

## Friends of High Town (FoHT)

### Minutes: 11.11.14

#### 1. Attendees

Simon Barrow; Lyn Bliss; Annie Bygrave; Russell Cartwright; Natalie Feerick; Kevin Foley; Jean Godden; David Landau; Marie-Louise Lowcock; Cllr Andy Malcolm; Fiona Morton; Jeremy Williams; Cllr Roxanna Whittaker

#### 2. Apologies

Peter Brooks; Saida el Moujahid; Chris Grabham; Kimberley Greig; Ryad Khodabocus; Joan Samuel; Lisa Wright

#### 3. Minutes of the last meeting

DL apologised for their late delivery.

#### 4. Park fitness equipment

Jane Conway from Luton Borough Council's Parks Department has secured £10,000 to be spent on outdoor fitness equipment in High Town - probably in the Bells Close Recreation Ground part of People's Park. JC presented a range of outdoor fitness equipment that she thought would fit the budget, and safety and durability standards.

As there were such a large number of options of equipment and sites, it was decided that a sub-committee of LB, FMO and SB look at the possibilities, and make recommendations to the next FoHT monthly meeting. The deadline for installation is 31.3.15, so the decision must be reached by mid-December.

DL to research the possibility of training for people to fully benefit from the equipment.

#### 5. Houses of Multiple Occupation

DL asked the group whether this decision could be postponed to the next FoHT meeting, as the proposer, LW, had to send her apologies. The group agreed.

#### 6. High Town Team (HTT) meeting

DL & AM: High Town Christmas Festival 2014 final details were discussed. Date 30.11.14. FoHT members invited to take posters at end of meeting.

AM: Morrisons and LBC have exchanged contracts on old Noah shop (corner of High Town Road and Cross Street). Need planning permission to use warehouse space behind for loading + alcohol licence. If these are gained to their satisfaction, then an M Local could be open in January 2015.

AM: Welbeck Square - HTT members have been asked to find local makers for the benches.

DL: Gateway further discussed and DL reiterated that FoHT members are generally in favour of a symmetrical design.

#### 7. Your Say Your Way (Participatory Budget) ideas

DL: FoHT and other High Town community groups can apply for up to £1500 from LBC through this process. Applications should go in from early January. Presentations and voting will be held in High Town Methodist Church Hall in March.

DL asked for ideas for HTT to put forward for uplift of the high road and also ideas for FoHT to get funding for.

FoHT members responded with:

- community newsletter
- an event in People's Park
- fringe events leading up to the High Town Festival on 4.6.15
- turning unproductive land in High Town into a community allotment.

#### 8. Big Tidy Up

LB: Woodcraft Folk led on this Keep Britain Tidy event, supported by FoHT. Although only 10 people took part, it was agreed that this was sufficient for a 3-hour event. About 12 large sacks of rubbish were gathered from the fringes of Bells Close Recreation Ground.

#### 9. High Town Festival meeting

DL: sub-committees have been formed and are getting on with their work; any groups that want to put on an event, within reason, should get in touch through FoHT to see what can be facilitated

#### 10. Community worker

DL & AM: High Town has been successful in an application for government funding for a paid, part-time community worker. It is administered for the national Church Urban Fund by Nehemiah Foundation and will aim to bring together people of all faiths and none with these initial aims in High Town: a) work with residents impacted by the sex trade; b) work with young people to ensure they have the facilities they require in the area; c) focus on the economic uplift of businesses in and around High Town Road.

Heather James (LBC Community Development), Tony Thompson (Hope Church), Cllr Andrew Malcolm (High Town ward) and DL (FoHT Chair) will support the worker, and will attend a training day later in November 2014 to that end.

#### 11. AOB

Street Watch - NF raised the possibility of one of these schemes, similar to Neighbourhood Watch, but involving residents patrolling local streets after being trained by Bedfordshire

Police, in order to feed back to the force. She said it could begin with one or two streets and she said the training stresses that residents should not get involved in vigilante actions. DL said a member of the Police Foundation spoke earlier in the day to the HTT, promoting Neighbourhood Watch in certain streets and he would facilitate contact to see what the best way forward was.

12. Notices & information exchange

a) Planning updates: 1 High Town Road has put in an application for a new shop front and sign, although it had already installed both, the sign over the former heritage title of the Luton baker Redrup & Starking; permission has been granted for the erection of a block of 52 flats on Dudley Street.

b) Marjorie's Café on High Town Road is hosting an open meeting between police, businesses and residents on 27.11.14.

a) Marjorie's Café on High Town Road is hosting spoken word event Utter Lutonia on 4.12.14.

13. Date of next meeting: 7pm for 7.15pm, 9.12.14, High Town Methodist Church Hall.