

HASSOCKS AMENITY ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 15TH JULY 2014 AT 7.30PM

Present: Margaret Ford (MF) (Chair) Colin Wilsdon (CW)
Fred Maillardet (FM) Catherine Cassidy (CC)
Frances Gaudencio (FG) Peter Gibbons (PG)
Jonathan Soper (JS) Paul Mercer (PM)
Liz Mercer (LM) Georgia Cheshire (GC)
Amanda di Clemente (AC)
Jean-Philippe & Emma from Downlands School

1. Apologies for absence: Bob Kenhard, Janet Slaughter and Judith Poncelet

The Chairman welcomed the newly elected committee members (Jonathan Soper, Paul Mercer, Georgia Cheshire & Amanda de Clemente) and the new head boy and girl from Downlands School.

2. Minutes of last meeting and matters arising: The minutes of the last meeting held on 18th March 2014, though approved, remain unsigned as Juliet Strange is on holiday.

- a. K12 Footpath. This is now complete and, although some areas already have holes appearing, the general consensus was that the work had dramatically improved the condition of the footpath. Concern has been expressed (both by the committee and a teacher from Downlands School) that the kissing gate, and therefore the footpath, could not be used by a person in a wheelchair. It was proposed that WSCC should be challenged to make this change.
- b. Railway Clock. Issues surrounding insurance and weekly maintenance (winding up!) mean this was not operational in time for the station opening. The station manager is still willing to have the clock on display in the booking office provided it is in a glass case (due to its value).
- c. Raised Beds. A Director of the Landlords, Eagle Peak, of the row of shops, which includes the pet shop and dry cleaners, have now met with their agents (Fludes). HAA asked to attend this meeting but were ignored. Subsequent to this meeting a letter was received at the end of May stating that the required repair

work was under consideration. Nothing has happened yet. It was proposed that this matter should be placed under the remit of the Green Group. GC to consider talking to Fludes regarding a planting programme. The Girl Guides are scheduling a much needed weeding session of the heather bed in the next couple of weeks. FM has found the sign for this bed and will replace it once weeding has taken place.

- d. Website. Astrid Stubbs now has this up and running and it was felt that the new website was a great improvement on the previous version. The important thing now is to keep it up to date.
- e. Amendments to Constitution re Internet banking. Upon review, Bob Kenhard felt it was an appropriate time to review the HAA constitution as a whole. FG has agreed to help with this.
- f. Managing Change. A meeting was held on April 1st between HAA, HCP and Age Concern to discuss the possibility of creating an administrative hub across the organizations. The meeting attendees proved to be in favour of this idea - in particular John Rose from Age Concern. FM is willing to meet with him again to push this idea forward. The HAA committee has agreed to appoint a secretary to work on a part paid/part volunteer basis. Due to a lack of candidates AC will re-post the vacancy on Facebook.

3. Youth Slot. The new representatives from Downlands were introduced and gave their report. The school fair on June 28th was very successful and raised approximately £6,500. These funds will be used mainly to run the school mini buses. Both of the representatives use Hassocks station and felt that the refurbishment was a massive improvement. A recent visit to Montmirail had been very successful in promoting good relations between the two communities. FM and AD asked if the reps would be willing to circulate a questionnaire to form groups asking what activities and facilities they would like to see in the village, in particular at the Beacon Centre. This questionnaire is to be sent to Emma Bates (PA to headmaster) in the first instance.

4. Project Reports.

- **Green Group.** The planter outside the sorting office has now been planted up with summer bedding. GC will be liaising with Amanda and Bob Kenhard regarding the purchase of new planters. GC is also in the process of approaching South Downs Nurseries (Jonathan Tate) to see if they would be willing to supply drought and shade resistant plants. The new signpost at Keymer is now in situ and the area around it will be planted with spring flowering bulbs in the autumn. The circular bed in the station car park (east side) contains an oak tree which, it is said, will poison anything planted below it. This needs to be investigated to determine if anything can be planted. Funds are earmarked for planting this area and are available via the Rail Group. Any ideas should be shared with Dennis South who has been involved in maintaining the station plants for many years. PM and LM agreed to weed the oak tree area in the next couple of weeks as it is very untidy at the moment.

Spitalford Bridge. The committee reviewed the artist impression of the bus stop area. The first application for funding has been submitted to the WSCC Community Initiative Fund and Andy Petch has supported this. If successful, funding of approximately £5,000 may be granted. FG agreed to canvas opinion of the proposed plans with the bus stop users. Lighting and dog waste were identified as issues to be considered at a later stage of the development.

Lottery. This is an urgent project for the autumn; marketing will need to start in September if the first draw is to take place in December. Last year a lot of work fell to a few people and it is hoped that more people can be involved for the 2015 lottery. Funds of £1,000 each from the 2014 lottery have now been distributed to HAA, Light Up Hassocks and The Scouts. HAA have allocated £500 of this money to the Spitalford Bridge project and would like to channel the remainder to a village youth organization/project. An appropriate beneficiary is still being sought. For 2015, publicity needs to be improved and the committee agreed that the following 4 mediums would be used – social media (Facebook), posters (GC has a contact for this), Talkabout (CW to liaise) and distribution via email to members of HAA, Light Up Hassocks, The Scouts and the local schools. An

alternative leaflet printing method also needs to be found. JS to approach some local companies to see if they would be willing to sponsor the application forms.

5. AGM and Forum Post Mortem. There was a very good turnout of both HAA members and interested members of the public however it was felt that the meeting was blighted by the ineffective audio system which caused a lot of frustration amongst the audience and the forum panel. Adastra Hall has been contacted regarding this issue. Car parking and the Neighbourhood Plan were the main subjects discussed during the forum and FM (the chair of the Forum Panel) felt that Sue Hatton and Paul King in particular found the event very useful. Since the meeting Paul King has approached HAA to advise that the Parish Council are holding a 2 day consultation event in September and could HAA help in promoting this. A response was prepared which stated that HAA were prepared to conduct one-off discussions on key points. No response has been received to this. GC has now been appointed to the Parish Council Neighborhood Plan (PCNP) committee. The HAA committee agreed that 4 focus groups should be established who would present their findings to the HAA committee at the next meeting prior to presentation to the PCNP committee on 26th September. The focus groups and leaders are:

Footpaths and cycle ways – FM

Housing – FG

Youth - AC

Transport – CW

6. Rail Report. A snagging list is in the process of being compiled and will include lift signage and the damp area around the lift. It is anticipated that it will take another 12 months for snagging items to be rectified. Improved train services is still an ongoing objective of the group and now that Southern have been awarded the only rail franchise this will hopefully lead to better consolidated thinking. Ticket office opening hours has been raised as an issue however it is understood that an additional member of staff has been employed so cover should improve.

7. Treasurers Report (attached). The main items of income and expenditure were discussed, as applicable, during the meeting. Funds of £2,500 remain in the Rail Group funds and have yet to be allocated.

8. Committee Co-options. The committee agreed to invite Peter George and Virginia Pullen to join the committee.

9. Beacon Centre. There has been no progress to report since the last HAA committee meeting.

10. Any other business.

PG would like to establish a Bus Group and asked for help in recruiting volunteers to take this forward.

JS promoted the open gardens in aid of St Peter & St James Hospice, which is taking place on 20th July.

11. Date of next meeting – 2nd September 2014, 7.30pm in the Green Room, Adastra Hall.