



The Meeting of the Friends of Chances Park was held at
Morton Community Centre 4pm on Thursday 25 January 2024

<p>PRESENT: I Rogan, M Logan, M Bainbridge, F Fawkes, D Hammond, Lu Graham.</p>	<p>ACTIONS</p>
<p>APOLOGIES: F Nugent, C Connolly, E Richardson.</p>	
<p>1. Minutes Taken as a true record.</p>	
<p>2. Matters Arising The main park paths have still not had edges cut back. LG has mapped the ragwort area on the Park so it can be dealt with next year. IR handed Nature Trail leaflets to LG so that the workers can see where to cut back, to nature trail posts. The wild area behind the gas hydrant still needs cutting back around edge of trees so that the snowdrops can be seen. The family are still deciding on a memorial tree? The Georgian Garden notice board still needs Perspex replaced, (Kim) notice board on park which depicts views over the city has been repaired but has been returned in a dirty condition. Elder trees in the giant redwood are still there.</p>	<p>IR</p>
<p>3. Park Maintenance The tree survey is halfway through. IR said she would be interested to see if we have as many trees as the survey report she has from 2007, Storm damage has been recorded and remedial work on schedule. MB asked if there might be funding eg from Sport England to repair muddy trails made worse by Parkrun. LG will meet Lee, MB & ER for a walk round and chat to workers about trucks running over grass & crocus. The main paths have become dangerously slippery with mud & leaves. (Dangerous) Emma, like many others disappointed that the coffee bar no longer open on Saturday morning, wondered if there is a possibility of drinks or even hot water being available, this matter to be followed up with the new Center Manager, who had hoped to be at meeting, and wants to work with us. Possibly a meeting could be set up with the chair and vice chair, in the near future.</p>	<p>LG</p>
<p>4. Activities Report The meeting accepted the Chair's report.</p>	<p>IR</p>
<p>5. Community Police There was no police report.</p>	
<p>6. The Labyrinth</p>	<p>IR</p>

IR continues to apply for funding with the guidance of CVS' Bridget Jones. She met with students from the Art College who were very enthusiastic about designing a centrepiece for the labyrinth. We are looking for local businesses to support with grants towards this project as smaller grants seem to be the way forward please contact IR with any prospective people / businesses.	
7. Financial Report The Treasurer was not present but reported an available balance of £4,409.49 and ring-fenced funds of £6,200 and his full report was presented to the AGM.	
8. Correspondence IR referred the Centre Trustees decision (to ban the Friends of Chances Park from using the Centre) to Paul Musgrave, Assistant Director, Communities and Localities, Cumberland Council, for direction. We are awaiting his reply.	IR
9. AOB FF was asked to make a provisional booking for BMS Day subject to the new Chair's approval. Richard Dixon will sort out the bird boxes when the weather is less hazardous. He's been waiting for a cherry picker to be available to erect the new owl box but now proposes to put it near the tawny owl.	FF
10. Next meeting date to be confirmed.	

Received as a true record:

Signed (Chair)

Date

Friends of Chances Park
Accounts for the Period

01/01/23

31/12/23

Credit Balance at

31/12/22

£13,881.53

Income

Grants (City Council & Parkrun)	£1,900.00	
Labyrinth Grants	£0.00	
Bank Interest Received	£150.97	
Donations Received	£82.87	
Body Mind & Spirit Income	£2,153.00	
Raffle Ticket Sales	£0.00	£4,286.84
		£18,168.37

Expenditure

Donations Made	£0.00	
Repairs & Renewals	£1,600.00	
Labyrinth	£2,100.00	
Gardening	£2,721.75	
Printing, Postage & Stationery	£257.74	
Insurance	£89.60	
Licences	£0.00	
Event Expenditure	£0.00	
Room Hire	£450.50	
Body Mind & Spirit Income - Expenses	£53.69	
Carol Service Refreshments & Children's Gifts	£285.60	
Computer & Website	£0.00	£7,558.88

Credit Balance at

31/12/23

£10,609.49

Ringfenced Funds (Labyrinth - See Below)

31/12/23

£6,200.00

Available Funds

31/12/23


£4,409.49

Accounts Prepared by



Frank Nugent
09/01/24

Accounts Checked by



P. L. Gauntlett
10/01/24

Friends of Chances Park
Accounts for the Period

01/01/23

31/12/23

Ringfenced Funds

Source

Riverside Housing Association
Cumbria County Council
Hadfield Trust

Amount

£3,000.00

£1,000.00

£2,200.00

Less Payments

£6,200.00

Total Ringfenced Funds

£6,200.00

Body, Mind & Spirit

Income

Stall Fees

£1,420.00

Entry Fees

£570.00

Raffle Ticket Sales

£163.00

Donation

£2,153.00

Expenditure

Morton Manor Hire

£300.00

M. I Rogan - Expenditure

£53.69

Lottery Licence

£353.69

Net Proceeds

£1,799.31

Chairmans Report 2023

Well, here I am again giving my final report, I'm sure I said that last year so a touch of déjà vu, only agreeing to stay on to see two particular projects which were earmarked as priority in our five-year plan agreed by this committee after the community had been consulted through questionnaires back in 2022. These of course were the wildflower meadow and the Labyrinth. Well, I'm happy to report that with help, from Cumbria County Council grant for £1,000 which paid for the ground preparation, and then another £1,000 from Tesco Groundworks, (where the public put token in to support one of 3 causes), which paid for 13.5 grams of seed and which were sown along with the ground preparation, we are looking forward to seeing amazing results this spring. In April we had a community event to mark Earth Day and planted 500 plugs into the meadow followed by the children from the local school planting another 300 plugs. These already showed results with lots of people commenting on how much the colour had brightened up park and their day. Not satisfied with this in October after the meadows' first cut community volunteers planted another 500 plugs, all paid for by our own fundraising but happy to say Cumberland Council helped by paying vat, thank you. I personally can't wait until the spring to see these flowers popping through.



It's a pure joy to see so many people of all ages enjoying our beautiful park, it's a real community out there, dog walkers all day long sometimes the only time they get to socialise and talk to others, so many people live alone and these same people note if some of the regulars are missing, caring for each other and notice if anyone needs a little extra care. Many others choose to use the park as a shortcut to school or between the different residential housing estates, to enjoy nature, the Georgian garden or the views over the City, or to play on the multipurpose games area - we cater for everyone. Added to this we have a nature trail leaflet which is a guide to the park in its own right, (take some paper and a crayon and do a rubbing on top of posts), plus there are activities sheets for different age groups (3-8 & 8-14) available to download either from website or in photos on the Friends of Chances Park Facebook page.

Most of our weekly activities, some of which have been running since our lottery grant back in 2009, now run independently these include, the weekly Parkrun, this group never fails to amaze me, this week they celebrated their 11th birthday with 141 taking part and 18 volunteers needed to run this event amazing in the rain! It was reported early in the year that one volunteer achieved his 400th attendance and so many more volunteers achieving high ranking numbers. Not satisfied with keeping people healthy they have supported the local foodbank, celebrated 75th anniversary of the NHS and so much more.

The Healthy Living walks also continue weekly, enjoying the benefit of the Manor Café for their cuppa afterwards.

The T'ai Chi group uses the Manor mostly but enjoys the park when weather permits.

Anyone is welcome to join the monthly Hospice Walk and Talk group, just turn up 11am the first Tuesday in the month.

K9 Dog Training is held every 5 weeks on a Sunday morning, they do puppy classes too. In summer there is a Wednesday evening class. For this group you need to meet up before for an assessment, for more information contact Dogs Centre <http://dogscentre.co.uk>.

Volunteering gardening and litter picking is another activity held on Chances Park, though this year gardening has mostly been done by the guys from probation service. Thanks to the ad hoc regular walkers who help with the litter picking and report any concerns re storm damage. A special commendation needs to go to Peter Aruocha who cleaned and tidied the entrances to the Park and singlehandedly painted our park gates adding gold lettering which gave such a welcome to all who entered and then went on to spruce up all the signage. Thanks to the Greenspace team for providing the paint.

Morton Manor also enjoyed the use of the park holding Manorfest in July and play schemes in July and August and I believe there will be another play scheme in the February half term run through the Manor and GLL.

So, what else has changed this year? Back in July at our general meeting we were updating the committee as to where we were with our major fundraising event of the year in September, and the committee was quite impressed with the figures until it was explained that room hire of £300 had to be taken from this. The committee asked the secretary to write to the Trustees asking why we were charged at the commercial rate when other Community Centres gave special rates to their own groups and the funds raised were always used for the benefit of the local community. The Trustees' reply was not helpful and we have now referred the matter to Paul Musgrave, Assistant Director, Communities and Localities, Cumberland Council, for direction.

At the same meeting the cost of postage, printing and delivery of notices to 30 members who required paper copies was discussed and a strategy decided upon. As a result of this action, only 4 of those members now need paper copies, and while I'm sure we lost one or two members, those who agreed to email communications represent a huge saving.

More than happy to report our fundraising BMS day was well attended and as popular as ever and although this event is primarily to raise money for the labyrinth and our rolling programme with the schools which gives the children ownership of their park, it is so nice to see old and new faces enjoying this event.

Our Community Carols were held at St Luke's Church as the Community Centre didn't want to co-host this event, and we had a very successful evening with the Church full –



I have left the Labyrinth until last as you may have noted the wheels of progress turn very slowly. In January not only did we need new plans but also a topographical survey which was completed in April and paid for (£450) in July. A donation of £650 from Parkrun paid for this with money to spare. The account for the main spec plan came as a shock when it finally

arrived in October - £1,980! Greenspace helped by paying the vat which saved us £330, but this has wiped out this year's fundraising event. Greenspace also helped by putting the building of Labyrinth out to tender and until we had this figure we couldn't go for funding for the entrance and pathway, as the money ringfenced in our account is to pay for signage and centre piece, although whoever gets the contract will install these on site.

So the tender came in at around £55,000 for job but these estimates are only valid for 60 day which means we have to add on 5%, making the amount we are looking for £60,000.

Having looked into possibilities, we have applied to Awards for All for £20,000 because if we secure this it's easier to get smaller amounts. Riverside is another we are applying to for £10,000. The Community Foundation is a possibility but not until April. We have also applied to Partnership West who I believe have awarded us £3,000 on condition we get funding from elsewhere. So where are we now? I have applied to the lottery, they have been back in touch and asked us to submit this again which I'm doing this week as the application had gone into community grant, this was from when we applied pre covid when they couldn't follow through because of government saying all funding to go to the pandemic, hopefully this is now sorted, I feel as long as we get this £20,000 the Labyrinth will go ahead, I have also updated our Spacehive account but that money which is approx. £3,000 wouldn't be released until we have the final amount. I am now working with CVS as suggested by lottery to earmark more funding but if anyone knows of any local business who will add support to this venture or any ideas at all please let us know.

I have had a meeting with postgraduate from the university campus on Brampton Road who are eager to be involved in the design of the centre piece.

Although I no longer want to be in an executive position on this committee and intend to travel much of the years to come, I would like to see this project completed as promised in the five-year plan.

