

FoHT MEETING MINUTES

FRIENDS OF HIGH TOWN AGM 14TH MAY 2013

DETAILS

The meeting was held at Methodist Church Hall, High Town Rd on 14/5/13. The meeting started at: 7pm and finished at 8:30pm.

ATTENDEES

People present at the meeting:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Subscriptions Received</i>
David Landau	Y
Annie Bygrave	Y
Simon Barrow	Y
Russell Cartwright	Y
Marie-Lousie Lowcock	Y
Joan Samuel	Y
Andy Malcolm	Y
Roxanna Whittaker	Y
Fiona Martin	Y
Kim Greig	Y
Lisa Wright	Y
Chris Grabham	Y
Naomi Wynter-Vincent	Y
(Linda Farrell: not present)	Y
(Fiona Morton: not present)	Y
	Subs received £35.00 (extra from RC, + extra sub from JS for 2012).

APOLOGIES

People who were not present at the meeting:

<i>Name</i>	
Fiona Morton	
Linda Farrell	

KEY FINDINGS AND DECISIONS

The following key findings and decisions were made:

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MEETING ACTIONS

The following meeting actions were agreed:

<i>Due Date</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Person responsible</i>
	AB to arrange Rainbows garden weeding with Beacon group	AB
	AB to get feedback from Geoff Bunce re Park entrance work	AB
	F Martin to ask/arrange for moveable artistic artwork/boards/hoarding to be supplied for Railway Tavern.	F Martin
	JS to design leaflet for advertising FoHT	JS

DL Asked the committee members to give a brief resume on what they carried out for the group last year.

SB (Media person) spoke about updating website and Facebook when required. SB is standing down from the post this year.

AB (Secretary) spoke about providing the meeting minutes, updating members on events, assisting in organising the gardening, updating Facebook with photos of events etc.

DL gave a message from the Treasurer, Fiona Morton, which was that the Treasury has some money left from last year and that suggestions for its use are welcome.

DL (Chair): Gave a resume on what the group had achieved last year:

Chair's Report – Annual General Meeting – May 2013

"As many of you know, it's been a difficult last twelve months for me personally, so I would like to thank you for your kindness, patience and understanding.

Thank you to all who have stepped into the breach when needed and for the help of our committee.

I will now try to sum up our discussions and achievements as a group, before moving on to next steps.

I think a lot of us wonder whether we are a talking shop or have actually achieved change, so I'll let you make your own minds up.

Here are some of the main things we have been involved in, in alphabetical order. Please excuse me if I have missed anything significant.

- Building conservation – re. The Railway Tavern, provided comments to LBC planning consultation; since fire - writing letters to LBC, the developers and other interested parties re. protecting the pub
- Consultations – our members are involved in shaping future High Town housing policy
- 'Guerrilla Gardening' – the legal version: improving green spaces in High Town, already cleared and planted the front of the Rainbows children's charity on High Town Road
- Highways – LBC engineer presented to us regarding the new 'Gateway' to High Town from Luton Railway Station, and FoHT passed comment
- Litter & fly tipping – asking councillors to pressure LBC & Network Rail to clean and maintain areas of High Town, to provide better refuse collection for the Paths Estate, to work with landlords to stop waste building up on land (successful with some, others ongoing)
- Parks – ensuring they are maintained and improved - working with Luton Borough Council (LBC) and environmental charity Groundwork on People's Park - secured funds, and have been helping to clear and plant)
- Portas money – being the lead group in securing £10,000 for High Town Road (the High Town Team met this morning again, so I can update you on what is happening with that)
- Post Office – petition for businesses to try to bring back a basic post office service for High Town: group agreed deadline of 1.9.13 for completion

- Prostitution – asked High Town councillors and petitioners to FoHT meetings to explain their roles and ask what we can do to help – partially done

2013-2014 'season'

- Summer music event 2013 – perhaps in collaboration with 33 Arts – narrow focus
- Summer Festival 2014 – broader in terms of events and geography
- Post Office petition – wrap it up
- revive successful Grandparents' Day event in October 2013 – already had discussions with Tina Unsworth about this, the Friends member who ran it last time
- clean-up days under the Keep Britain Tidy banner – perhaps partnering with British Telecom and Barclays – more on this later
- membership – increase numbers and diversity – not just ethnicity, but the breadth of the ward, inc. undertaking a 'preaching' tour – secular and non-secular venues in High Town ward
- improve our internal and external communication – timely information, publicity leaflets, our website and local media coverage
- support our committee and association to achieve our goals, e.g. get any training for all the skills we need to improve this group – chairing, minute taking, media & PR, grant applications –free of charge
- find a home for FoHT – started discussions about having a desk at 33 Arts, where I can be available from time to time

And of course, I am always available to discuss new ideas and we have an open forum at these meetings.

I hope you'll agree that we've actually achieved quite a lot as a small group of active members, but I am acutely aware that we need to reach out to the whole of High Town ward and increase our membership.

In that way, I hope we will achieve our aims and possibly more."

JS: thanked DL for all the letters written regarding Railway Tavern.

FMartin: can perhaps help with website.

JS: willing to design an FoHT publicity leaflet to be spread around the High Town Ward –*action point*.

KG: offered to speak to churches and organisations about FoHT and High Town.

Voting for 2013-2014 Committee Members

1. DL was voted in as Chair for another term (seconded by 5 persons)
2. N W-V was voted in as Media Secretary (seconded by AB)
3. AB was voted in as Secretary (seconded by 6 persons)
4. FMorton was voted in (*in absentia*) as Treasurer (seconded by DL)

DL: Portas High Town Team Meeting feedback:

High Town Team 14.5.13

New people...

Gavin O'Brien – creative agency – Clearhead Media – Bute Street – joined up thinking

Ian Rowlands – creative agency – ATP Media – Bute Street – joined up thinking

Claire Gillies – Branch Manager, Barclays – Comm. Dvlpt

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Agenda

Gateway Project

Mural on the fence

Hats In Shops

33 Arts

Luton Comm. Dvlpt – BT volunteers & funds

Barclays – volunteers & funds

Summer Festival

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Gateway – Fabiana scoping land – poss. arch at entrance to station

- Bute Street 'collective' interested in co-coordinating with us – sub-group created to make this happen
- community workshops on archway (Luton Culture)
- Re-use Hats on Sticks – 5(?) left
- Thomas Heatherwick – will send document, but not hopeful, as contact has been sacked!

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Mural – taxi owner is landlord – been contacted about it, but not sure whether he would allow

- Abi Spendlove open to do it
- Barclays has money for paint and varnish

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Hats In Shops. Luton Culture – Zoen shop as micro-hat museum and hat shop (sell seconds, workshops, promote local companies)

- Hoping to sign lease on Friday for 6 mths
- Poss. match funding

Wardown Museum – will be shut at some point – possible relocation of collections

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33 Arts

– small independent record labels – commission sales

- Jewellery
- Artwork
- Grants – work with elderly people
- Wi-Fi access – Virgin problems
- Sign going up this week
- Website showcasing HTR

Trust has committed funds for 1 year – April / May 2013

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Summer Festival

Gavin – 12 hour festival – America

David – Bedford could be a model?

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Comm. Dvlpt – Heather

BT offering - £10k (keen on improving neighbourhood and working with young people) + 200 days (200 staff) - voluntary staff + pay for co-coordinator to work with the team

Want to do it in Luton – HT

Poss. Youth Outreach worker - funding

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Barclays

5 people involved – gets £500. e.g. revamping garden in St Joseph's school in Luton. Every member of staff has 2 days for volunteering

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AOB

Noah shop – future use. Tesco pulled out yesterday. £32,000 a year for 700sqm

Matthew Shaul has another 6mths in George Street with his art gallery

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Jonathan Barnbrook – renowned artist and typographer (ex-Luton) meeting with Fabiana Panetta of Planning Department re. poss. future projects

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Next meeting 10.30am – The Freeholder, 11.6.13

F Martin: Proposed music festival. Has to be held on 13th – 14th July to get funding. Has spoken with the pubs and asked them to put on live bands. Freeholders and Painters Arms agreed. Bricklayers declined but may be able to supply a special Festival beer. Also hoping to get buskers in on the street. Painters Arms is 100 years old this year. Shut road off in same way as for Jubilee party. Haven't done big consultation with all the shops owners as had to put in a fast application.

DL: Was keen to use the £300 that we have got on this project.

RC: Asked if the Bricklayers would have a band in their car park.

F Martin: Landlady not keen (on live music), but offered to get in a festival beer.

AM: Suggested getting some of the food outlets involved too.

JS: Suggested getting a representative from the Community Centre involved in the discussions.

RC: Said that it is run by Active Luton so is no longer a Community Centre as such.

Discussion by Group.

Grandparents Day

DL: Care home (Milner Court, Wenlock St) was involved last time. Day very successful. Spoke to Tina Unsworth at Community Centre. Could perhaps set it up in the Community Centre this time. To be in October. Will give the group feedback later. Residents may need to be bussed from care home.

LW: Suggested grandchildren and younger people would be good to get involved in this.

RW & RM: Internet for the elderly discussed, but not got the funding yet.

Housing.

AM: Gave group feedback on 'Kick Start Housing':

- LBC officers looking at funding
- The Paths and LBC housing stock – using some of the money to improve the paths estate.
- Consultation took place with Paths residents and High Town Ward.
- 23 people came.
- Main issues discussed were prostitution and litter (evenly balanced).
- Other option was redesigning the paths and reducing the number of entrances/exits, making more direct routes through the estate.
- Architects to be brought in to redesign the area.

KG: Asked if that was 23 people or 23 homes? Asked if the planned developments behind High Town Rd be going ahead?

AM: 23 homes I believe. Development has stalled due to recession.

Discussion re number of people engaged in Paths discussion and how to encourage more.

Railway Tavern

DL: Nothing further to report on this. Technical issues (between developer and LBC) still not resolved. Probably they shouldn't have started the development. There was a meeting but nothing has been done to protect it further.

F Martin: Can we use our money to make site more attractive – window boards/hoarding etc?

DL: Private developers remit really, but maybe we could do something.

F Martin: Perhaps something moveable – use it on that building then use it again elsewhere later if required.

We do have some things that could go up – *F Martin action point*

Guerilla Gardening

DL: Liaise with Beacon group to weed Rainbow garden - *AB action point*

DL: Chase Geoff Bunce re Park entrance contractor work –*AB action point*

AOB

David Alexander: Are the cars that are parking and being sold from behind the Drill Hall supposed to be there?

RW: They are doing it illegally. Steps are being taken to stop it.

F Martin: Residents need to be given advice re the Bedroom Tax.

AM: LBC is running advice shops.

RW: The council will help and also the Citizens Advice Bureau.

RC: 'Luton Rights' at 15 New Bedford Rd at junction of Inkerman St and Collingdon St can help.

RC: 111 North St Hat factory is being demolished.

FMartin: They are taking one end down brick by brick and reclaiming the materials.

DL: Some of the factory is to stay. Good survey done by English heritage - pdf on their website. Central part of Dye factory to be kept, the rest reclaimed. May be used for housing.

KG: Kingston Rd rubbish & trolleys have been cleared.

F Martin: Need more artists in our shop (Shop 33). Anyone want to sell anything through the shop? Open Mon-Thurs 12.00 – 16.00, Fri 10.00-16.00. Hot desk available. Come in and have a coffee.

Next meeting Tuesday 11th June
