 'resurfacing'.

ST noted that CEC intention was to use this money to resurface the path running between the park and Taobh na Pairce(TnP) adjacent to the new persimmon development as this was no longer safe.

Members queried whether or not this was in fact in the park, however, ST noted that it does not fall under the Highways remit and that Persimmon have no legal responsibility to resurface the path once the development is complete as their boundary lies at the kerbside. If CEC do not use these funds to fix the path they may be forced to close it completely.

Local residents and members of the Friends of Pilrig Park Committee made it clear that they felt Persimmon should be responsible for covering some, if not all,

of the cost of the path repairs as a substantial amount of damage had been caused as a result of the development of the Silverfields site.

**Actions:**

- ST to find out whether there is a time limit on when money must be spent by.
- ST to clarify what is meant by resurfacing and what this money can be used for.
- SB to contact Persimmon to discuss whether they would be prepared to contribute to repairs.

**3.7 FoPP Account** – Current FoPP funds stand at £2,205.99. This includes £150.00 from the Summer Picnic day.

**3.8 Forrest Schools** - Katie Wight (KW) noted that Taobh na Pairce are now using Pilrig Park for Forest School activities and that the Sgoil-araich are also running Forest Kindergarten sessions bi-weekly in the park. Sweeps are being undertaken fortnightly by City of Edinburgh Council and the school also sweep the sites prior to the sessions.

**Action:** ST stated he would arrange for a sharps box and some litter pickers to be left at the office at Taobh na Pairce, which can be used when running Forest School activities.

#### **4. Committee Elections**

SB noted that both Damien Sefton and Irene Sweeney were standing down from the Committee and took the opportunity to thank them both for all their help and support over the last three years.

The constitution of the Friends of Pilrig Park requires Committee members to be elected at each AGM. An election to the committee was held

Members re-elected; (Proposer, Seconded)

- Liz Ballantyne; (Sophie Brown, Emma Strong)
- Max Brown; (Sophie Brown, Katie Wight)
- Sophie Brown; (Emma Strong, Rob Knight)
- Christine Hanny-Saville; (Katie Wight, Liz Ballantyne)
- Rob Knight; (Sophie Brown, Emma Strong)
- Stephen Penman; (Katie Wight, Emma Strong)
- Emma Strong; (Sophie Brown, Katie Wight)
- Katie Wight; (Stephen Penman, Liz Ballantyne)

#### **5. RSPB**

SB welcomed Amber Jenkins (AJ), Community Green Space Officer – Edinburgh, RSPB. AJ noted that the RSPB have run two mini-beast hunts in Pilrig park to date,

both with a good turnout of local families. The RSPB have secured funding for network rail to be used for environmental education in Edinburgh and £250 of this can be used in Pilrig Park. A number of suggestions about how this money could be spent were discussed. Options included a scheme to focus on additional woodland planting with the option of creating a woodland trail with 'fairy doors' for children to explore. These could have an educational aspect with 'natural treasures' behind each door. Another suggestion was to replace one of the bird boxes in the park (overlooking the Taobh na Pairce playground) with a wifi Camera Bird Box. The school would then be able to view the process of the nest being built and the eggs hatching. The RSPB have a Gaelic speaker in their Edinburgh Office who would be able to support educational events with the class(es) involved in the project. It was agreed that AJ and SB would discuss this further and update at the next public meeting.

## **6. ACOB**

- Anne Miller (AM) raised the possibility of installing a dog toilet in Pilrig Park. This would be a fenced off area where dog owners could try and encourage their pets to poo. AM noted that although the majority of dog owners were very responsible and picked up after their pets it still left trace dog poo in the park and that this was then unpleasant for other people who want to use the space for sports/picnics etc... Dog toilets are much more common in Scandinavia. This is an interesting option, however, due to funding restrictions and some initial concerns from other attendees this would have to be looked into further.
- A bulb planting day has been scheduled for Saturday, 29<sup>th</sup> October from 10.30am-12.00pm. Volunteers should meet at the Balfour Street entrance and free soft drinks will be provided by FoPP member Simon Mitchell who has recently produced a new soft drink!

### **Date of Next Public Meeting**

- The date of the next public meeting will be Monday 11<sup>th</sup> April 2016 from 6.00 - 7.30pm in the Nelson Hall at the McDonald Road Library.