



**Minutes of Friends of High Town Tuesday
9th May 2017**

Attendees David Landau (Chair); Kevin Poulton (Media & Marketing Officer); Lyn Bliss (Secretary); Piotr Mikucki; Maureen Allen; Tricia Smyth; Robert McClennon; Kim Greig; John Wright; Russell Cartwright; Jeremy Williams; David Alexander

Apologies Fiona Morton (Treasurer), Luke Middleton, Chris Grabham, Cllr Andy Malcolm, Pete Savage, Philippa Collier, Csaba Sipeki, Caroline Anderson, Ryad Khodabocus and Saida el Moujahid

1. Matters arising

a) High Town Methodist Church – path lighting

Finally lights have been replaced with 3 energy saving columns.

b) Conservation area

i) Satellite dishes – RC has been informed Council will carry out inspection

ii) 94-96 High Town Rd – change of shop front application procedure - DL has chased again – wants an apology for Council not keeping us informed of change of planning application and to ensure next time we are informed of any changes concerning conservation area.

iii) 17 High Town Rd – Councillor Maahwish followed this up. Work had originally commenced July 2003 within time limit of 1999 planning application – windows may not be acceptable for conservation area – they need to stick to original permission – FoHT needs to monitor.

c) Donation to former TV and Video Repair shop owner

DL arranging a suitable time to hand over cheque.

d) FoHT newsletter

Gone to printers. Some discussion as to whether we had agreed total delivery by agency or part by members.

e) 142-144 Midland Rd

Planning permission already agreed. Restaurant at bottom and 40 flats in 8 stories – little we can do now.

146 Midland Rd

This is for the bottom of Redpoint – 2 applications have been submitted, one for



3 flats and the other for an HMO with 9 bedrooms – it hasn't been approved yet.

f) **Hatton Place 114-134 Midland Rd – application to convert club into flats**

Parking will be an issue but Council will say it is too close to town centre and public transport for parking to be an issue. **DL** to look into.

g) **People's park – missing benches**

All 3 should be replaced shortly probably before green flag inspection this month

2. High Town Peace Garden

This is planned by Council of Faiths for the area behind the Methodist church. This land is owned by the Council and will be made into a community garden. 12 Primary Schools are involved. The project has already been presented at several school assemblies. Each school will decorate a totem pole. Bird and bug boxes will be introduced. There are problems with the many roots of trees. The Council want to remove the sycamore trees and replace with less invasive, native trees such as hornbeam and to introduce some diversity, with different heights and dimensions. Groundwork is helping with a professional landscape plan. The idea is to have it complete by the time of the Peace Walk on 23 Sep which will be through High Town.

Established tree removal Some discussion followed about the wisdom of removing well established trees in an area with high air pollution from the airport. **DL** has already raised this with the Council. Some horse chestnut trees need to be destroyed as they are diseased. It is a problem that the Council no longer replace those they cut down. **Jeremy** hopeful of finding funding to replace some that have been cut down. **DL** will contact Robbie Barnes to see where trees have been removed and not replaced. Our gardeners could maintain these new trees.

3. Report back High Town Voice meeting 19th April

Minutes not yet available so from memory - Rachel from Active Luton training team informed us of training that has been funded for anyone with an NIS no who is not working or works less than 16 hours a week. This includes first aid training and other courses. For more details contact Community Centre.

Community Centre will not plan any more community activities till after the Festival, where we can ask more local people about community events they would like at the centre. Knit and natter event was put on as a result of consultation at last festival but then no one attended.

Youth group started on 5th May. Youth Football club still going strong.



School is putting on a number of summer activities which makes it difficult for Community Centre to compete.

Irish Forum is putting on children events in autumn half term.

4. **Report back from High Town Improvement Action Group**

Meeting at community centre during Andy's surgery was very successful. Andy able to attend and give immediate feedback or set an enquiry in motion. He reported back on issues raised during Lyn & Piotr's visit to surgery.

Clean up day June 17th to be combined with Let's Get together event in memory of Jo Cox. Participants to be encouraged to bring food to share for 1pm after litter pick. Meeting at Community Centre 9.30. Gardening to be included again.

Street Cleaning – Piotr has been busy knocking on doors in Frederick St asking if residents would be willing to move cars on certain days for street cleaning.

Litter – fly tipping Andy recommends to report these issues via Luton Borough Council - My account. That way all problems are logged and we have proof they were. Andy to follow up any that are not resolved. Need to encourage more people to report problems and let Andy know when not successful.

Phone box opposite station This is in bad repair and is only partly connected. Maybe we could use this as a notice board as original notice board has been removed and although we have funding to replace it, it would now require planning permission.

5. **AOB**

Toilet at Burr Street Car park Planning permission given for cafe serving tea, coffee, cakes. Need to make a hatch.

6. **Notices and information exchange**

a) **The Old English Rose** – 46 Old Bedford Rd – several offers in.

b) **Paths Estate Fencing** - More and more fences being erected, now around some open grass areas. In one area of Elgar Path fencing has lead to a hideaway area having been created in order to get access to chute bins. Already encouraging unsavoury characters to conduct business there – defeating whole object of work being done. Residents concerned encouraged to attend High Town Improvement Action Group meetings.

7. **Date of next meeting** June 13th 7pm.