

Friends of Bridge of Allan
Minutes

Date	Monday 25th November 2024
Time	7pm
Location	Allan Centre, Bridge of Allan.
Attendees	Graham Russell (Chair), Douglas Neilson (Secretary), Mark Everett (Treasurer), Elizabeth Rankin, Robin Kleinman, Sheila Hutton, Jenny Smith, Judith Everett, Mike Watson.
Apologies	Sheila Gebbie

Agenda Ref

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1.	Welcome. GR welcomed everyone to the last meeting of 2024.
2.	Apologies. As above.
3.	Minutes of the last meeting. The minutes of the October meeting were agreed as a true record and proposed by RK and Seconded by ME.
4.	Matters arising not on the agenda. Item 4 Spoken to Sheila McGregor and reminded her we are awaiting the wording of the plaque for the tree in the Royal Garden. Item 4 Storage at tennis courts - opening delayed – carry forward. Item 4 Disclaimer for Volunteers – in progress. Item 4 Basket trees – very disappointed by SC lack of support and action. Item 5 Baskets and troughs now at Homesteads for winter storage Item 6 RBS Community Account – awaiting confirmation of account opening – very slow! Item 7 Millennium Garden. RK contacted SC and basically, they are not interested as area will be affected by Flood Protection measures at some point in the future. Again, very disappointed at their apparent dismissive attitude. Item 7 Following discussion at last committee meeting, the issue of the very poor condition of the Provost’s Park, was supposed to be raised at the last CC meeting but was rather brushed over. Plan is for CC to visit site and look at problems. List of concerns include - extensive long-term corrosion on the gazebo, the dangerous condition of the surfacing on the ramp, poor condition generally of the surfacing elsewhere, poor condition of paintwork on benches, railings and the mural. We await the outcome of their assessment. We will continue to maintain the shrub areas and are looking to carry out significant improvements to the very poor condition of the soil in the beds in the spring. Item 10 - Rats – RK informed the meeting that SC had again looked at the area and found no evidence of rats. They intend to have a specialist check the area and report back. GR stated that he had several photographs from Angus Robertson showing rats in the area.
5.	General Report Our end of season celebration on 31 October at the Brewhouse was sold out with 38 attendees and 2 last minute call offs. It was an excellent evening with copious supplies of drink, pizza and ice cream (very kindly supplied by the Allan Water café).

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	<p>The Remembrance Service on 10 November was very well attended and we received many favourable comments about the condition of the Memorial Park. Along with many other organisations, we laid our wreath at the cenotaph.</p> <p>Christmas arrangements have taken up some time this month. Sponsor plaques for lights were all put up for CC last week.</p> <p>In preparation for the Christmas tree, we decided to put the lights on the gazebo and install the 6 illuminated trees beside the Provost's Park ramp on the Tuesday before the tree was delivered. We or rather Dougie, had devised a new, safer, low voltage arrangement for the power supply to the gazebo lights. New ducting and protection strips were installed to keep the cables safe and secure. These arrangements worked very well.</p> <p>The excellent, but bigger than expected, Christmas Tree was put up last Thursday. Despite the challenges of working around the roadworks which were happening right outside the Provost's Park that day, thanks to some excellent co-operation with the road contractors, we were able to get the tree unloaded and put in its socket, with the star attached to the top (loosely as it turns out!) without too much problem. We also facilitated the supply and installation of the tree to the newly renamed Red Herring, for which they were very grateful. We collected 85 wreaths from Mo-lawn last Friday and thanks to Fairview School, were able to use the Royal car park to prepare them. Our many volunteers then carted them off to put up at the various shops and business premises. After a bit of checking and rechecking we had all the wreaths at the correct locations well before midday. Big thanks to Tom Morgan for getting all the orders and collecting payments. The light switch on event scheduled for last Saturday afternoon had to be cancelled due to Storm Bert; however, the lights were switched-on right-on schedule at 4.15pm with a few hardy spectators braving the cold conditions. The CC team organising the event had put in a terrific amount of work, and it was really disappointing that the various activities planned could not go ahead but they deserve a lot of credit for the work they did. The battery powered lights on the dual carriageway, at the Howff and the new lanterns on the basket tree at the chemist, referred to in action point 9, were put up after the switch on.</p> <p>On more routine activity, we have spent 2 weeks, so far, clearing the worst of the accumulation of leaves from the east end of the Memorial Park and have taken almost half a ton of green waste to Polmaise for recycling.</p> <p>All other areas are being regularly maintained as needed. SC will be cutting the Photina hedge at the Royal Garden early next month.</p> <p>We have had a further new volunteer joining the Thursday team.</p>
6.	<p>Treasurer's report.</p> <p>ME provided a written report for the meeting. With members subscriptions being received in November the account balance is healthy even with all bills being paid. He is still awaiting the opening of the community account with the Royal Bank of Scotland. He also informed the meeting that he had managed to find an examiner for the accounts given the resignation of our previous treasurer and examiner midway through the current financial</p>

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	year. The new examiner is Roger Macdonald MBE, ACIS who is a retired Chartered Secretary.
7.	<p>AGM Nominations.</p> <p>Sheila Gebbie has intimated that she does not wish to stand for re-election at the coming AGM. A list of nominees with their proposers and seconders has been drawn up and agreed. This will be posted on our noticeboards. We are looking for members to fill the vacancies on the committee.</p>
8.	<p>Community Action Plan.</p> <p>The Community Action Plan which was produced by Discover Bridge of Allan and the Community Council was published at midday on 25th November and circulated by our Chair to committee members as there were several issues within the work plan affecting the Friends of Bridge of Allan, namely: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering an annual summer event in the Memorial Park (where we are a lead). • Work with volunteers to maintain and improve community greenspaces (where we are shown as a prospective partner). • Within the engaging young people focus we are not shown at all except under 'all stakeholders' as a prospective partner. (we carry out work with schoolchildren, scouts etc.) • The lack of any consultation with the Friends, as a stakeholder, prior to publication. <p>Following a discussion RK made the following proposal – "Are we, as a group, willing to run another picnic in the park next year". This was seconded by ER. The proposal was passed by the committee.</p> <p>Due to the issues raised it was agreed that a meeting should be arranged with representatives of Discover Bridge of Allan.</p>
9.	<p>Membership.</p> <p>We currently have 136 paid up members of the Friends although it was noted that some volunteers were not paid members. It was agreed that they should be approached to join as a member.</p>
10.	<p>Projects.</p> <p>GR informed the meeting that, along with DN, he had attended a meeting with the Trustees of the Allan Centre where it was agreed that we would scope out a project regarding the clearing and reinstatement of the round beds at the rear of the Allan Centre. Once completed it would be similar to the raised triangle bed at the bottom of Union Street, which is adjacent. The meeting agreed that this should be taken forward as a winter project.</p>

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11.	Memorial ideas for Chris Turner. DN informed the meeting that he had met with Chris's widow, Eileen, who expressed a desire to have a tree planted in the bed that Chris worked specifically on. This was agreed. It was also agreed that a plaque in memory of Chris would be placed on the bench adjacent to this bed. MA suggested that a Eucryphia would be suitable.
12.	AOCB. It was suggested that some of our funds could be used to replace some of the wooden picnic tables with the recycled plastic ones which require no maintenance. This was agreed as a good idea and would be carried forward to a future meeting next year. RK informed the meeting that SC were coming round to the idea of community groups using mechanical equipment in parks and other open spaces provided training had been given. It was agreed to carry this forward to the February meeting.
13.	DONM. The AGM will be held on Monday, 27 th January 2025.

Actions

4.	Storage at Tennis Courts.	RK
7.	Paperwork for AGM.	DN
7.	Members to fill vacancies.	All
8.	Meeting with Discover Bridge of Allan.	GR
9.	Contact current volunteers who are not members.	GR
10.	Project at the rear of the Allan Centre.	All
11.	Purchase of tree and plaque for Chris Turner.	GR/DN