



Friends of Hermitage Park

Newsletter

2017

January

Happy New Year to all Friends

Chairman's Letter

Dear Friends

This letter is long overdue! I took over from Chris Packard as the Chairman of the FOHPA at the AGM last September. Chris has worked tirelessly to bring the Friends to where we are now – finally on the cusp of the regeneration works starting in the Park. We are all very lucky to have had Chris at the helm and immensely grateful for all he has done for Hermitage Park and Helensburgh. As we enter this new and exciting phase it seemed a good time for Chris to step back and pass on the baton and I will do my best to follow in his footsteps. Not that Chris has gone far – he has been assisting Argyll and Bute Council in the tender procedure and appointment of contractors. The good news is that the landscape contractor has been appointed, the contractor for the new pavilion is yet to be appointed. At the moment I can't tell you who has been appointed or what the start date is but we very much hope the work will start by the end of the month. We hope to have a small ceremony with Chris cutting a symbolic sod to mark the start of the works and tea in the Victoria Halls. Once the date has been finalised I will send out an invitation to you all and hope you will be able to attend.

We hope to continue with the Action Days in the Park during the refurbishment works but this is still being discussed with the Park Manager, Melissa Simpson, who is in post for 5 years. We will update you as soon as we can.

The Hermitage Park Users Group (HPUG), representing various interested parties and chaired by the Friends will continue and will formally become a sub-committee of the Friends.

During the refurbishment works the Friends will have a monthly progress report in the *Community Advertiser* magazine and we will try to keep you up to date with developments as they occur.

Fund raising must continue - £3.3 million is a lot of money but it is not enough to do everything! We have set up the Hermitage Park Development Fund and will continue applying for grants and holding coffee mornings, bag packs etc and memorial / sponsored trees will soon be available for purchase. Any funds raised by the Friends will be used for on-going improvements and developments in the Park and these will be agreed with the Park Manager every year. It is important to stress that these funds are not for any maintenance works, which will be funded by Argyll and Bute Council for the next twenty years. Initial projects include funding poetry stones for the war memorial garden, a wildlife hotel in one of the trees, incorporating a Helensburgh 'Walk of Fame' into the Park, a reed bed and solar panels for the pavilion. If anyone wishes to organise a fund raising event please do!

We will also be producing some correspondence cards with a picture of the Park, which we hope will help raise some funds. A book telling the story of the Park is also planned to mark the formal reopening of the Park in June 2018.

We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at the formal start of the work in the next few weeks.

Kind regards,

Events

Saturday 7 January 2017 2pm meet at the Sinclair Street Gates. Tree Walk with Park Manager Melissa Simpson and the Trustees to look at the trees that will be felled and explain why this is necessary. About 80 trees in the Park will be felled due to disease, being overgrown, dangerous or near the end of their lives. Many more new trees will be planted but sadly the large horse chestnut and red beech on the lawn are diseased and dying and have to be removed.

Trustees

The AGM in September saw a change in the Trustees. Our Chairman Chris Packard and Secretary Nigel Millar stepped down after serving as Trustees of the Friends from the outset in late 2011. Khursheed Moos also stepped down as a Trustee after two years' service. We are all very grateful to Chris, Nigel and Khursheed for all their hard work and dedication to the cause. Fiona Baker (Chair), Chris Sanders (Vice Chair), Brian Kyle (Treasurer) all remain as Trustees and we are joined by Alison Holliman as our new Secretary and by John Campbell.

Chairman Fiona Baker, Hillcroft, Station Road, Rhu G84 8LW. Tel. 01436 820 334

Secretary Alison Holliman, 28 Queen Street, Helensburgh G84 9QL. Tel.01436 673187

Treasurer Brian Kyle, Dolphin Lodge, 2a East Montrose Street, Helensburgh G84 7EP Tel. 01436 672951

Membership

Membership of the Friends is free - though donations are gratefully received! We would like to increase the membership as the more Friends there are the easier it is to obtain funding grants. If you know anyone who would like to be a Friend please could you ask them to get in touch – email, telephone or via Facebook.

We have been updating the membership list and note we are missing various details for a number of people. If you know of anyone who is a Friend but has not received this newsletter please could you ask them to get in touch with me at: fiona@scottish-archaeology.com Tel 01436 820 334

Facebook and Web Page

For those of you who use Facebook please like **Helensburgh Hermitage Park**.

Our web page hosted by Argyll and Bute Council is about to be updated but can currently be found at <http://argyllcommunities.org/friendsofhermitagepark/>

Hermitage Park

Growing our park together

