

FRIENDS OF CASTLE GREEN

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Castle Green Pavilion, Hereford on
Thursday, 4th July, 2013 at 7.00pm

Present:

Margaret Jones, Jean Ellis, Mo Burns, Olwen Anstee, Liz Hughes, Michael Mable, Amanda Attfield, Ariella Fieldman, Anthony Edwards, Jonathan Sheldon, Felicity Watts, Colin Holmes, John Faulkner, Maureen McGregor, Gillie Toye, Geoff Stanley, Andree Poppleston, Julie Orton-Davies, Dave Quine, Naomi Bell, Barbara Ferris, Susan Handy, Perry Walker, Colette Priestley, Marianne May, Kate Redding, Denise Jones, Dee Jones, Helena M'Arole, Julie Brown, Jenni Morgan, Julie Ford, Aileen Harnett, B. Hesbrook, P. Nugent, Sue Griffin, Chris Boivin, Mary Bennett, Julie Milne, Anne Cottringer, Bill & Abby Laws, Elizabeth Johnstone, John Kennedy, Peter Maybury, Susanna Grunsell, Heidi Macdonald, Mark Hubbard and Lisa Richardson.

Apologies:

Richard Brancsik, David Watkins, Carrie Attfield, Clare Wichbold, Bill & Maggie Matthews, Jan Wainwright, Simon & Liz Allen, Georgina Miller, Zara Roberts, Neil & Fiona Barnes, Jim & Eileen Dunn, Sara Siloko

Minutes

The minutes of the last AGM were accepted as being a true record of the proceedings.

Proposed by Andree Poppleston and **seconded** by Amanda Attfield

Matters Arising

One third of the riverbank had been cleared in November/December 2012 by Amey as was planned. Mark has a copy of the management plan agreed between Amey & Natural England and invited a volunteer to go through it to pinpoint any actions not being carried out.

Chairman's Report

Mark thanked Alistair Neill, Chief Executive of Herefordshire Council, for his informative presentation on the changes that will ensue from the current financial situation. The Council will provide the statutory services to the most vulnerable in the community and those it is required to provide. Changes envisaged include transfer of assets to local community groups, transfer of responsibility for services that can no longer be provided from Council funds & decentralisation to the market towns. Economic development, although not statutory will continue to be supported as vital to Herefordshire growth. Opportunities should be identified such as the skills gap in the fields of science, maths, engineering & IT – perhaps make Herefordshire a centre for University foundation degrees in those subjects.

From the floor:

- ~ Hereford City has to draw people across from the new shopping development, developing the markets, restaurant & café ambience, particularly in the evening.
- ~ The Council accepted a slimmer management level was needed and one Director's post had already been allowed to lapse.

- ~ Empty shops, not bringing in rates: Open them up as 'Hereford's sitting room', dress the windows with art work.
- ~ Loss of expertise: The Council would work with the communities to provide services. Perhaps lay down a template for discussion with local groups on ways of doing this.

In the light of this presentation, Mark tabled the following resolution:

"The Friends of Castle Green note the rapidly changing circumstances relating to local service provision and the direct of travel at Herefordshire Council. Further, the AGM authorizes the Directors to respond positively to the challenges ahead, taking on & promoting projects that:

- a) support community cohesion
- b) utilize skills & resources present with the group
- c) promote the founding principles of the Friends of Castle Green"

The opportunity to take over the Pavilion had arisen very quickly. There was now an active & keen steering group. The canoe centre had reconstituted itself as a club with the British Canoe Union and was enjoying a very successful season. However, the responsibility is great and, as a community group, we need to work out how to take up opportunities that we would do well & efficiently with the advantage of flexibility & lack of bureaucratic constraints. Ideas included a mentoring service for the 200 children currently in care in Herefordshire. There is an FOCG member with the necessary experience who could train a group of mentors by the end of the year to offer the service to the Council & the remuneration would provide an income stream & enable further training. On a show of hands, 6/7 people would be interested in doing this. There is a great reservoir of skills, experience & knowledge within the membership. We have the choice of remaining a park group & operating the Pavilion with restaurant, café & ultimately the building project or we can pass the resolution, giving momentum & focus to the Friends of Castle Green.

From the floor:

- ~ The founding principles of FOCG were to promote & use the green as a park for the people making it a vibrant centre in the life of both the city & the county.
- ~ Herefordshire's heritage was to respond to the needs of the people
- ~ The newly retired, well represented in the membership, had the time, experience & skills to help the community
- ~ FOCG is a good example of what HC aims to develop so perhaps we could mentor other community groups
- ~ The Pavilion could be a social enterprise hub for the community but we need clarity of purpose. The steering group & Directors had attended a session with a group facilitator to work on an Action Plan/Business Plan and this was being developed.

Adoption of the resolution was **proposed** by Mark Hubbard, **seconded** by Julie Ford and carried unanimously

Treasurer's Report

Jonathan Sheldon distributed the accounts covering a 3 year period. The statutory accounts had been filed. The year-end had changed from 30th April to 31st December which reflected FOCG activities more accurately and covered the changeover from a company limited by guarantee to a community interest company. Summer Fair, Christmas Fair & the car boot sale had run profitably but a £700 loss was incurred with the theatre presentation due partly to the dire weather & partly to the clash with another function on the opening night of the Three Choirs Festival. However, the opportunity

was taken to offer free tickets to anyone who had helped us in the past. There had been a number of donations including the very generous £500 from the Barrels Formation Drinking Team and three benches had been commissioned and were now installed on the green. A donation of £500 had been made to the Diamond Jubilee celebrations. In relation to the future, the present funding streams will be inadequate so applications were being made for grant funding. £5,000 had been received from Jesse Norman's Four Acre Trust to provide the maths project, £3,000 from Hereford City Council for IT equipment, the income from the Summer Fair was £5,500, with an anticipated surplus of £2,500 approx. Rental income in the first quarter was £1,000 from sessions such as Tai Chi, yoga & the Livewire music project.

Adoption of the accounts was proposed by Geoff Stanley, **seconded** by Paddy Nugent and carried unanimously

Election of Officers & Members

Andree Poppleston was retiring from the committee. She had attended the first meeting in 2004 and had worked tirelessly to achieve the success of FOCG throughout the following ten years. She will be much missed. The remaining officers and committee members are as follows and were happy to stand for re-election.

Officers

Chairman: Mark Hubbard
Secretary: Lisa Richardson
Treasurer: Jonathan Sheldon

Members

Events Officer: vacancy
Membership: Antony Edwards
Gillie Toye
Geoff Stanley

Co-opted representatives:

JABA, Mo Burns; Guild of Guides, Julie Orton-Davies

Two committee members were needed – one to take responsibility for events / outdoor activities and one to act as a Volunteer Co-ordinator, identifying the needs of the steering and sub groups and finding the volunteers to match. Using the offers originating from the Pavilion Open Day, a register of the membership's skills would be set up.

Election of the Committee as above was proposed by Liz Hughes, seconded by Sue Griffin and carried unanimously

The Chairman declared the meeting closed, thanked everyone for coming and invited them to enjoy supper.

Date & venue of next AGM: Thursday, 3rd July, 2014 at the Castle Green Pavilion