



## **Friends of Murray Park**

### **Notes of Annual General Meeting held on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2023 at Murrayside Community Centre**

**Present:**

**Officers:** Tracy Rowe (Chair)  
Lesley Fayers (Treasurer)  
Sue Bird (Secretary)

**Members:** Dennis Carpenter,, Paul Gilbert, Jimmy Knight, Joanne Mansie,  
Malcolm and Jenny Ebbs

**Also Present:** Nick Wilcox (IBC), Cllr Roxanne Downes

**Apologies:** Gillian Richardson

#### **1 Excluded Persons**

#### **Action**

There were no excluded persons.

#### **2 Minutes**

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a true record.

#### **3 Matters Arising**

The idea of a memorial board for dogs was discussed again and NW confirmed that IBC would not welcome this idea as experiences on other parks have shown that the site would probably be turned into a “shrine” and that bereaved owners would likely place all sorts of memorabilia there. It was therefore, although a lovely thought, it was not seen as a feasible idea.

#### **4 Finance**

LF reported that there had been no financial transactions since the previous meeting, and the bank balance remained at £335.58.

## **5 Election of Officers for 2023**

The Chair informed members that Glen Thimblethorpe, having moved away from the area, did not really have an active role as Vice Chairman and had said that if someone else would take on the office he would be happy to step down. Joanne Mansie volunteered to take on the role. Her appointment was proposed by the Chair, Tracy Rowe, and seconded by Paul Gilbert.

The officers currently holding the roles of Chair, Treasurer and Secretary were all happy to serve again for the coming year and they were appointed en bloc as follows. This was proposed by Roxanne Downes and seconded by Paul Gilbert.

Chair	Tracy Rowe
Treasurer	Lesley Fayers
Secretary	Sue Bird

The members would like to thank Glen for his many years of service on the Friends Group.

One thing that Glen has been doing for us up to now was administering and updating the MPF website. The Chair said that she would like the webpage to be linked to the FaceBook page, but would need some help in achieving this. NW offered to contact the appropriate department in the Council to ask them to assist with this. They had been very helpful in the past.

**NW**

## **6 New Police Structure**

The Chair had received an email from Hanna Canning, who had been our local officer for the past few years, to say that with effect from 4<sup>th</sup> December, she will no longer be working in the East Ipswich area, If we need to contact a local officer within the Community Policing Team from this date onwards, we should contact one of the officers listed below.

PC Jenna Milne – [Jenna.Milne@suffolk.police.uk](mailto:Jenna.Milne@suffolk.police.uk)

PC David Goodwin – [David.Goodwin@suffolk.police.uk](mailto:David.Goodwin@suffolk.police.uk)

## **7 Refurbishment of Children's Play Area**

LF informed members that the Padlet scheme had proved to be unworkable and was therefore being abandoned. Any ideas and/or pictures could be put on the Facebook page.

Several ideas had been expressed by attendees at the Family Fun Day in August, including:-

- Fencing off the whole children's area to exclude dogs from the area (NW confirmed that this would be included in the refurbishment in 1024);
- A running track around the inner perimeter of the new Play Area;
- Bike Racks – there was a stall next to the MPF one on the Fun Day which were offering tuition on cycle skills, and this group could provide and install bike racks free of charge. NW said that the Council would be glad to support this, and that he would get in touch with this group to see if this could now be done. Members agreed that the best place for the racks to be installed was near to the MUGA.

**NW**

**8**

### **Wish List**

Members discussed an extract from the minutes of the 2019 AGM, and identified some of the items which were still outstanding, as follows.

- a) The local school were keen to get involved in the development of the Wildlife Area;
- b) The refurbishment of the Cobbold sign at the North West corner was still outstanding. This was identified previously as an achievable and reasonably inexpensive target. NW said he would ask his team to fit this into their schedule.
- c) We had asked several times for an enclosed area in which unsocial dogs could be exercised, but this had not yet been actioned. LF reported that she had witnessed a dog owner exercising his dogs in the MUGA and when asked to vacate the court, he became aggressive and threatening. He subsequently transferred one of the dogs to the Wildlife Area. Dogs are not allowed in either of these areas and there is clear signage to that effect.

**NW**

Another dog had been seen to foul in the MUGA and it had to be locked up before it could be cleaned. This had prevented people from using the court in a proper manner.

MPF had already identified a suitable area in the South East corner of the park, and asked if this item could be dealt with as a matter of urgency. Once fenced, this area would need to have signage to explain the proposed use for it. It could also be used for puppy training.

## 9 Any Other Business

- a) NW confirmed that the old toilets should soon be demolished but was not sure whether those on another park would be done before Murray Park.
- b) LF reported that two benches, one on the Murray Road side and one on the King Edward Road side, which needed attention or replacement. **NW**
- c) TR asked whether picnic benches could be moved from the existing play area to the old pavilion hard standing. NW explained that this was not seen as a good idea as it could encourage youngsters who occupy the park late at night to gather there and annoy the people in the neighbouring properties. NW had received complaints before about nuisance noise at this end of the park. JK offered to explore whether home owners would have any objections. **JK**
- d) TR reported that there were still two old waste bins on the park, one being concrete and the other black plastic. These were seen as inadequate as they were overflowing on a daily basis. NW was of the understanding that these had been replaced with the large black bins.
- e) The new composting toilets had been vandalised on a regular basis. LF said she had witnessed this happening and had attempted to take photographs of the offenders. NW said that it was risky to take photos of these people, as it could result in retribution. LF had seen a man kicking the door as he wished to use the toilet as it was locked. NW said that, with the frequent vandalism, the Park Patrol had been locking one toilet so that there was always one good one available when another was out of order.
- f) Bill Quinton's tree had now been planted and Mr Quinton has been very pleased to see this done.
- g) The Chair asked for clarification on the rules for the use of the park notice boards, as she had seen notices on the boards which had not been posted by Murray Park Friends. We had been given to understand that the boards were only for use by us, and only for matters relating to Murray Park. NW confirmed that our understanding was correct and that the notices could have been put there by Friends of Holywells Park as they may have used a generic key to gain access. He promised to speak to them to remind them of the correct parameters for use of notice boards. The Secretary offered to remove the offending notices. **SB**

- h) Several people used mobility scooters on the park and were finding it difficult to exit the park, as all the gates opened inwards. It was seen as a positive initiative to improve disability access.

A few ideas had been put forward, including a solar panel-powered mechanism (which was considered too expensive, especially in the light of the frequent vandalism experienced on the park).

Another idea was to adjust one of the gates so that it opened outwards instead of inwards, so that people on mobility scooters could enter at one of the other gates which open inwards, as they do now, but exit from the new outward opening one. This was seen as a workable idea and NW said he would look into this solution. The most favourable gate would be the one at the South East corner (King Edward Road side).

- i) ME asked why people were being allowed to use cycles in the MUGA. It was explained that this was a Suffolk County Council initiative, as mentioned above, and it had been approved.
- j) JM asked whether a “splash pad” could be included in the new Children’s Play Area, but this was seen as extremely expensive to install and maintain.
- k) LF reported that one of the trees on the park had developed a weeping fungus (bleeding canker) and that she had discovered that it was a notifiable event. NW said that the trees are checked on a regular basis and this would be dealt with as a matter of course.
- l) NW informed members that IBC will shortly be digging a trench near the new trees, in order to insert a barrier to restrict the growth of tree roots.

## **10 Date of Next Meeting**

The Secretary had drafted the Calendar of Meetings for 2024, and this would be circulated to members along with the Minutes. The next meeting would therefore be on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> January 2024 at 7pm.