

Red House Park Friends Group

8th May 2006

Meeting Notes

Sarah Carter, Chair, opened the meeting at 7.00p.m.

1. Present

Sarah Carter, Chair	Oliver Franklin
William Gunn, Vice-Chair	Kay Clash
Jenny Hale, Secretary	Sue Willets
Guy Hale, Treasurer	Ian Carroll, Swan Watch
Steve West, SMBC	Cllr Tony Ward
Ray Wheatley	Jean Jones
Stephanie Page	PC John Hardwick
Glen Williams	Ken & Barbara Styler
Jason Cross	J Ward
Tony Potter, SMBC	

2. Apologies

Christine Horton
Dawn Williams
Carol Szymura

Mary Wilson
Margaret Macklin
Helga Lutz, SMBC Urban Parks Manager

3. Swans

SC advised that the male swan had been attacked and killed by a dog let loose in the park, which had then gone on in an attempt to kill the female as well. Luckily the female managed to escape due to the intervention of a member of the public. Five days later the female swan was attacked again by a dog (rumoured to be the same dog) which another member of the public also witnessed. The swan has now been removed from the park for its own safety and well being. Ian Carroll of Swan Watch wanted to know what SMBC and the Police had done or were doing about the incident, considering that the attack had breached the Wildlife and Countryside Act. He wanted the owners of the dog prosecuted. PC J Hardwick confirmed that the dog was a bullmastiff / rottweiler cross which belonged to residents of Hill Lane. He also confirmed that there had been conflicting descriptions of the two dogs, although the 2nd witness had not been visited by the police or been asked to identify and eliminate the 1st dog. The evidence had been put before the Crown Prosecution Service, who had decided that there was insufficient evidence to take the matter further. The Super Intendant was aware of the case and the Police were still looking into it.

SC asked if there was anything the Friends could do, e.g. have signs put up around the pools. SW advised that there are no regulations to force people to keep their dogs on leads and therefore, signs would be purely notices of advice. JJ thought there was no need for signs and didn't want all dog owners to suffer as a consequence of one irresponsible owner. SP wanted to see the owners prosecuted, to serve as a warning to others. IC wanted the old swans' nest to be moved to a safer location and a new by-law passed which was clear and unambiguous.

4. Pools

SW confirmed that once the silt was dry they could start to move it. Unfortunately, due to high rainfall, the process had been delayed slightly.

Members had recently reported that workers had put broken slabs and debris into the top lake. The situation had been reported to SMBC who advised that a Health & Safety report carried out by RoSPA had reported that the pool was too deep for anyone to get out unaided, should they fall in. A ramp must therefore be created. Several members complained that the work was so poor that it was in fact more dangerous now than it had been without the ramp. SW confirmed that he would deal with the situation and the work would not be signed off until he was satisfied that it was safe.

5. Gates

- SC asked why the gates on Pages Lane had been locked on 24th, 25th, and 26th April. RW confirmed that the gardener had been off sick and due to the obvious short notice and lack of staff, they had been unable to unlock the gates. This is the responsibility of Groundcare.
- SC had spoken to youngsters in the park about the locks being kicked off. They had advised that kids from the Pheasey estate were coming down and causing trouble. PC JH confirmed that the Police were patrolling the park at dusk. He agreed to start patrolling at night instead or as well as, to try to prevent any further trouble.

6. General Information

- SW confirmed that work on the MUGA had begun and work on the Toddler Play Area would commence in the next 2 weeks. They would both be ready in time for the Fun Day. Members wanted an official opening at the Fun Day. It was suggested that we ask Tom Watson and Sadie Smith.
- Maintenance Plan – SW advised that SMBC wanted Green Flag Status for the park and would be carrying out a consultation. This would include a survey and management plan, which would consist of history, archaeology, management, maintenance, budget, etc.
- Notice Board – this is now ready for installation. Thanks to Mr William Gilbert of W G Fabrications.
- Pump House – no more news.
- Flooding at main entrance on Newton Road – drainage engineers had been to look at the area. JJ reported that no flooding had occurred recently, even after the recent torrential rains.
- SW suggested that Property Services might pay for the paint to refurbish the railings (work to be done by Probation Service).

7. Red House

CS had applied to Corporate Property Services, SMBC, for a Sports Academy at the Red House. SW had spoken to the dept. that confirmed they were looking at all considerations. Cabinet members would make any final decision. Cllr TW agreed to follow up application.

8. Trees

The walk around the park to look at the trees designated for work or removal had taken place on Thursday 4th May with SMBC and Friends present. Many of the trees marked for removal were still there and a danger to the public. The Acacia tree opposite the House will be removed. Suggestions were made to replace the tree, either by sponsors or money raised at the Fun Day, possibly by selling the programmes. GW to include request for sponsorship, a plaque for the monument and a thank you for the notice board, into the programmes. SW agreed that the council would match fund any money raised for new trees.

9. Fun Day

Agreed that the times for the Fun Day this year would be 11am to 5pm. KC and JJ to organise and co-ordinate between them the show times for Karate, Dance and Dog Show. TP confirmed that the Disabled Toilets were booked and would be paid by SMBC. PA system available this year but still require an

announcer. Climbing Wall booked. Fair rides booked, including 3 adult rides. Scouts booked for burgers and cold drinks - £50 fee to be refunded if they provide helpers for the day. Stalls – same charges as last year. Banners needed – Cllr TW to organise. Plants and books needed for sale. Gifts needed for Tombola. SW to put Fun Day forward for the June issue of CabeSpace. Still need someone to organise Football. Brass Band not booked for Fun Day – to be arranged for a separate date – SC to arrange with CC, possibly in September. Agreed that no vehicles allowed through the park after 10am (access from 8am – 10am).

10. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting was set for Monday 12th June, 7 p.m. at Hill Lane. A separate meeting will be held in-between the June and July meetings for Fun Day purposes only.