

Northfield Constituency Environmental Forum

Minutes of meeting 21 September 2012

Present; Graham Andrews; Amanda Cadman; Geoff Ray; Roland Kedge; Penny Moore; Sue Amey; (Parks manager) Cllr. Peter Griffiths; Maggie and Clive Sweet; Steve Hinton;

Apologies. Sarah Royal (BOSF); Lynn Horsnett; Georgia Stokes; Leanne Youngson ; Emma O'Sullivan.

Welcome.

Amanda welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Previous minutes

The previous minutes were approved and signed off.

Matters Arising

1. Cofton Park

Work to start on the football pitches in early October. Sue to meet with ward committee. Looking to get the whole Cofton project defined, then built into a scheme, then apply for funding. At this point there may be opportunities to get a friends group up and running. Perhaps a stakeholder analysis could be arranged in the next few months? **Action Sue.**

No part of Cofton is leased to anyone, its all covenanted.

The Cofton Hackett newsletter could be used to publicise what's going on. **Action Sue**

A consultation is to take place on the future of the barns. Sue to write to parish councils. **Action Sue.**

Any relevant documentation can go onto the NCEF website. **Action Sue/Penny**

Roland mentioned the badger sett on the waste ground. Sue was unaware of it but said she would get it mapped and maintenance programmes amended.

2. Quick Response Bar Codes.

Steve outlined how QR codes work. He described work he is doing to implement some locally. Graham suggested it might be useful if new information web pages are being built to try to keep them generic so we can all tap into them and use them.

Steve said codes can be done as a printed sheet, or laminated locally. Steve said he would act as an advisor if people needed advice.

NCEF members need to think about QR codes and their use with walks and parks. QR codes for groups could be put on notice boards. Any feedback from members would be most welcome.

Some helpful links:

"What are QR codes"- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/QR_code or

"How to Create"- <http://blog.hubspot.com/blog/tabid/6307/bid/29449/How-to-Create-a-QR-Code-in-4-Quick-Steps.aspx>

How to generate codes-- <http://www.qrstuff.com/>

3. Turves Green

The dingle hasn't had the fly tip removed.

4. Finance

Nothing to report. An invoice has been raised from Oddingley Hall for the Walk Leaders training session.

5. Local Explorer Walks

Walks planned so far:-

25th Oct start at Ecocentre at 11.00. A short, family orientated, walk led by AN

Nov 17th start Oddingley Hall 11.00 West Heath Park to KNLNR circular led by AC.

Dec 14th 11.00 Bournville parks walk start at Rowheath café. A '12 Days of Christmas' themed treasure hunt led by PM and MS

Advertise on our website and try to put them on B31? **Action Penny.**

Put a link in to this web site <http://brummiesguidetobirmingham.blogspot.co.uk> from NCEF site.

Action Penny

NCEF now has three trained Sustrans Active Travel champions. Well done to all 3 of you.

6. Group Development

Rangers

The weather has affected everything. Lot of ground damage due to flooding and wash outs. The orchard projects are going ahead.(Balaams Wood, Lickey Hills and Cofton Park etc.) Trees for Life funding may have been cut. There are now nearly 30 orchards across Northfield.

Eco Centre

Look at their web site for several up and coming events.

Unloved

Roland outlined the pocket handkerchief parks idea. **Members are asked** to identify neglected open spaces in Northfield. Roland spoke of 3 along the new by pass. Graham mentioned the unkempt area alongside Bell Holloway, wild overgrown and full of rubbish. Could members send a Google map to Graham (gra1952@live.co.uk) with their area marked on it and Graham will mark them all up on one map and pass onto Sue who can then identify the owners.
Action All

7. Future Plans for NCEF

Plans so far discussed are: implementing **QR codes** and developing **Be Active** walks. A new idea was put forward:-

River Rea Catchment

Graham put forward an idea, raised by from Nick Hale a member of FOLHP, of working holistically together as the NCEF on the River Rea catchment area. We could perhaps start by eliminating Himalayan Balsam; the idea being all groups to provide volunteers and work together to promote healthy habitat along the Rea and its catchment area. Trout habitat was also discussed. Roland mentioned that water quality on the Rea was very poor and fluctuates with carrying sediment. However things could improve once Longbridge was redeveloped. Steve added the River Cole has a healthy trout population and that the Wildlife Trust is doing a city wide water quality report. Graham agreed to give Nick's contact details to Roland and to attach the Trout report to these minutes. **Action Graham.**

8. Friends Group reports

Fields Millennium Green

Launched a natural play area.

National Trust putting on conservation training.

Birmingham Open Spaces Frum

Coffee morning Oct 2nd KHP. 11.00

There is a Birmingham and Black Country Nature Improvement Area plan- BOSF is applying for funds.

BOSF and Green Space are setting up a fund to attract money from local industries.

Rea Valley Conservation Group

Coleys Lane: The Environment Agency is causing some damage to the wildflower meadow as they work on alleviating flood risk on the River Rea at Coleys Lane. The meadow was a great success and Roland showed photos of it.

Friends of Balaams Wood LNR

Frank Balaam, an American artist, is coming down to paint in the woods. Penny has invited Emma from the Icon gallery.

Halloween event planned.

Lickey Hills Society

A book of walks was seen in draft form. A very exciting project, it is hoped to launch the book in November at the Society's AGM

Friends of Manor Farm Park

It was noted the Manor House is being redeveloped. Will Section 106 monies become available?
Bat night went well at Manor Park.

Friends of Ley Hill Park

Tree for Life have offered 1000 whips. The friends want to take up the offer but require more information. The orchard has had 3 trees damaged.

Himalayan balsam has been removed from the Brook. Efforts to engage FOMP in a joint effort in Meadow Brook hadn't happened.

Roland commented positively on the new meadow. When asked about the conservation cut Sue said there was no budget for it on the Holloway. It has now been cut.

Friends of Kings Norton LNR

A new reed bed was being developed on Popes Lane. Hopes that the LNR designation can very soon be extended to cover this area too.

Friends of Kings Norton Park

Grand event planned for 11 October: "reopening the park".

Friends of West Heath Park

Starting to clear the area in October, and an orchard planting is planned.

Doggie day to hopefully educate dog walkers.

9. AOB

a) Cllr Griffiths kindly promised to support NCEF as much as possible.

b) Public liability insurance for friends groups is expensive. Roland found he could reduce his bill considerably by dealing directly with the insurance company on line.

Steve said BCC will eventually cover groups if they decide they are competent – whatever that means. All progress is stopped currently. Steve said he would follow up with Joe Hayden.

10. Date of next meeting

Dec 12th. 12.00 at Lickey Hills. It is the Xmas meeting so please bring food to share