

Friends of High Town (FoHT)

Minutes: 8.7.14

1. Attendees: Simon Barrow, Chelsie Chinnick-Blair, Lyn Bliss, Peter Brooks, Annie Bygrave, Russell Cartwright, Saida el Moujahid, Kim Greig, Ryad Khodabocus, David Landau, Marie-Louise Lowcock, Cllr Andy Malcolm, Fiona Morton, Cllr Roxanna Whittaker, Lisa Wright.
2. Apologies: Chris Grabham.
3. Minutes of the last meeting – sent to DL close to the deadline, so to be distributed as soon as DL has reviewed them.
4. High Town Festival 2014 – post-event discussion.

The second High Town Festival was deemed successful despite the wet weather. It was estimated that at least 500 people attended the day and evening events. The following comments and suggestions were made to consider making the event even better next year.

- Closing High Town Road for the day
- The SOS Bus can be used and run by volunteers, to save paying for St. Johns Ambulance
- More events on the road, e.g. buskers
- Print more flyers and posters
- Signage to festival events, toilets, etc.
- Stewarding / organisation on the day
 - Girl Guides could be invited to volunteer as stewards
 - The Woodcraft Folk would like to be included with planning as early as possible
- Avoid dates with major events on – DL said despite the Tour de France, Wimbledon, the British Grand Prix and the World Cup, the numbers were good
- The performances could carry on into the evening
- Have a tribute band to end the day
- Farmers market stalls
- More than one person staffing the FoHT stall
- Ensuring food outlets have their offer ready on time
- School performers on Community Stage brought in big crowds (of parents), so
- Have a bouncy castle – always a winner
- Some FoHT gazebos have been misplaced and more are required
- Discussion about position of stage and stalls - using Cross Street was suggested

- Shops on High Town Road should be encouraged more to promote the event and decorate their windows, etc.
- High Hats offered craft events for children and had many customers – they apparently needed more staff to cope
- ML suggested and offered to organise a High Town Arts Competition. Inspired by High Town, it will be open to all ages and levels. All aspects of the arts will be invited to participate. It will be offered six months ahead of the next festival. *ML will research and develop the concept.*

DL to report ideas to High Town Festival wash-up meeting on 15.7.14.

5. Railway Tavern – CCB said Heritage Lottery Funding had been rejected, so she would be seeking alternative sources.
6. Licensing application variation (High Town Food & Beverages) – DL informed the meeting that this store at 1 High Town Road wishes to extend the hours it can sell alcohol to 20 hours a day. *Meeting agreed that DL would write a letter of objection similar to when a previous application was made by JJ Food Stores on Dudley Street, which was overturned.*
7. Flytipping – DL has written to Luton Borough Council, asking them to take action on 6 hotspots identified by FoHT and offering whatever help the group can:
 - Duke Street – blank wall between High Town Road and Back Street
 - Frederick Street Passage – most of its length
 - Havelock Road – blank wall on the corner of Mussons Path
 - Kingston Road – blank wall between junction of Edward Street and North Street
 - Mussons Path – most of its length
 - Welbeck Road – between the two large bin containers

Suggested solutions:

- Faster collection than 48 hours
 - Regular pick-ups from hotspots
 - Warning notices near hotspots
 - CCTV
8. High Town Team – report back – AM
 - High Hats shop – now to be run by social enterprise ‘High Town Arts for All’
 - Bronze hat sculptures left over from the Blockers Seaside at Marsh Farm to be re-established, in the triangular flower bed at the Midland Road end of High Town Road, ar

an estimated cost of £3,000. Karen Grunzwiehl at Luton Culture is to work on this project, to help get funds for the High Town Team.

- Welbeck Square needs a further £20,000 to complete its redevelopment . The £10,000 given from the council has to be spent within the year.
- The design of the Gateway to High Town is being worked on by the artist Jonathan Barnbrook, in collaboration with local metalworker Francis Martin.
- A Vision Document to encourage new businesses on High Town Road has been initiated by the Team.
- A grant of £3,000 is to be offered to a business that has been successful elsewhere to bring it to High Town Road.
- Steve Whiting is likely to organise a Christmas Fair in the Scandinavian Café again this year.
- Morrisons is almost certainly going to move into the former Noah building at the junction of High Town Road and Cross Street.

9. AOB

- JS said the return of the post office to High Town Road is still a priority.
- PB said it is very difficult to cross North Street at the Old Bedford Road end and traffic calming measures are required. A number of FoHT members agreed. *DL will contact Luton Borough Council's Highways Department about it and to look into speed limits within the ward.*
- AM suggested a Guerilla Gardening project to replace bushes at the Burr Street car park, near the Noah shop. The council will clear it but 4 people to plant are required. There is a budget of £400 available from money not spent during the High Town Spring Clean. *AB to lead on this. Date set: Sat 11th October 2014.*

10. Notices

- a) 54 Old Bedford Road – change of use from computer shop to takeaway rejected
- b) 67 High Town Road – demolition of outbuildings + extensions proposed
- c) Luton Fun Palace wants to bring a creative collaboration of scientists and artists to the Hat Factory for a 'Happening' as part of a national project. There is a relevant website and Facebook page.

11. Date of next meeting: Tuesday 12th August 2014.