

Red House Park Friends Group

12th May 2005

Meeting Notes

Sarah Carter, Chair, opened the meeting at 7.15pm.

1. Present

Sarah Carter, Chair	Ken Sutton
William Gunn, Vice-Chair	Cllr Mary Wilson
Jenny Hale, Secretary	Tony Potter, SMBC Events Manager
Kay Clash	Helga Lutz, SMBC Urban Parks Manager
Jason Cross	Ken Styler
Jill Fisher	Brenda Styler
Dawn & Glen Williams	Sue Willetts
Anthony Lewis	John Payton
Jackie Lewis	Christine Horton
	Mr Titchmarsh

2. Apologies

Jean Jones
Cllr S Smith
Tom Dwyer

3 New Toddler Play Area

- Helga Lutz, Urban Parks Manager for SMBC, was introduced to the group. Sandwell council has £150k from the Play Area Capital Programme to use for the whole borough over the next 3 years. £60k has been allocated to Red House Park for a new Toddler Play Area. We had previously asked whether the equipment could be installed in time for the Fun Day but Helga confirmed that this would not be possible. However, she did suggest that we use the Fun Day to finalise the consultation on the Play Area – this could be done in conjunction with the Lakes Restoration Project consultation.
- The location of the area was discussed. Both Friends and HL felt that the most sensible place would be next to 8-14's play area, however, due to the proximity to the cricket field, the new play area may have to be sited on the other side of the current playground. This may involve some changes in the landscaping of the gardens. A minimum area of 20m x 20m is required.
- KC asked about expanding the 8 –14's playground. This may be possible at a later date. Extra equipment cannot be added to the existing space because each piece of equipment has to have it's own safety zone.
- The Friends pointed out the existing equipment is insufficient and asked how SMBC had decided on what should be installed. HL explained that during the 1st phase SMBC had asked 3 separate suppliers to come up with an idea that fulfilled the brief (seven different modes of exercise) within the price allowed (£85k). These 3 different concepts were then used for consultation with the local school children, who chose the one they liked best.
- JH asked whether the £60k could be match funded by SMBC. HL stated that there was no B106 money available to match fund.
- SC asked how much the Toddler climbing frame unit in Dartmouth Park had cost - £40k.
- SC asked HL if she could supply someone to man the consultation on the Fun Day. HL to arrange.

4. Tree Surgery & Trouble In Park

- SC advised that there had been trouble in the park on Friday 6th May. Two rival school gangs had met for a confrontation and fighting broke out. Police were called in to deal with the incident.
- On Saturday 7th May a group of youths broke into the House and Jumpin' Jacks via the rear entrance. No apparent damage was done but the youths were still there Sunday morning using chairs to play on in the park. They were reported to the Police on Sunday morning, who dealt with the matter and contacted SMBC. The doors are now secured. The Police felt that the incident was a one-off prank and not a case of burglary.
- SC pointed out that the alarm had not been in working order. It should be linked automatically to the Police Station. JH to contact BTCV and SMBC for an explanation and confirmation that the alarm will be rectified with immediate action.
- SC pointed out that there are several dangerous trees in the Park which require essential tree surgery. Mark Satchwell, Urban Forestry Unit, SMBC, had been in contact with SC and is in the process of performing a consultation of the situation. SC asked HL if she could chase up the matter.

5. Fun Day

- Climbing Wall is booked. If we want to charge for use then we have to provide a person to take the money. Decided to wait till nearer the time to see how many people Friends have for the Day.
- The matter of disabled toilets was raised again. Tony Potter, Events Manager, SMBC, had quotes for 2 disabled units - £230 + VAT, delivery Friday, collection Monday or £517 (Incl. VAT), delivery and collection on Sunday. HL suggested contacting Mike Lloyd, Disabled Access Officer to see whether there was any funding via him. There was a general sense of disgust from the group that SMBC could not provide disabled toilet facilities for a park event and these views were made clear to HL and TP. KS wanted to know why SMBC could not purchase their own port-a-loos and use them for all the borough's events, as this would surely be more cost effective. TP stated that it would cost more for transportation and staffing costs than it would to hire. The Events Budget does not cover the cost of toilets. SMBC do not own any port-a-loos. The group wanted to know whether it was illegal to hold a public event without having disabled access to toilets. HL stated that SMBC had agreed to give the Friends £250 towards printing costs but this could be used to go towards funding toilets instead if we chose to do so.
- Lynn Foord, SMBC had confirmed that the installation of the gates is imminent. (LF on holiday and therefore, unable to confirm exact date).
- JH had received info leaflets from Sandwell Park Farm listing the Borough's events during the summer. JH wanted to know what the Friends have to do to get their events printed in these documents. TP stated that only SMBC organised events are advertised in the leaflets and as the Fun Day is classed as a 'private' event it would not be publicised in that way. TP confirmed that the Fun Day would be listed on the monthly council website of events.
- Need to make a list of all the people available to help on the day. Members asked to bring lists to next meeting.
- JF volunteered to run Tombola for Friends. Need prizes and a drum. JF to arrange.
- TP to look at whether there are any SMBC staff to marshall for the day.
- Still need to book license for Car Boot. TP advised to contact Markets Dept. Any commercial vans will not be allowed on Car Boot and will be charged £50 for a commercial stall. KC agreed to organise Car Boot.
- TP to check exactly what time the park gates will be opened.
- SC to contact beat bobby.
- TP suggested that we draw up more detailed plan of site 10 – 14 days prior to event, when all details should be confirmed.
- Need posters and leaflets ASAP. HL agreed to give £250 from SMBC towards Fun Day but wants SMBC's logo on material. AL also pointed out that we need the new RHP web address printed on material as well – GW to deal.
- JC advised that Hamstead Homebrew had shown an interest in sponsoring the day. Friends require toilets, advertising material and banners. TP provided quote for printing by SMBC – GW to see if he can find a

cheaper quote. GW also provided quote for banners. Agreed to see what SMBC could arrange by way of funding for toilets and GW's quotes before going back to Hamstead Homebrew.

- Quote for banner £163.56. If we are unable to secure sponsorship to fund it then keep the wording basic so that it can be reused each year.
- TP can book an assortment of inflatables – no charge but with 20% of takings. Discussed whether to have these or go with WG's son-in-law who attended last year. Decided to have both. TP to book assortment.
- TP awaiting confirmation from Pat Collins as to whether his fair rides were available.
- TP still to book Gladiators and Bunji runs.
- WG has booked Face Painting. They will charge £1 per person and pay £10 fee to Friends. WG advised that Sea Cadets had shown an interest – WG to arrange.
- Need letters for Hill Lane residents advising of arrangements for the day. JH to produce.
- Need volunteer to go into local banks and businesses to ask for donations / gifts.
- GW offered to take photographs again on the day.
- JP (Scouts) wanted to know how much they would be charged for selling burgers and hot-dogs. SC confirmed £50 due to size of stall, amount sold and profit. This charge would be negotiable should the scouts help out on the day.
- KC still waiting for confirmation from other scout group as to whether we can have the use of their marquee. KC to chase up.
- Decided that if Friends were going to have so many posters printed (100) and other fliers / leaflets, that there was no need to post Newsletters door to door as well, as was the case last year.

6. Any Other Business

- SC suggested that Friends hold a Bat Walk in the park. SC had been in touch with the Mousesweet Brook group, which had held the same thing, and was advised that the event would include a slide show, talk and walk through park. Need to have before September, preferably not June / July due to late sunset, with the walk taking place at Dusk. Agreed to hold in August. SC suggested using CSV Make A Difference Day, sponsored by Barclays (which we tried to use last year for planting bulbs). HL pointed out that it is a national event and as yet has not received any information about the scheme. She will advise us if and when she hears.
- KC had been approached by local dog walkers about the opening times of the new gates (specifically those on the Newton Road). They requested a key for the gates to open them early. They advised KC that should the gates prevent them from walking the dogs early enough they would raise a petition against the installation. HL stated that the official opening times of SMBC's park gates was 7.30pm. Residents will not be allowed their own keys.
- Application for grant to renovate the Tennis Courts has been submitted and we are awaiting outcome.
- Tom Dwyer, Dartmouth High School had confirmed that the pupils should be able to organise the Five-a-Side Football Competition but he required written confirmation / proof that Friends were holding Fun Day. JH to send.
- KS advised that some years ago a report was released which showed a dangerous level of toxicity in the soil due to dog faeces being left on the ground and had warned against children using the park. KS wanted to know if anything had been done about the problem and what the current situation was. HL stated that the survey must have been carried out at least 15 years ago but she would look into the history.

7. Next Meeting

- The next meeting will be held on **Monday 6th June 2005, 7.15pm** at Hill Lane. **Please bring a list of all stalls / activity bookings / costings to the meeting, as well as a list of all volunteers for the Fun Day.**