

## **Buckingham, Hamilton and Ruskin Association**

### **Minutes of the Extraordinary General Meeting held at 7.30pm on 19 February 2019 at The Coach House Trust, 84 Belmont Lane, Glasgow, G12 8EN**

1. Frances Goldman welcomed those present.  
Committee members present: Joanna Clarke, John Elder, Frances Goldman, Christine McGuigan, Colin Miller, Susan Triesman. Around 40 members of the association were also in attendance.
2. Apologies: Committee - Tony Hughes
3. Agenda items:
  - a. Ratification of new Constitution  
Copies of the proposed updated constitution which had been advertised in the newsletter and on the website were also circulated to those present. Frances explained to the meeting that the proposed changes were proposed in order to update the previous constitution adopted in 1994, principally: formally updating the association's name to reflect the change previously agreed at a meeting on 16 June 1999; adding promotion of a sense of community to the association's aims; amending the financial year to align with the timing of the AGM and the membership year; clarifying the streets eligible for membership in accordance with development of the neighbourhood, particularly the construction of Hamilton Gardens where the premises of the former corporate member BBC Scotland was located; setting out the terms of election to and length of service of the committee and the allocation of votes.  
All those present were given the opportunity to review the existing and proposed constitutions. Adoption of the new constitution was proposed by Susan Triesman and seconded by Colin Miller. The adoption of the new constitution was unanimously passed by a show of hands.
  - b. Viewpoint Garden  
Frances explained to the meeting that the garden at the end of Hamilton Park Avenue, known as the Viewpoint, is currently rather neglected. It had previously been cared for by the Coach House Trust (CHT) for many years, but they are not currently involved in looking after it and it has been fenced off. The area is identified as Amenity Greenspace by Glasgow City Council. The Committee feel that the area should remain as open space available for use by the public. The association has been working to find a partner, possibly the CHT, to help do this as someone has to maintain the area. There is apparently NHS and EU grant funding available for horticultural therapy. The committee has also approached various organisations such as local housing associations and the Children's Garden and is considering whether, if we cannot find a partner, the association should investigate taking out a lease itself. The meeting was asked for opinions and for any other suggestions for use of the space.  
  
Two local residents, Gordon Gibb and Theresa McComiskey, explained that they represent a recently formed group called View Point Community Grow Space UK (VPCGSUK) and set out their views on use of the Viewpoint. Gordon stated that the CHT stopped maintaining the Viewpoint six years ago and that it had become dilapidated, vandalised and used by drug users and rough

sleepers. John Elder pointed out that the CHT only stopped maintaining the garden much more recently than that, around the time the Viewpoint was fenced off. Gordon stated that he decided to do something and organised two group clean-ups of the area, and formed the new group which has recruited 16 members. He considers that their actions have reduced the number of calls to police about antisocial behaviour. He is an architect and wants to make the land safe, it has 40' boundary walls with no fence or signs and is unsafe to be in.

Frances and others pointed out that historically the Viewpoint has been open to the public, including unaccompanied children, without safety issues.

Gordon said that all his group have been doing is digging the garden out, they can grow their own vegetables and have done some trials. Theresa added that the VPCGSUK is about growing things, and that they had planted some potatoes which had been gifted to them and distributed the harvested potatoes to residents.

A member asked why the CHT were no longer maintaining the Viewpoint. John Elder pointed out that the area was until recently maintained to a good standard and open to the public until the CHT were apparently driven away by local residents, as they felt they were being held accountable for anti-social behaviour on the site. A member pointed out that antisocial behaviour should be reported to the police, it was not a reason for closing off the public space, although it was agreed that perhaps some measures to discourage undesirable uses could be taken.

A member asked who had fenced off the Viewpoint site. Gordon Gibb stated that it was the Council who fenced off the Viewpoint. A member explained that the Council said they didn't erect the fencing. Gordon said that he had the name of the individual at the Council who dealt with the fencing off of the Viewpoint and he would provide it on request. It was left that the member would follow up with Gordon and liaise with the Council to confirm the position.

A member of the association voiced the opinion that the Viewpoint should be open to all, and that they would like the CHT to be involved again. A few points were raised by members on this, including whether CHT would be interested in working with the association and whether CHT have the capacity/funding to do this. A member advised that from initial discussions with CHT that it was believed they were. Further there may be additional grants that we may be able to access to support work at the Viewpoint. A member raised whether the CHT needed to be involved at all and whether the local residents could manage this themselves

A member of the association pointed out that the CHT had maintained the Viewpoint for years, had landscaped it and erected the sculptures, ironwork and walls and, had received grant funding to do so, and had used it for educational purposes. A member of the association observed that there are grants and fundraising help available from organisations such as the Royal Horticultural Society.

Further discussion ensued. The majority view of the meeting was that the entire area, both inside and outside, the Viewpoint should be open to all. There were differences of opinion about the

level of anti-social behaviour in and around this area, and also about the level of risk within the walled area. There was general support and agreement for the local community as a whole to be involved in helping to maintain the gardens there, again both inside the walled area and in the flower beds outside. A show of hands indicated that many residents would give time to this. The feeling of the BHRA was that if possible we should try and work with the CHT again. It was agreed that rather than going to the Council as two separate entities, that we should try to find common ground, and that the association and VPCGSUK would meet to explore ways of trying to achieve this.

c. Refuse Collection

As noted in previous minutes the Council have recently introduced new larger black metal street bins in the area in the last 7-10 days. These are larger than older bins, easier to empty and don't require bags as they enclose a standard wheelie bin, and incorporate sensors to alert the Council when they are full. One had been placed on the pavement to the west of the bollards on Hamilton Drive but removed by the Council soon afterwards. It was hoped that an alternative location could be found for it near there, perhaps near the communal gardens at the foot of 35-51 Hamilton Drive or near the staircase leading down to Hamilton Gardens. Another bin has been located on Hamilton Park Avenue near the entrance to the Viewpoint. Gordon Gibb stated that it was already a magnet for antisocial behaviour and was being used as a public urinal. Another local resident commented that he was not seeing this level of anti-social behaviour despite living opposite the Viewpoint.

Generally there remained an issue with domestic waste collection. It was reported that grey food waste bins are being used as general bins by some users. The large number of recycling bins at the Queen Margaret Drive end of the association's area are filling up within 2 days and not being emptied. It was suggested that there should be notes on the recycling bins explaining what materials can and cannot be recycled.

d. Turning Spaces on Hamilton Drive

It was noted that the new turning areas on either side of the bollards on Hamilton Drive following the completion of the Barratt development remain inadequate for use, particularly by delivery vans which are unable to turn and continue to reverse out of the street at speed which is a safety hazard. Tony Hughes continues to liaise with the Council about this and possible steps to remedy the issue.

e. Traffic

The use of streets as short-cuts by through traffic continues to affect the area, particularly the terraces and Ruskin Lane. It was pointed out that access-only signage is obscured by bushes and is too high, and should be made more visible. It was also suggested that the speed bumps in Ruskin Lane (or landscaping features as they pre-date official speed bumps) which are reduced in height following the recent resurfacing work, should be improved.

4. Other matters arising

The next neighbourhood clean-up is to be scheduled, as is the Summer event. The committee is investigating whether there is potential for community noticeboard(s) in the area, in the

meantime details will be available in the newsletter and on the website (<https://www.bhrassoc.org/>).