

# Collings Park Trust Management Committee Minutes

## 21 March 2023

### at Lexden, Hartley Avenue, Plymouth

Present: Andy Stewart (Chair), Andrew Leigh, Lois Conrad, Liz Rawlings, Pen Cabot, Dy Taylor, Geraldine Whitby, Sam Smith.

Apologies for absence from Tony Bray

Liz was thanked for hosting the meeting. Geraldine was welcomed to her first committee meeting. Jen Reeley has stepped back from the committee for the time being.

**1. Minutes** of last meeting (13 October 2022) were accepted. **Matters arising: Improvements to main pathway.** There are continued discussions around the main pathway, its possible extension, what it should be made of and how it will be funded. Councillor Charlotte Carlyle has agreed to provide some funding from her Community Grant fund. The idea of establishing a restricted funds pot for the path was also explored. Would it be possible to do half of the path for £10k, rather than the full £20k? It was mentioned that Charlotte and Luke Pollard MP would be at Emmanuel Church on Saturday 25 March. It was noted that, currently, the 3 ward councillors represent 3 different parties and so are not joined up in their approach or in their funding priorities. There has been no follow up with Luke on the **Plymouth Pear Project**, but there is time to do this. **Recruitment drive:** there is wide acceptance that memberships need to be addressed. Paper-based joining may be easier for some people. It was suggested that the noticeboard in the garden be used to drive more memberships/ supporters and that a weatherproof dispenser could be used to hold forms. Would the WI be interested in supporting?

**2. Health & Safety** No major health and safety concerns were raised. The pond has been installed with a 'safety first' mindset. There have been some cases of vandalism, climbing on the sheds etc and this will be dealt with by the application of anti-climb paint. Increased incidence of bad dog management is going to be tackled with increased signage. In addition, the parachute shelter rope between two trees was cut and removed

**3. Finance, Membership & Funding** There is circa **£8k in the account** at present. There have been ongoing issues with HMRC requesting (unnecessary) tax returns, but this matter is close to being resolved. **Membership** is stable, with 9 households, 4 individual members and, 3 supporters bringing £806 to the accounts annually. This is not, however, a very strong support base so efforts will be made in 2023 to improve this. The idea of giving a branded tea towel or mug to new members was floated, as there are still some of these in stock. As per Matters Arising, there was discussion around facilitating the joining process, such as paper based forms and 'door knocking' for potential members. The idea of holding a spring/ Coronation event with active signing up on the day also arose: a potential date of Sunday 7th May was discussed.

#### **4. Policies, Procedures & Key Documents**

Andy S has reviewed and updated documents when necessary, and these are now uploaded on the CPT website in accordance with best practice. The key documents which committee members are encouraged by Trustees to read are:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Accident Reporting
- Health and Safety Policy
- Healthy and Safety Coordinator Terms of Reference
- Environmental Policy
- Community Garden Generic Risk Assessment
- Data Protection Policy
- Data Protection Procedures
- Privacy Notice

#### **5. Progress and Planning for the Community Garden**

The pond has been installed with great success at a cost of £610, of which £466 was planned cost, the remainder for wooden stakes and a replacement solar powered aerator. The safety aspects are excellent, but additional signing may be required to discouraging children and/or dogs from accessing the enclosed area. Andy S has 30 saplings from the Woodland Trust ready to be planted. There are a few suitable areas to plant these, some of them as a deterrent to entry such as a row across the end of the French drain side and bank of the shed. Additional trees could be planted within another suitable area at the lower level of the garden. The DofE volunteer, Lottie, is to be invited to create a bed in front of the elder and a small budget is available for this.

#### **6. Collings Park Playing Fields**

The question of what happens to Collings Park Playing Field remains. With the aim of maintaining it as an open green space, options include improving the facilities to encourage greater sports use and improving it ecologically. Ideally, a combination of the above. It was suggested that the Sport Council's playing fields policy would prevent housing development, especially as there is a national shortage of sports areas. Taking on the lease of the field would be a big responsibility for CPT. Some previous conversations need to be followed up: those with Ocean City Football Club and the tree team at the Council. There needs to be some investigation into facilities/ utilities potential for the site, as there is evidence of better facilities in place in the past.

#### **7. Future Events Planning**

Possible events for 2023 include: an Easter Egg Hunt; an Elderflower Festival; a Coronation event (7<sup>th</sup> May proposed).

#### **8. External Events**

Nothing to note, other than ongoing lack of contact from Plymouth Open Spaces Network.

#### **9. Feedback from Board of Trustees**

The Board meeting of 8 November approved the annual report, which was then taken to the AGM on 29 November. Minutes of the Board meeting to be published.

## 10. AOB

- Beekeeper Paul needs a 3<sup>rd</sup> hive, which it was agreed can be funded by the remainder of the Greggs Foundation grant with a top-up from general funds.
- Councillor Nick Kelly is giving £535.50 from his Community Grant fund for a new picnic bench in place of the one amongst apple trees.
- Does the garden need a Defibrillator? They are quite expensive, up to £2940 for solar-powered setup and batteries/pads need changing also (£245 every 5 years). There is believed to be one mounted externally at the tennis courts adjacent Collings Park. Ultimately, it was decided that CPT would not be able to support this for the present time.
- Andrew L noted that the community garden is referenced in a positive way within recently issued local election publicity material.
- Andrew L highlighted a local press article about the approval of a proposed housing development on open green space at Elgin Crescent, Egguckland. This illustrates the council's ongoing need to find spaces for new housing and reminds us of the threat to Collings Park (although the space in Elgin Crescent was never used as a designated sports pitch).
- It was agreed to set up a WhatsApp group for garden volunteers. Andy S to action.

**11. Date and venue of next meeting:** Tuesday 6 June 2023, 1900 hrs, Lexdon, Hartley Avenue