

Friends of Newlands Park (FoNP) AGM

Monday 8th July 2024, 7:30 – 9:00pm

Attendees:

FoNP Committee members: Dave McLeod (DM) - chair; Fiona Godsman (FG) - treasurer; George Frier (GF), Sheilagh White (SW), Jamie MacDonald (JM), Matthew Sheehan (MS) - ordinary members Debra Gill (DG) - Meeting minutes (in absence of Secretary)

Members of the public and FONP volunteers 10

Apologies:

FoNP Committee members: Humera Ashraf (HA), Julia Radcliffe (JR), Iain MacBean (IM) – ordinary members

Invited attendees: Councillor Sean Ferguson

Agenda:

1. Approval of minutes of last meeting
2. Election of officials
3. Review of the year
4. Future vision for Newlands Park
5. AOB
 - Pétanque

Minutes of the meeting:

DM welcomed the attendees to the AGM and gave apologies from the FoNP Committee members who were unable to attend the meeting (please see summary above).

A special thanks was given to MS for attending the meeting, despite just returning from his holiday, to ensure that it was quorate.

1. Approval of minutes of last meeting

The minutes from the previous quarterly FoNP committee meeting (held on Monday 20th May 2024) were proposed by GF and seconded by MS.

2. Election of officials

DM informed the meeting that 2 of the current committee members (IM and JM) would be stepping down at this meeting, and thanked both of them for their valuable contributions to the work of the FoNP.

Prior to the election of official's formal updates to the FoNP Associate Constitution were required – these are detailed on the following page.

Update to the FoNP Associate Constitution

Prior to the election of officials, GF provided an overview of the structure of the Management Committee for the FoNP Association, which has 4 office holders (Chair, Vice chair, Treasurer and Secretary) and up to 5 ordinary members.

GF also described two special resolutions that have been proposed to the Constitution, in order to maintain the required structure for the continuation of the FoNP Management Committee. These special resolutions (which were published in the Notice of the AGM) are as follows:

- i. To disapply regulation 5(b) of the Constitution so that any members of the Management Committee who would, but for such disapplication, be obliged to demit office having served in their current capacity for three years on the Management Committee and who are willing to be re-elected, are eligible for re-election.
- ii. To disapply regulation 5(a) of the Constitution which limits the number of ordinary members on the Management Committee to five, and to provide that where any specific office of the Management Committee is vacant an additional ordinary member may be elected in lieu of each such vacancy provided always that the maximum number of persons on the Management Committee shall not exceed 9 (ignoring for these purposes any co-opted members appointed pursuant to Regulation 5(e)).

In order to enact these special resolutions, it was necessary to vote on each of them. Each was proposed and then seconded by FoNP committee members, followed by a vote for all attendees of the AGM (assessed by a show of hands), as summarised below:

- Special resolution i
 - Proposed by JM
 - Seconded by GF
 - Vote: unanimous
- Special resolution ii
 - Proposed by GF
 - Seconded by FG
 - Vote: unanimous

Following the agreement of the formal updates to the constitution, the Committee proceeded with the election of officials, as outlined below:

Election of Officials

Chair DM (the current Vice Chair), has been the acting Chair since the previous AGM
DM is happy to stand as Chair for the next year
This was proposed by GF and seconded by SW
A general vote of AGM attendees was not required to confirm this appointment

Vice Chair GF is happy to stand as Vice Chair for the next year
This was proposed by SW and seconded by JM
A general vote of AGM attendees was not required to confirm this appointment

Treasurer FG is happy to continue as Treasurer for the next year
This was proposed by MS and seconded by DM
A general vote of AGM attendees was not required to confirm this appointment

Secretary DG has been taking FoNP Committee meeting minutes since the last AGM, in the absence of a Secretary
DG is happy to stand as Secretary for the next year
This was proposed by DM and seconded by FG
A general vote of AGM attendees was not required to confirm this appointment

Ordinary members Re-election of the current ordinary Committee members (JR, MS, SW, HA) was not required, as all were within their 3 year terms

Alison Ramsay has agreed to stand as an Ordinary member
This was proposed by DM and seconded by SW
This appointment was confirmed by a vote (show of hands) of the AGM attendees

This concluded the formal business of the meeting and MS was excused (and thanked again for his attendance at this meeting).

3. Review of the year

The FoNP Annual Report had been prepared providing an overview of activities of the group from July 2023 – June 2024.

DM thanked all of the FoNP volunteers for their contributions, highlighting many of those in attendance at the meeting, and acknowledging the Duke of Edinburgh (DoE) volunteers. It was acknowledged that it can be challenging to maintain momentum with activities, particularly if/when it is difficult to access support from Glasgow City Council (GCC). DM highlighted that is important that the FoNP determine what the community want for/from the park.

DM highlighted a number of the key projects, challenges and successes over the last year, including:

- Gardening – redevelopment of the rose-bed area to reduce the maintenance requirements to a more manageable level, and improve the habitat in order to promote and support biodiversity
- Tennis – the Newlands Park Community Tennis Centre (NPCTC) continues to grow, and now has over 550 members. In it's first year the centre was shortlisted a finalist for the LTA Park Tennis Venue of the Year
JM was invited to say a few words about the NPCTC, he reflected on discussing this project approximately 2 years ago and thank the FoNP for their foresight. The new facilities have engaged existing users, but also brought new people to the park
- Fête – the event, held in September 2023 (the second time that this was organised by the FoNP), was a great success. Unfortunately, it has not been possible for us to take on organising the event again this year, however, we hope that the fête will return in 2025
- Pond closure – working with colleagues from Neighbourhoods, Regeneration & Sustainability (NRS) at GCC there have been activities to clear some of the vegetation from the pond in a manner that is consistent with its status as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC). GF has continued to pursue discussions with GCC regarding the pond path renovations – the nature of this work has been agreed, funds are available and GCC are engaging with contractors regarding these works
- Children's play facilities – the FoNP Committee established a sub-group to explore opportunities to improve the facilities for children. A survey was performed to gather input from park users and local community groups to help inform plans of what could be done to provide more facilities for children in the park

These, and other activities, are continuing into 2024-25 (please see the next agenda item for more information).

FG provided a summary of the FoNP accounts for 2023-24. Income included grant funding and donations, with outgoings for horticulture activities (including plants and tools), fixtures for the tennis courts, sheds, the fête and educational/promotional resources.

4. Future vision for Newlands Park

Following on from the work to date, the FoNP will be continuing to progress the ongoing activities, but are also keen to expand our efforts by engaging more volunteers to help with new and ongoing projects, to provide additional facilities and enhance the park for the community to enjoy.

The FoNP will continue to follow up with GCC in relation to the pond path renovations, and look forward to the pond being reopened, with the new sign and bench installed.

The play facilities sub-group has made an excellent start, with a great response to the survey, a variety of suggestions, and a number of people who have indicated that they would be able to provide their time/expertise to support this initiative. FG outlined that we are keen to be ambitious, but are aware that larger projects that require funding will be longer-term activities, so we are also looking for quick wins, such as outdoor classrooms. It is anticipated that this work will kick off in earnest following the school summer holidays.

The FoNP recognise that having a broader vision for the future will be valuable. DM and FG introduced this idea at the meeting, highlighting the importance of the park providing for the needs of a different users, whilst also supporting GCC targets for parks and green spaces.

DM reflected that linking with other local parks within the area may allow us to provide a wider range of facilities for the community overall. For example, Newlands Park has excellent tennis facilities, which Auldhouse Park users can easily access, however, Auldhouse Park has much larger, level areas, which may lend themselves to sports facilities that Newlands Park would not be able to accommodate. The FoNP are keen to work closely with other groups, such as the Friends of Auldhouse Park (FoAP) to identify and support such projects.

FG outlined the intention to develop a vision for Newlands Park by considering the park and its users holistically, proposing that we undertake a consultation to better understand the views of park users and the wider community. This information will be used to develop a proposal for future projects, balancing the requirement for areas that are maintained for accessibility with the need to enhance the overall environmental impact of the park. Developing this overall vision will enable us to bid for funding, where necessary, and allow us to connect with, and maximise the support from, volunteers for on-off activities and ongoing initiatives.

FG opened the discussion with the idea that “zoning” the park with specific areas for designated uses might be beneficial, for example, having areas for children’s sports, dog friendly spaces, etc. A general discussion followed, which also revisited points that had been highlighted earlier in the meeting, and attendees reflected on how the park is currently used:

- Grass-cutting: manicured areas and biodiversity spaces – frustrations with the new GCC grass cutting regime had been raised earlier in the meeting, and the FoNP Committee have discussed this with GCC recently. It was acknowledged that mown areas are required within the park, to provide suitable spaces for certain activities (children’s games, picnic areas, etc) and in specific areas (for example, around the tennis courts), however, it was also highlighted that GCC have amended their mowing regime to provide wilder areas that will support biodiversity **ACTION: FoNP will include this in discussions with GCC to develop a plan for the park that allows for regularly mown areas in addition to enhancing habitats for wildlife in other areas**
- Wildflower planting – it was suggested that the areas of longer grass could be enhanced with planting. The FoNP have previously worked with GCC and The Conservation Volunteers (TCV) to plant a variety of wildflowers in the park. It was acknowledged that a concerted

efforts is needed to ensure that these areas thrive, and this could be an ongoing project for volunteers

- Dog-friendly areas – the general feeling voiced in the room was that dogs in the park don't cause much of an issue, however, there is a responsibility on dog owners to ensure that they pick up dog litter (particularly if they let their dogs off lead)
- Volunteering – it was highlighted that having a programme of planned projects will allow our current volunteers to maximise their impact (for example, the DoE team), and there was general support for having "ground-force" type days with call-outs for volunteers to join in with a specific activity
- A diversity of projects – there was a consensus that having a range of different projects would enable the group to engage with a wider range of volunteers
- Clearing "the maze" – Following on from the discussion about specific volunteer call-outs, and improving facilities for children, it was suggested that we have arrange a session to clear the maze **ACTION: A maze clearing session will be organised in the coming weeks**
Post meeting note: This is scheduled for Saturday 27th July, and a call-out for volunteers has gone out on the FoNP social media channels

5. AOB

The only AOB at the meeting was the discussion of facilities for pétanque.

- DM circled back to the earlier discussion regarding the potential for additional facilities at other local parks, highlighting that there had previously been a bowling green at Auldhouse Park, and that this area may provide a suitable area for pétanque
 - Those representing the pétanque group at the meeting felt that Newlands Park is the preferred location, due to the facilities available there (in particular, parking and the café)
- In order to progress the request for an area to be developed for pétanque, the following are required:
 - A formal proposal outlining the project and estimated costs
 - Funding for the project would have to be secured
 - GCC would need to give permission for "Change of Use" for the designated area
- Both DM and FG offered to help with preparation of the proposal
 - DM suggested that a consultation would be helpful to demonstrate support for the initiative and FG would be happy to help with preparing a survey to facilitate this, which would be shared on the FoNP Facebook page
 - **ACTION: Alan Melville to provide FG with supporting information so that the pétanque survey can be developed**
 - It was suggested that including details about the following would help to strengthen the case for the project:
 - Ensuring that the area would be suitable for multiple activities, to increase the utility
 - Outlining the benefits of the activity for participants