

**Park Improvement Sub-committee**  
**Minutes of Meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2023 in Llanferres Village Hall**

**Present:**

Cllr Allan Morgans  
Ann Catherall  
Cllr Lyn Gibson  
Sean Thomas  
Dawn Skelhorn  
Margaret Narburgh - Clerk

**13. Apologies**

Ms McLoughlin sent her apologies and regrets that she had to resign from the committee due to ill health.

**14. Meeting Open to the Public**

No members of the public were present.

**15. Declarations of Interest**

None

**16. Approval of Minutes from Meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2023**

Mr Thomas proposed accepting the minutes as a true and accurate record of the meeting. Cllr Gibson seconded the motion and all members voted in favour. There were no votes against or abstentions.

**17. Progress of Actions from Meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2023**

- Item 6 completed on 29.3.23
- Item 8 completed with survey by Denbighshire tree officer in Maes Ysgawen on 5<sup>th</sup> April 2023. See notes in Appendix 1. All actions completed between 20/4/2023 and 9/4/2023.
- Item 9 completed 29.3.23
- Item 10 completed 29.3.23
- Item 11/i committee members met in Maes Ysgawen park on 6<sup>th</sup> April to survey the area and had an informal meeting afterwards. See notes in Appendix 2.

**18. Progress on Actions from Informal Meetings on 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> April**

- i. The Clerk stated that as the landowner, the Council is responsible for maintaining the water quality in the stream. Natural Resources Wales lists owners are responsible for maintaining riverbeds and banks, allowing the water to flow without obstruction and controlling invasive alien species such as Japanese knotweed and others. Reference [www.gov.uk/wales](http://www.gov.uk/wales)
- ii. The Clerk read out a draft letter to be sent to numerous organisations to establish the level of support for the project in preparation for applying for grants. After due discussion, members accepted it subject to a change of wording of the last paragraph. Ms Skelhorn suggested including 'Resource' from Ruthin on the list. **Action: Clerk to reword the letter and send before next meeting.**
- iii. In the absence of Ms McLoughlin, Mr Thomas agreed to find the contact details for Coleg Cambria in Ruthin. **Action: Mr Thomas to notify the Clerk when available.**

- iv. Ms Skelhorn had contacted FlintShare and obtained permission for the Council to contact Nicki Gillus to discuss the structure and day to day management of their scheme. **Action: Ms Skelhorn to send contact details to the Clerk.**
- v. Cllr Morgans stated that his letter to the AONB asking what services they could offer had been forwarded to David Shiel but no response had yet been received.
- vi. Cllr Morgans stated that Liam Blazey was no longer the Biodiversity officer for Denbighshire CC and his email asking what services DCC could offer had been passed to his replacement but no response had yet been received.
- vii. Cllr Gibson has established that it is possible for committee members to visit Gellifor Community Garden. **Action: Clerk to suggest possible dates during the first week of June.**
- viii. In the absence of Ms McLoughlin, Mr Thomas agreed to ask his contacts if they had any suggestions to raise the profile of the parks on the Council's website. **Action: Mr Thomas to liaise with the Clerk.**
- ix. Between them, Cllr Morgans and the Clerk had contacted nine Landscape Architects to obtain quotes for their professional services to survey the park, provide initial design drawings and specifications for formal tender documents. To date only three had responded. Land Studio visited the site on 19<sup>th</sup> April and sent their proposal and costings on 24.4.23. Harrisons have agreed to a site visit on 10<sup>th</sup> May and Axis asked for further information on timing before they could consider quoting due to them being extremely busy. **Actions: Mr Thomas agreed to ask his contact at the Post Code Lottery if they gave grants to pay for Professional Services. Cllr Morgans agreed to contact Clocaenog Wind Farm fund to ask them. The Clerk agreed to check if the National Lottery Heritage fund and others on the potential grants list provided grants for this type of expenditure.**

## 19. Councils Response to Assigning Land to Create a Community Garden

The Council has agreed in principle to allocating a section of land in Maes Ysgawen park to create a community garden. This would be subject to creating a sub-committee and appointing someone to take responsibility for the garden's overall management i.e., building it, managing the activities of those who use it and agreeing to the Council's conditions to ensure the land does not end up resembling a 'shanty town'.

**Actions: Members to ask how Gellifor manage their garden during the visit in June. Clerk to speak to FlintShare to establish how they manage their gardens.**

## 20. Other Business

- i. Ms Skelhorn suggested inviting representatives from other organisations (AONB, NWWT etc.) to join the sub-committee to take advantage of their expertise. After due discussion members agreed it would be more appropriate to do this during the public meeting planned when initial design drawings were available.
- ii. Ms Skelhorn offered to set up and manage a Park Improvements community Facebook page as a means to engage the community. The Clerk stated that the Council has shied away from having a Facebook page to safeguard the Council from unwarranted abuse. After due discussion, members agree to try it on the understanding that Ms Skelhorn checks comments before they are published. **Action: Mr Skelhorn to set up with safeguarding guidance from the Clerk.**
- iii. Ms Skelhorn suggested installing compostable dog waste bins as an alternative to those where the waste is collected and disposed of by DCC. **Action: Ms Skelhorn to research what's involved and speak to Cllr Grice as he is already looking into installing two new dog waste bins in Llanferres.**

Members agreed the next meeting would be on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> June in Llanferres village hall. **Action: Clerk to book.**

The Chair thanked the members for their contributions and the meeting was closed at 20.05 pm

Signed:

Date:

Page 2 | 5

## Appendix 1

### Notes of Meeting held with Tom Hiles Denbighshire CC Tree Inspector on 5<sup>th</sup> April 2023 in Maes Ysgawen Park

**Present:** Allan Morgans, Margaret Narburgh, Sean Thomas, Tom Hiles

#### 1. Background

Mr Hiles was invited to inspect the trees in the park and advise how the trees could be pruned and/or thinned out to improve and regenerate growth. His contact details are Mobile: 07887655166 E-mail: [Thomas.hiles@denbighshire.gov.uk](mailto:Thomas.hiles@denbighshire.gov.uk)

#### 2. Areas of Work

He confirmed the park is outside the Llanferres conservation area and there are no preservation orders on any of the trees in the park.

- i. The tree at the top of the boundary between the park and the playing field is hollow suggesting it was unstable and dead, hence the probable the reason why it fell over when laden with snow. Volunteers have started removing the branches in the playing field and the stump and other branches in Maes Ysgawen need removing and the fence repairing. Mr Thomas knows a couple of volunteers trained to use chainsaws and offered to help remove the rest of the tree. Action: Cllr Morgans to bring the matter up at council meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> April with a view to making suitable arrangements.
- ii. The rest of the trees along the boundary with the playing field appear to be sound and healthy but LPFRA have raised concerns with the council that some of them (mature elder and sycamore trees) could fall onto the new play equipment installed less than 12 months ago. Action: Cllr Morgans to arrange for qualified tree surgeon to undertake risk assessment and agree appropriate action if there is a danger. Steve Cutmore 07877 120981 or Gareth Jones are able to undertake this type of work.
- iii. The trees in the woodland would benefit from thinning and pruning and Mr Hiles suggested how this could be done and which trees to take out. Action: Cllr Morgans to mark those trees and obtain quote for their removal.
- iv. The boggy ground between the stream and the woodland could be covered with a timber boardwalk to make the area more usable. Action: Sub-committee to consider this when drawing up plans.
- v. The wildflower strip along the rear boundary did not do so well last year and Mr Hiles suggested trimming back the leylandii to provide more light. Action: Cllr Morgans to arrange quote.
- vi. Two of the native fruit trees have obvious **Burr Knots** on them which need either treating or the trees removing. Advice is available on <https://www.rhs.org.uk/problems/burr-knots-on-apple-trees> Action: Clerk to research and report to sub-committee. The remainder of the trees need pruning at the appropriate time of year to create a 'tulip' shape which should encourage growth. A selection of other fruit trees could be removed to open the area. Action: Cllr Morgans to mark trees for removal and arrange for quote.

#### 3. Useful Contacts

Mr Hiles suggested contacting the AONB as they may be able to help undertake some of the work.

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Date :

Page 3 | 5

## Appendix 2

### Park Improvements Sub-committee Informal Notes Following Survey of Maes Ysgawen on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2023

**Present:** Allan Morgans  
Lyn Gibson – discussion only  
Holly McLoughlin  
Ann Catherall  
Sean Thomas  
Dawn Skelhorn  
Margaret Narburgh - Clerk

#### 4. Background

Maes Ysgawen Park was created in 2010 on land bought by Llanferres CC from Denbighshire CC. The land was originally gifted to the County in the 1970's to preserve the legacy left by Mrs. Williams whose wish was that the land be used by future generations for recreation and education.

The park is maintained by Llanferres CC and although some improvements had been made in 2020, the path and trees are now in need of attention. The first Green Flag was awarded in 2018 and in all subsequent years since then (five at the time of writing).

Denbighshire CC Planning Department have confirmed that plans to improve access and biodiversity would be considered 'permitted developments' so planning permission is not required.

Denbighshire CC's Tree Inspector has confirmed there are no Tree Preservation Orders (TPC's) on any of the trees in the park and the area is outside the Llanferres conservation area.

A copy of the parks original design is attached as Appendix 1.

#### 5. Survey

Committee members 'walked' the park and Cllr Morgans and the Clerk explained what the Tree Officer had suggested as they went along. Ms McLoughlin asked who was responsible for the stream's water quality. Action: Clerk to investigate and confirm.

#### 6. Conclusions

- i. The consensus was that there is a lot more work required than originally thought and the most practical way forward would be to split into separate phases.
- ii. Dog owners should continue to be allowed to walk their dogs in the park, providing they pick up and dispose of any mess.
- iii. Community engagement is essential to secure funding and should start immediately. It was agreed the following organisations should be contacted to gauge the level of support: residents, school headmistress, County Councillor, Gardening Club, Llanferres Church, Village Hall committee, AONB, NWWT, Bee Friendly Society, Hedgehog Society, LPFRA, Tafarn y Gelyn pond management committee, Countryside Services, Druid Inn, Keep Wales Tidy and others identified below. Actions:
  - a. Clerk to draft general letter to establish the level of support and open the conversation to see what help and resources are available

Signed :

Date :

Page 4 | 5

- b. Ms McLoughlin to find names of contacts at Colec Cambria horticultural/forestry/countryside department in Ruthin – potential student project
  - c. Ms Skelhorn to provide name of contact at FlintShare, - a community run social enterprise group which provides members with the opportunity to produce their own food in Cilcain, Northop and Hawarden. Ms Skelhorn offered to set up and maintain a Facebook page if the Council supported a similar initiative in Llanferres
  - d. Cllr Morgans to contact Karen Weaver AONB co-ordinator at Denbighshire CC to see what services they can offer
  - e. Cllr Morgans to contact Liam Blazey to confirm how best to remove nutrients to regenerate wildflower area planted in 2020 and see what wildflower plugs and other plants are currently available
  - f. Cllr Gibson to see if it is possible to visit the Gellifor Community Garden
- iv. Suggested ideas and features for improving the park include:
- a) Changing the main entrance gate and the one onto Forestry Road to facilitate disabled access
  - b) Upgrading the main path through the park from Cae Gwyn to Forestry Road to make it suitable for wheelchair and mobility scooter users.
  - c) Installing a dropped kerb outside the main entrance
  - d) Creating a hard standing path through from the playing field into the park
  - e) Upgrading the path to the viewing area and extending it to join the main path through the park
  - f) Installing information lecterns at the main entrance to the park
  - g) Create an area suitable for use as a 'Community garden' with raised beds, storage shed, water collections butts
  - h) Building an outdoor shelter for social activities
  - i) Exposing the rock just below the existing viewing platform to create a 'feature'
  - j) Planting Rock Roses to harvest seeds for propagation
  - k) Building a boardwalk through the boggy area near the stream to make it more useable
  - l) Thinning the tree to encourage growth and creating a circular grass pathway and nature trail
  - m) Regenerate the wildflower area planted in 2020
  - n) Plant the slopping bank with Yellow Rattle – Cllr Gibson can provide plugs
  - o) Create a compost area
  - p) Design and promote a 'walking trail' linking the parks and other local places of interest i.e., Llanferres church, Tafarn y Gelyn pond, Big Covert, local pubs etc
  - q) Improving digital presence to promote what is available in the area to residents via Council Website, community Facebook page. Action: Ms McLoughlin to draft webpage and circulate for consideration
7. Next Steps
- Cllr Morgans to identify people/organisations specialising in park design
  - Clerk to prepare draft specification and invite quotes for each area of work to enable the project to be split into phases.
  - Mr Thomas to identify organisations who fund undertaking professional surveys and creating drawings for this type of work