

## **Friends of High Town Meeting Minutes - 8th October 2013**

### **1. Attendees**

David Landau, Annie Bygrave, Marie-Louise Lowcock, Linda Farrell, Chris Grabham, Fiona Morton, Joan Samuel, Michael Missen, Philip Jones, Roxanna Whittaker, Andy Malcolm, Sam Covington PCSO, Kerry Stag PCSO.

### **2. Apologies**

Simon Barrow, Kim Greig, Linda Wright, Jean Godden, Russell Cartwright, Sue Lake.

### **3. Minutes**

Minutes for Sept meeting taken by Fiona Morton have not been released yet as there are some additions to be sent to her by DL.

### **4. High Town Team Update**

DL:

- Wellbeck Square redevelopment - £1750 funding is to be applied for by HTT, to be used for Groundwork charity planning of the redevelopment of Wellbeck Square.
- The bid for the restoration of the hat sculpture at the Gateway is not going ahead at this time.
- There has been a public advertisement for ideas for the High Town Gateway project and the 7 replies are being looked at.
- 1million pounds from Arts Council - bid is going in from Luton. Gives 1-2 years money for arts events across Luton. HTT keen to apply for this - Caroline Wallace has suggested they apply. Bid must go in before December and is currently being developed.

JS: Will this include 'The Departure Lounge'?

DL: I am not sure

- The Edge nightclub put on 'The Midas Touch' art exhibition (21<sup>st</sup> Sept 13). 22 year old artist Kerry Campbell put this on. The

Happening in Luton FB page [*Ctrl + Click links to visit [‘Happening in Luton’ page](#), [‘The Midas Touch’ page](#). AB*].

- Attendance (HTT) of by 2 members of Barnfield Academy on York St. They have children doing practical projects. Desperate for work experience placements. Half day per week (continuously). Also offering to join in with community projects. Offering meeting space in their building. They run a sweet shop in New Bedford Rd. Some talk of opening and old style sweet shop in the area.
- Suggestion of a trade association run by the group. DL has mobile and email address of a contact.
- High Hats - a 2<sup>nd</sup> milliner [*Alva from Alva Headwear*] joined Marie-Louise in the shop recently [*as volunteer artists-in-residence: selling hats, educating the community and demonstrating hat-making*]. There will be a book signing in the shop soon. Check [www.hightownluton.com](http://www.hightownluton.com) website for events.
- Next HTT meeting will be at Barnfield on 12th Nov.

## 5. High Town Festival

DL: Have had 2 meetings today on this subject. A date has to be set. Heather James has looked at weekends of 6 week period before schools break up for summer; 7<sup>th</sup> June, 5<sup>th</sup> July, 12<sup>th</sup> July. 5<sup>th</sup> July suggested as best day so far.

CG: Check Wimbledon for those dates (final is 6<sup>th</sup> July).

MM: Ladies final is on that weekend and I don't want to miss it.

DL: Shaheen at St Mathew's School - they want to be involved. Tony Thompson - faith group from local churches - events on community stage interspersed with non-faith events. Need stalls that are selling things to bring people into area. Keep it along High Town Road and St Matthew's School (not in the park).

FM: We can apply for grants from £250-£5000 for this Festival

DL: 33 Arts [NB in collaboration with the Luton Irish Forum] are applying for 'Awards For All' from Lottery Funding of up to £10K for the Festival.

DL: Next High Town Festival meeting is at 12:30 pm at Hope Church on 12<sup>th</sup> November.

## **6. Wardown Park Museum - Presentation by Chris Grabham**

CG: Feedback from group on Wardown Park Museum project; Laura's talk was a bit woolly. What do you want us to do? We had a meeting about this.

Have touchscreen iPads on the wall so you can whizz through lots of photos quickly, with access to the museum database -you could also do 3D stuff. Zoom in to photos, move around, see streets and buildings labelled, show links to relevant information.

*Chris showed a slideshow of what could be done - using maps of the area, clicking on buildings to show labelling and moving to 'links out' on relevant subjects, all held within the museum database.*

CG: Even just one museum gallery would be great if it had this kind of technology. It could be a starting point.

CG: Event on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> Nov: 'Take over the Museum day'. Judges make their selection on types of art to be shown. Public can then vote on their favourites - there will be a public selection.

*(Discussion by group on what they had seen in presentation - very positive feedback from group)*

LF: Could it be done outside the museum too - eg in schools?

CG: Possibly

JS: Laura's talk was also about raising funding and coming up with ideas for this, as well as finding out what the public want to see. This idea does

look expensive. Have you got any further with this *[raising funding ideas]*?

CG: We want to know what the public want before we go any further with that.

FM: If the public are going to get really engaged with the Museum they have to enjoy what it gives.

MM: You could finance it using businesses, eg Lloyds. Click on the Lloyds building on the interactive map - shows the history of the building in photographs, write ups etc, also somewhere on page there is a link to 'Open a New Bank Account'. If they thought they would get more business they would stream funds into it. This could get very big. But you'd need a strategist involved to develop these kinds of ideas. Public funding and councils are not enough. You have to get into the commercial sector to do this long term. Photos of old Vauxhall cars could lead to the newest models with a click. I can see them funding it too.

DL: Are there any other ideas that people *[museum staff]* have?

CG: Four of us in the team - each of us came up with a suggestion but the others were not concrete enough to show as a presentation. But on 22<sup>nd</sup> Nov they can present their ideas better. I will ask if they can provide us with a document to email around.

DL: Thank you to Chris for his presentation  
*(Group applause)*

## **7. Luton's Best Awards**

DL: 'Luton's Best 2013 Awards' This is part of the Love Luton Campaign. Vote until 8<sup>th</sup> November. Awards held at Luton Hoo on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> November.

Various different sections for awards

(see website <http://loveluton.org.uk/lutonsbestawards/>)

DL: Maybe an award to Judy Dixon posthumously? Very active in the community.

CG: James Dyer - author on Luton history.

DL: Should we do a group vote?

LF: Better to vote individually as this will give most numbers of votes.

## 8. Media & Marketing Update

DL: I have a meeting with N W-V tomorrow to talk about media and website.

## 9. Notices

- a) ML: the charity coffee morning at Marjorie's Kitchen raised £104. Thanks are due to all who helped, donated and came along.
- b) DL: Make a difference day in Wardown Park - clean up etc. Will email about this around to group (*action point AB*)
- c) DL: Green Flag status Presentation Day - I will go along - maybe give suggestions on changes to parks, River Lea etc. Can lobby for them on that day.
- d) DL: St Matthew's School - lots of events we didn't know about are being run eg Zumba classes and other activities.
- e) DL: St George's Square market on Sunday last - did it go well  
Fiona?  
FM: 1<sup>st</sup> two markets went down quite well. August was cancelled. September was run. Don't know yet if it was successful enough to keep running it.  
JS: I went along and it was very good. Good quality of products and a good, quality range of stalls. Quite impressed. I bought several things. Not many people were around though.

FM: The focus is the local market. Haven't yet been told whether or not there will be a Christmas market there.

f) MM: Majorie's website is up now. Ben has done an amazing job. FB & Twitter links too. Check it out and link to it where possible.

g) DL: A clean up of Kingston Rd was organised by my neighbour. We cleared up rubbish and improved our local environment. Important to do these things outside the FoHT group too!

h) DL: EDL - two leaders have left EDL and the rest of the group want to be more peaceable in future.

## 10. Any Other Business

DL: Railway tavern- no further updates.

JS: I was impressed by the Sex Trade meeting. Hope that they keep on with the action.

DL: Shazad Khadam acknowledged that the sex workers had gone from the streets and that it was working.

JS: Solid evidence given - figures of the numbers of kerbcrawlers [*arrested*] and of those women that had been targeted and were being worked with [*to help them leave the trade*].

DL: Philip - I saw you used the new busway - how did you find it?

PJ: It was fast and seemed good.

DL: I found it was fast and a bit bumpy.

*(Short discussion on the busway)*

Next meeting is on 12<sup>th</sup> November 2013

\*\*\*\*\*