

Friends of Bridge of Allan
Minutes

Date	Monday 29th March 2021
Time	7pm
Location	Via zoom
Attendees	Graham Russell (Chair), Douglas Neilson (Secretary), Elizabeth Rankin, Alex Galloway (Treasurer), Sheila Hutton, Sheila Gebbie, Tony Bradshaw.
Apologies	Murray Airth

Agenda Ref

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1	Welcome. The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and informed them that we now had unlimited time on Zoom so the meeting would not require to finish abruptly, as had happened previously.
2	Apologies. As above.
3	Minutes of the last meeting. Agreed as a true record and proposed by SH and seconded by ER.
4	Matters arising. The Chair indicated that he had checked the choked drains in Coneyhill Road near to the rockery and stated that as they were on the north side they would not prevent the water flooding down the steps. ER pointed out that she was referring to drains on the south side much further up Coneyhill Road. The Chair agreed that he would check this and the matter was continued. A check had been carried out regarding payment for the wreaths and it was noted that several were still outstanding. This will be raised with Tom Morgan. It was decided that the letter to businesses regarding the baskets should point out that we are keeping the cost the same as previous years as we are aware of the hardship which some businesses may have suffered during the pandemic. The Secretary has still not gained access to view the bank account. The Treasurer will follow this up with the bank. The layout and content of the flower bed at the top of the High Street in Dunblane had been noted.
5	Chair's report. The remaining Christmas items have been removed and placed in the storage container. The baffle plate for the steps at Coneyhill has been collected and will be fitted in due course. The Chair and SG had met with James Robertson, the latest Duke of Edinburgh's award participant and outlined the work required in Blairforkie Drive. SG stated that he has since been out and cleared one bed of weeds and had done an excellent job. It was noted that pruning was required in the beds at Blairforkie.

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	The Chair informed the meeting that he had been approached by Kris Henderson from the Sports Club who stated that they were holding an auction and would like to give some of the proceeds to the Friends. She also informed the Chair that we could use the club for meetings once the restrictions were lifted. These generous offers were noted. The Chair and Secretary will arrange to meet with Kris.
6	Treasurer's report. There is currently a good balance in hand, but we are coming into the season when a large spend will be required on plants for the baskets, tubs and planters.
7	Plant sale. The Secretary has been in touch with the Church Secretary regarding the use of the car park and tables. Providing the proposed lifting of restrictions goes ahead as planned there should be no issue with holding the plant sale there on Saturday 15 th May. Homesteads are geared up to supply us with the plants and hanging baskets as required.
8	Hanging baskets and tubs. The cost to have the baskets filled in 2019 was just over £20 per basket. This year the price will increase to £21.90. It was agreed that we should keep the cost to businesses at £30 for this year given the coronavirus issues. The Meadowpark Hotel will now deal with their own baskets. Once again, the plants for the planters and tubs will be arranged with Elspeth at Homesteads. Gavin Drummond has agreed to take on the watering rota for another year. It was felt that the barrels and planters should be watered on a separate trip as they were occasionally missed. ER stated that Maggie Moss will ensure that the hanging baskets and tubs at the Triangle Park are watered. TB thought that a barrel had been moved or was missing from the Health Centre. This has to be checked.
9	(a) Obelisks. More thought had been given to this and it was decided that the proper and secure fitting of 16 obelisks was more than the volunteers could take on board. (b) Shrubs. We have bought 28 shrubs from Craigmarloch for the Memorial Park and lavender and yew trees for the Provost's Park. They have all been planted together with another 50-beech hedging to fill the gaps at Blairforkie. (c) Bedding plants.

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	<p>Friends had received an email from Land Services of Stirling Council informing us that they would not be planting bedding plants in the Memorial Park beds but offered instead to sow wildflower seeds in the beds. This was found to be totally unacceptable, and enquiries were made with the Council to establish the number of plants required to fill all the beds. This totalled 4500 plants at a cost of approximately £1600 for marigolds and dahlias. ER proposed sustainable perennial planting in the beds. A lengthy discussion then took place regarding all options. It was noted that Saughton Park had been on TV several times lately regarding different types of planting they have been carrying out. Also, North Berwick are renowned for beautiful displays. It was agreed that contact should be made with both to obtain ideas for the Memorial Park. It was also felt that the lack of bedding for a second year should be raised with the local Councillors.</p>
10	<p>Cawder Gardens. We have still not received a reply from Housing at Stirling Council regarding the positioning of benches on the grass area in Cawder Gardens. This is in spite of another email having been sent last week. We are still awaiting costs from Andrew Gardner for the slab laying. The Secretary suggested that we should apply for a community grant for this project, and this was agreed.</p>
11	<p>Blairforkie Drive. Maintenance is currently ongoing including the planting of more hedging as mentioned previously. Pruning is required. There is a large quantity of mulch in the container which could be used on the beds.</p>
12	<p>Millennium Gardens. Ian Anderson has purchased paint for the benches in the Garden and will carry out this task once the weather improves. Now that Margaret Edwards is moving away from the area it was noted that someone should take over responsibility for the sensory garden there. ER suggested that Laura Scott may be willing to take it on. She will contact her. It was agreed that the sensory garden could do with a bit of a revamp. This will be looked at during the summer.</p>
13	<p>AOCB. The subject of the triangle at Allanvale Road came up at the last meeting but there was insufficient time to discuss it. It was agreed that this area required to be completely cleared out and redone.</p>

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	ER stated that the local Scouts were looking for a commemorative bench for their commissioner who died recently. There have been quite a few similar requests for memorial trees or benches recently.
14	Date of next meeting. Monday 19 th April 2021 at 7pm via Zoom.

Actions.

4	Check drains on south side of Coneyhill and inform Stirling Council of blockages.	GR
4	Check with Tom Morgan re outstanding payments for wreaths.	GR/DN
4	Letter to businesses re baskets.	DN
4	Secretary's access to bank account.	AG
5	Pruning of beds at Blairforkie.	All
5	Meet with representative of the Sports Club.	GR/DN
8	Arrange with Elspeth regarding plants for planters and tubs.	ER
8	Inform Gavin Drummond to include a specific trip to water tubs and planters.	DN
8	Check Health Centre regarding number of barrels etc.	TB
9	Check with Saughton Park regarding sustainable planting. Check with North Berwick as above.	TB ER
9	Write to local Councillors regarding the lack of summer bedding for the second year in a row.	GR
10	Apply for Community grant for the benches in Cawder Gardens.	DN
12	Ian Anderson to paint benches at Millennium Gardens.	
12	Laura Scott to be contacted regarding the sensory garden.	ER