

**Record of discussions and decisions of the  
1<sup>st</sup> Annual General Meeting of the Friends of Summers Field  
held at Doynton Village Hall on 20<sup>th</sup> February 2013**

The Chair of the Friends of Summers Field (“FoSF”) Management Committee, Sandy Higgins, welcomed everyone present and introduced the other members of the committee - Lee Whitbread, James Hughes (also directors of FoSF Ltd), Helen Barnes, Mike Blacker, Jill Salter, Wendy Scott, Andy Stew and Corrinna Wakefield-Wylde. Sandy stated that the main business of the meeting was to report on the work of the Management Committee, to gain approval of and sign off the Annual Report and Financial Statements and to confirm the appointment of the Management Committee. This was to be followed by an open discussion of current and planned use of Summers Field.

**1. Report from the Chair of the FoSF Management Committee on the work of the Management Committee**

The formal report was summarised on slides setting out a timeline running from the initial identification of the need for further outdoor recreation space in the Doynton Parish Plan in 2008 through current activities to future plans. Achievements in 2012 included the execution of South Gloucestershire Council (“SGC”) Licences, securing award of an SGC Environment Award grant and a Big Lottery ‘Awards for All’ grant, purchasing of trees, benches and a gate and their installation by community volunteers.

It was noted that a planning application had been submitted to SGC to locate a secure shed behind Doynton Village Hall to house a ride-on mower purchased with the grant funds. SGC was currently seeking public comment on the application which can be viewed online at <http://developments.southglos.gov.uk/online-applications/> by entering “doynton village hall” as the search criteria.

In the coming months, the Committee were planning to purchase and plant the remainder of the trees and start development of the wildflower meadow. Sandy invited all members of the community to assist with these activities. Further fundraising activities were also being planned including another Cider Fest, following the success of the event last autumn.

The Management Committee indicated their unanimous approval of the full report and it was resolved that Sandy should sign it off on their behalf.

**2. Report on the finances of the Charity and receipt and approval of the financial statements for the year ended 30<sup>th</sup> November 2012**

The financial statements for the year ended 30<sup>th</sup> November 2012 were summarised on two slides reproduced below:

### Statement of Financial Activities

<u>Income</u>	£
Donations	2,084
Membership	385
Grants – SGC Capital Grant	900
– SGC Environment Grant	1,465
Cider Fest	873
Interest	<u>2</u>
	5,709
<u>Expenditure</u>	
Cider Fest	386
Benches	924
Trees, stakes and guards	528
Replacement gate	267
SGC Fees	500
Rent	550
Insurance	269
DVH hire	<u>19</u>
	3,443
<u>Net Income</u>	<u>2,266</u>

### Balance Sheet as at 30/11/12

	£
Debtors – SGC Environment Grant	1,465
Cash at Bank	<u>801</u>
Net Assets	<u>2,266</u>
Unrestricted funds	1,977
Restricted funds	<u>289</u>
Total funds	<u>2,266</u>

*Unrestricted funds* are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity.

*Restricted funds* are subject to constraints on their expenditure imposed by the donors.

After description of the individual lines in the financial statements the Management Committee indicated their unanimous approval of the full statements and it was resolved that Sandy and Lee Whitbread, as directors, should sign off the balance sheet.

### **3. Appointment of the Management Committee**

Sandy noted that Jill Salter wished to resign from the committee with effect from the end of the meeting. Sandy emphasised that membership of the committee is open to the whole community and that appointment is by resolution of existing members. He invited anybody present who felt they could contribute to apply to him. Terms of Reference for Committee Members have been drafted and will be made available to those who express an interest.

Sandy made those present aware that as well as being a Director of FoSF Ltd he is also currently Chair of the Management Committee, Treasurer and Secretary. This carries an unacceptable level of risk and Sandy requested volunteers to take over two of the three positions. Lee Whitbread volunteered to act as Secretary from July.

Sandy noted that there is currently no provision for retirement of Committee Members by rotation and he proposed that the Terms of Reference for Committee Members be amended to provide for this every three years. This was supported by the Committee members. Sandy highlighted that this would not prevent existing members from offering themselves for re-appointment.

### **4. Open discussion of the current and planned use of Summers Field**

As an introduction to the discussion and to ensure a common understanding, Sandy set out the terms of Clause 8 of the SGC licence for the orchard which severely limit the permitted use of the land. He also set out the charitable objects of FoSF Ltd which are limited to the development and subsequent management of a community orchard and wildflower meadow. In addition he showed a slide of the current design for the orchard and wildflower meadow as approved by SGC which includes a Social Area, the intended use of which was as an area to hold picnics, social and fundraising events and for casual play by children. Sandy noted that two of the trees planted to date have been inadvertently placed in the position intended for the Social Area and that the solution to this was either to move the trees, or to relocate the social area and seek approval of a

revised plan from SGC. Sandy then invited those present to raise any questions or issues about the current and planned use of Summers Field.

Gordon Copping asked about the proposed site for the storage sheds behind Doynton Village Hall ("DVH") as he believes a tree planted by the community in 1973 as part of a 'plant a tree in '73' campaign already stands in the area chosen. Sandy showed a slide of the planned position of the sheds and assured the meeting that the intention is to avoid existing trees as far as is possible. Sandy agreed to look again at the proposed position and check that it does indeed avoid the trees.

Liz Crew asked about the arrangement between FoSF and DVH to locate the sheds on Village Hall land. Sandy explained the proposed agreement was that, in consideration of DVH granting permission to site the shed for the mower on DVH land on a rent free basis, FoSF would agree to mow the DVH grounds on a regular basis. Sandy explained that only one storage shed is needed by FoSF and that the DVH Committee had requested that planning permission should be sought for a second storage shed to be used by them.

Liz Crew asked if the storage sheds will be visible. Sandy stated that the proposed location behind the existing trees would minimise their visibility.

HA Swan asked what the Management Committee were proposing to do with the social area as she felt that children should be encouraged to enjoy the orchard and play in it. Anne Fisher asked if the social area would be moved in order to protect the trees from children running about. Anne felt that children enjoy playing in the field and will continue to want to run about there. Sandy responded that it's not the Management Committee's intention to stop children from playing in Summers Field, but that the agreed use of the land is as an orchard and wildflower meadow rather than a playing field. There had previously been temporary goal posts erected by some of the children using the field and Sandy suggested that this should be discouraged as it does not fall within the uses permitted by the SGC licences.

Mike Lawrence asked if it was practical to limit the way in which children play in the field. He asked that the committee be flexible in their approach to children playing in the field and felt that it would be important to do this to meet the community's wishes. He further felt that there had been good work done by the community in establishing the orchard and that the committee shouldn't allow this issue to blight it.

Jenny Higgins raised the point that there has previously been discussion in the community about the best space in the village for children to play and that there is already provision for this at the Playing Field.

John Bartram suggested that the issue is not the primary use of Summers Field as there is already consensus among the local community that it should be used as an orchard and wildflower meadow, but rather the issue is how we can best accommodate children playing there.

Mike Blacker highlighted that the SGC licences require FoSF to hold public liability insurance for the agreed uses and that any additional uses would be likely to affect the insurance premiums. He also cautioned that SGC might want to renegotiate the terms of the licences if they believe that Summers Field is being used for any purpose not within the current terms and that, if this happened, SGC would be likely to levy further fees.

Lee Whitbread expressed the view that there is already provision for recreation within the current plans in the form of a social area and while the Management Committee can't

encourage children playing football on Summers Field under the terms of the licences, general play would not be discouraged. He added that the community has anyway been clear at three past public meetings in its consensus to use Summers Field as an orchard and wildflower meadow not a playing field. Further, the planned location of the social area at the centre of the field was designed to be as far away from adjacent houses as possible in order to minimise any nuisance value of activities in the area.

HA Swan observed that some community and social groups have had licences for land use withdrawn by SGC because there wasn't community agreement on their use. She expressed her view that there was strong feeling at the meeting that children should be encouraged and allowed to play on Summers Field. Lee emphasised that the committee want to encourage children to enjoy the field.

John Bartram expressed his view that there is overwhelming agreement and support in the community for the use of Summers Field as a community orchard and wildflower meadow, and that it's never been suggested that the community wants a football pitch. It's just a question of how the use of Summers Field is communicated.

Mike Lawrence stated that he felt there is a perception in the community that the Committee is intending to exclude children from Summers Field. Sandy clarified that it is not, and has never been the Management Committee's intention to stop children playing in the field and that perhaps the Committee has failed to communicate this to the community.

Pat Rees suggested that there is a need to clarify that we want to be legally compliant with the SGC licences, but that we use common sense within this so that children can continue to play on Summers Field. Anne Fisher added that the committee needs to ensure that there is no dissension within the community which could cause SGC to reconsider the licences. Pat asked if the terms of the licence could be printed on a notice and displayed at Summers Field so that the uses of the field are clear to those using it. Mike Blacker stated that this would not be enforceable.

Lee Whitbread again emphasised that the Management Committee is not discouraging children from playing in the field, but that its primary responsibility is to maintain the orchard and meadow and it must prioritise maintaining and protecting the trees.

Elizabeth Copping said that she would like children to feel welcome at Summers Field and that this would encourage them to respect the trees and enjoy the environment.

John Bartram proposed moving the social area slightly towards the Church Road houses in order to avoid moving the two trees that were accidentally planted in the planned position. Mike Blacker further proposed that the Committee request a clarification from SGC on the permitted recreational uses of Summers Field under the terms of the licenses.

Sandy supported these proposals and asked for a show of hands in support of the committee taking action to:

- a) Produce revised plan to relocate the Social area approximately 20m towards Church Road and seek SGC approval for this;
- b) Requesting clarification from SGC as to whether the proposed recreational uses of the field fall within the spirit and intent of the licences.

There was unanimous support for this from those present.

## 5. AOB

Sue Merrall raised the issue of dog excrement on Summers Field and suggested a bin should be provided for dog owners to use. John Bartram mentioned that a bin has been provided at the Playing Field which costs around £200 to £300 per year for servicing by SGC. Jenny Bartram suggested that a sign could be made for Summers Field requesting dog owners be responsible for dealing with dog excrement. The committee agreed to sourcing and erecting the sign.

Barbara Kent asked about plans for the wildflower meadow preparation and planting. Sandy responded that plans are still being formulated and invited input from all members of the community. He added that the grants already secured include provision for turf cutting and purchase of seeds. Ann Fisher asked how the work will be carried out and Lee answered that detailed plans are yet to be made and that anyone with experience of planting wildflowers would be welcome to assist. Sandy emphasised the Committee's commitment to keeping the community informed about the plans.

Mark Pitman suggested that the Committee could approach the builders of the houses in Summers Drive for a financial contribution as they had dumped a lot of waste materials at the entrance to the field. Sandy expressed the view that they would be unlikely to agree because of the time elapsed and the current economic conditions. Lee indicated that he would be willing to write to them in his role as Secretary in the summer.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sandy King'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped 'S' and a distinct 'K'.

3 February 2013