

Friends of High Town (FoHT)

Minutes: 10.2.15

1. Attendees

Maureen Allen; Lyn Bliss; Annie Bygrave; Wendi Childs; Saida el Moujahid; Jean Godden; Kimberley Greig; Ryad Khodabocus; Luke Middleton; Stephen Pointer; Csaba Sipeki; Dan Warwick; Jeremy Williams; Lisa Wright

2. Apologies

Simon Barrow; Russell Cartwright; Natalie Feerick; Marie-Louise Lowcock; Veronica McMahon; Fiona Morton; Joan Samuel.

3. Minutes of the last meeting

Sent out on day of meeting – please let DL know of any corrections within 1 week.

4. Your Say Your Way / Near Neighbours bids

a) Newsletter/dance event - LB - YSYW sub-committee

Newsletter – 2x/yr

Participatory events – 2x/yr; 1st to be a dance event

Needs helpers for both.

SP & JW said they would both talk to LB about it. JW said he could provide some content, but would not be responsible for its production. DL said he would be involved with content and production at some level.

DL: voting for this bid is in person, 14.3.15, High Town Methodist Church. More details to be sent to FoHT email list.

b) community allotment – JW

JW has spoken to Cindy Wilson at St Matthews Church about using their land. She said that a change in vicar means any project will be on hold until the new one is in place.

JW said he understood St Matthews School had an eye on the same land for outdoor activities.

DL said it could be joint venture.

ACTION POINT: KG to let JW know when the new vicar is in place, so that this project can be moved forward.

5. High Town Team (HTT) meeting – DL & AM

Welbeck Sq. refurbishment: delayed again, but should be included in Luton Borough Council 2015/2016 Capital Investment Prog.; notice of Traffic Restriction Order to prevent parking on the square has been publicised.

Gateway: Caroline Wallace (CW) to put before planning meeting in March.

'The Experiment' shop, High Town Road: CW to contact owner about creating a pop-up shop there.

DL: to pursue Noah charity and English Heritage about working together on a conservation skills training prog. to benefit High Town Road.

Morrisons, High Town Road

- AM said has been granted planning permission.
- CS asked when it would be ready and AM replied that he was not sure, but hoped it would be quickly.
- DW asked whether it would be in keeping with a Conservation Area and AM said that as it was a more modern building than the late C19th and early C20th surrounding buildings, that it would probably be more in keeping with that.

6. Railway footbridge – LB

LB: been lobbying AM about ensuring that another lift is provided to allow for easier access between Town Centre and High Town for those with buggies and disabled people.

If not, that sufficient help is provided by station staff or signage placed at Midland Road, to avoid pedestrians and cyclists having to get to the lift before finding it is out of order.

AM: he put questions to Network Rail.

Lift fixed as soon as possible.

Staff supposed to help when not working.

Station refurb will go ahead, partly paid for by new shops there, although not all money in place.

Aim for a new lift at Platform 5 by 2016/2017.

ACTION POINT: DL to ask FoHT members to email the general address whenever the lift is broken, so that we know what actions have been taken.

7. Spring Clean – DL

Positive response to FoHT taking active part again, if it happens in 2015.

General discussion followed about litter and flytipping:

a) Dumped rubbish on the latest site where Gypsies/Travellers have moved to: former La Phyzz site, Duke Street.

AM & RW: complicated to do anything about as this is private land.

ACTION POINT: RW to follow up.

b) CS: in Hungary, home owners and shopkeepers clean outside their own places.

DL: reminded him of a 'High Town Proud' idea that he had, to encourage households who are not keeping their frontages clear and shopkeepers setting a bad example, to improve. Leafleting campaign, etc., with info. on Tidy Tip, collections, help from churches/community groups to clear gardens.

AM: important that any such idea is not just negative, e.g. some sort of award for good examples + local newspaper article about them.

ACTION POINT: DL to look into prices for leaflets/stickers.

8. Street Watch update – DL

NF said nobody had registered, despite several people putting up their hands at the last meeting to show interest in doing so.

DL: please fill in the form that was emailed to the group and return it. It is important to register an interest, even if FoHT members find it is not for them, to enable Street Watch to start.

9. AOB

JG: got a letter about Streetlife community network.

ACTION POINT: DL to distribute info. to the group.

**

LM: introduced himself as new High Town Community Worker, based at Hope Church, Villa Road.

Role:

- Encourage social interaction between all groups in High Town.
- Overseen by FoHT, Grassroots, High Town Methodist Church and Hope Church.

**

DL: High Town Masterplan – last chance to view at Shop 33, High Town Road, tomorrow (11.2.15).

**

LW: raised problem of fumes from motor spraying business on Edward Street.

ACTION POINT: RW to pursue this in her role as cllr.

**

LB: why has part of the dye works on North Street been pulled down and now seems to be used as a car park? DL: got outline planning permission for new homes, but the space appears to be being used for car repairs.

ACTION POINT: DL to see whether the above is lawful.

**

DL: CW will potentially making bids for a 1950s day on High Town Road and wanted to know if FoHT attendees were in favour. Attendees signalled their approval with a show of hands.

ACTION POINT: DL to inform CW.

**

DL: AGM coming up on 14.4.15.

£2 annual memberships will be collected.

FoHT members should consider standing as Chair, Treasurer, Secretary and Media & Marketing Officer.

10. Notices & information exchange

- a) Scandinavia Café – closed suddenly due to serious illness of one of the proprietors. Rumours that son of current landlord may reopen it as a business unknown.
- b) The Freeholder – has reopened under Veronica McMahon, its first landlady following its stint as a South Asian restaurant.
- c) Luton Heritage Forum – DL has spoken to its former chair, Barry Neale, about reviving this.
- d) Hope Church – putting on free culture evenings, ever 3rd Friday of the month, starting 20.2.15 with a Moroccan night, with free food, music and interviews. Email for tickets.
- e) Déjà Vu club (formerly The Blockers pub), High Town Road – AM said someone has taken on the building and work is being done to it.

11. Date of next meeting: 10.3.15.