

FRIENDS OF HEADINGTON HILL PARK

MINUTES OF AGM, 25 APRIL 2019



The Friends of Headington Hill Park held their 2019 AGM on Thursday, 25 April, in the Music Room of Headington Hill Hall, by the kindness of Oxford Brookes University.

Attendees:

Marion Ackrill, Phil Baker, Diana Bell, Alison and James Boulton, Christine and David Colbeck, Giles Darkes, Hilary and Ian Gourlay, Michael Hugh-Jones, Sophie Huxley, Sylvia Lymbery, John Marjot, Trevor Mostyn, Cathy Pickin, Marie Power, Juliet Simpson, Zoe Sparrowhawk, Elizabeth Teague, Adam Wright, Elizabeth Yates

Apologies for Absence:

Alistair and Ann Buchanan, Caroline Chanides OxCC, Rosemary Clayton, Nigel Day, Margaret Downs, Patrick and Jane Coulter, Julie Harrod, Katie Pardie, David Saunder, Ian Walmsley

1. Chairman's Address

The meeting was chaired by Ian Gourlay, who has been acting Chair since the resignation of Alistair Buchanan. Ian thanked all those who had contributed both financially and practically to the activities of the FoHHP in the past year. He thanked Alistair Buchanan for all his work as Chairman and expressed gratitude to Sylvia Lymbery for her work as Membership Secretary.

Ian said HHP had had a very productive year. Many people have commented on how much better the park appears and there have been very positive remarks regarding our new Information Board and Tree Trail. A special thank you was given to David Colbeck for his work creating the Information Board.

We are hoping to get an additional Tree Trail.

We are also hoping that the City Council will continue to liaise with us over matters like removal of dead trees, their replacement, work-parties and removal of debris resulting from these activities.

2. Election and Re-election of Officers

The Committee for 2019-2020 was unanimously elected:

- * Ian Gourlay - Chairman, replacing Alistair Buchanan
- * Alison Boulton - Vice-Chair
- * David Colbeck - Treasurer
- * Elizabeth Teague - Secretary in place of Alison Boulton
- * Zoe Sparrowhawk - Membership Secretary
- * Christine Colbeck - Co-opted Minutes' Secretary
- * Trevor Mostyn - Co-opted Publicity

Roberta Catizone has offered to help with the website

3. Approval of Minutes of Last AGM

The Minutes of the 2018 AGM were approved unanimously.

4. Treasurer's Report and Approval of Accounts

David Colbeck reported that the FoHHP had £1,940 at the end of this financial year. Of that, £1,026 is already assigned, leaving £914 available.

He explained that the subscription income did not cover the expenses of running the Friends and the website, so the meeting approved the Committee's recommendation for a rise in the subscription to £5 per annum per person.

The projects listed below (item 6) need to be funded by sources other than subscriptions.

The accounts for 2018-2019 had been audited by David Scott ACMA.

The financial report and accounts for 2018-2019 were unanimously approved.

5. Council Statement

The City Council was invited to the AGM, but no one from the Council was able to attend.

David reported that the Council said the Parks' Budget has been reduced as of April this year, and that they will not be able to resurface the Park's footpaths and would reduce the mowing. Headington Action has declined to fund maintenance work on the grounds that it is the Council's responsibility.

David explained that FoHHP is not allowed to do any work in the Park without official approval. All the work is now to be done by the Council-owned Oxford Direct Services Ltd.

6. Project Update

Ongoing projects include:

- a) Tree-planting (the Monkey Puzzle tree possibly needs to be replaced)
- b) Bird boxes (which have been funded by Finders Keepers)
- c) Another Tree Trail information board
- d) There are also plans for a path from the Park with a gate/screen facing the entrance to St Clement's Church. Headington Action CIL funds have promised us funding for this.
- e) The idea of a cycle-path through Headington Hill Park has been put on hold.
- f) There are a lot of dead trees that need to be taken down (one dead tree fell down three months ago) and maintenance work is urgently needed.
- g) Brookes University have informed us that the new building that is underway on its campus at the top of the hill will have a café and public WC. They have suggested that a path should be laid that would lead from the Park to this new building, which is due to be completed in 2020.
- h) Co-operation with local schools was proposed at a previous AGM, but has not yet been realized. Diana Bell offered to approach St Mary and St John Primary School.
- i) Drug-dealing remains an ongoing problem in the Park. Members were advised to call 101 or even 999 if they saw evidence of drug-dealing, but were warned that the police would not take action if what was reported was just drug-taking, rather than drug-dealing.
- j) It was felt that FoHHP need to keep in close touch with Brookes University. Comments were made concerning the number of trees being felled for the Clive Booth Hall, but this will have no impact on HHP.
- k) Brookes and EF might be interested in organising student work-parties in the Park.

7. Membership

Sylvia Lymbery reported that FoHHP now has 50 members. She said that the last Work Day was very well supported, but that we do need more Friends and members were, therefore, encouraged to spread the word about FoHHP.

8. AOB

Diana Bell updated members about the upcoming events to celebrate thirty years of Oxford's twinning with Grenoble.

Juliette Simpson updated the meeting about repair work currently underway on Cuckoo Lane which, she said, should serve as a warning that, if things are not taken care of in good time, the results can be devastating to the ecology.

9. Ivy

The Chairman rounded up the meeting, which had been a very lively and friendly occasion with wine and canapes, by giving a talk about ivy. He explained that ivy has to be cut back to some extent since otherwise it can cause trees to fall down in strong winds. FoHHP are cutting back the ivy on vulnerable and important trees.

There will be a Work Day in the Autumn and the date will be posted later to FoHHP.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending.

ET