

Friends of Granton Castle Walled Garden

Thursday January 21st

Royston & Wardieburn Community Centre

Present: - Kirsty, Mariana, Linda, Gillean, Jonathan, Graeme, Isla, Rahel, Margaret, Neiria

Apologies: - Sophia, Ellie, Dave L, Liz, Christopher D, Debs & Sylvia.

Minutes from AGM to be circulated by e-mail for approval.

1,1 WEL/EDI

- Eric Adair(EDI/WEL) letter dated Jan 13th stating that the 2003 planning application for 17 townhouses in the walled garden has been withdrawn, but their intention is to reapply in the future. This would require submission of new plans open to public consultation. We are now in a much stronger position to object, and indeed it was felt that we should submit our own plans for a wheelchair accessible path. This would allow access to the walled garden for necessary surveys before public liability insurance can be processed and visits arranged for Friends Group members with RCAHMS staff and other interested parties (see 1.2)
 - KS highlighted CEC's own 2014 planning guideline on listed buildings (no development unless necessary) KS sent this to Christopher D for an opinion and he believed it to be a very strong policy. It defines the curtilage of listed buildings as including adjacent walled gardens, doocots etc. even if separately listed.
 - KS also e-mailed the reporter to follow up the response on the 7th January to add information. The sudden withdrawal of the EDI/WEL application for the walled garden, 2014 Listed Building planning guidelines, and an excerpt of the 1768 Plan of Caroline Park showing the walled garden's relationship to the A-listed house. The Reporter will have completed the examination of the current proposed LDP by the end of February. We hope that the garden will be retained as Openspace in the city plan, and protected further from development, with possible designation as a candidate Special Landscape Area.

1.2

- A meeting has been arranged with Councillor Lesley Hinds who chairs among other things, Edible Edinburgh. The meeting is on Friday January 29th, 3p.m. at North Edinburgh Arts.

ACTION : Kirsty, Mariana, Linda, John G, Dave L, Gillean and Jonathan to attend.

- It was noted we had support from across all political parties
- It was felt strongly that the next logical move would be to submit our own plans for access to the garden. It was noted that this would cost money (£150 perhaps)

ACTION : KS to tweak the outline proposal sketch and to contact Planning via Alison Kirkwood for advice on the best way to proceed.

- The Community Empowerment Act (Scotland) section on asset transfer will become operational in Sept 2016.

1.3

- Historic Environment Scotland responded to our ancient monument finds at the start of January by updating the listing description for the walled garden within two days . We shall endeavour to keep HES updated on any more discoveries.
- Scotland Urban Past (SUP) see 2.2

2.1

- Gillean gave an excellent account of the foray into the newly discovered Ancient Monument Files for Granton Castle and its Walled Gardens (closed to the public for 50 years) accessed at General Register House. The tale resonated strongly with us all having so many parallels with our modern day experiences and feelings during the campaign to have the garden's antiquity recognised and protected. It was felt that this story should be published. Some ideas were:- Lothian Life, History Scotland, Lost Edinburgh, Common Space, Botanic Magazine, People's History Show STV, Cockburn Association.

ACTION: Graeme Purves to follow up.

- It was noted that Cockburn Association would like to meet with us

ACTION: Kirsty to follow up invite and dates with Marion Williams

2.2 & 2.3

- SUP are very short staffed at the moment and we do not have a list of what they might be able to offer us. KS to follow up with Nicky and Neiria.
- Neiria updated us on the last "training" day with SUP and outlined some of the ideas generated. There was felt to be a need for a skills audit amongst our members to see who could offer what in the way of film making, creative model making, writing, IT skills etc
- There would need to be a sub-group formed to carry out any of the ideas generated
- Linked to this was the 3 day art exhibition at Maldevic House in March with a mid Feb deadline for submissions. It was felt that we would not have enough time to prepare a quality exhibit to tell our stories (for it then to be possibly rejected)
- We should seek an alternative venue for an exhibition, one which would give us maximum, positive exposure in Edinburgh. John Hope Gateway was suggested as was the Botanic Cottage. Historic connection with Sir Thomas Hope one of the early inhabitant's of Granton Castle.
- RBGE biodiversity officer Leonie has been in touch & wondered if there was anyone in our group interested in the RBGE biodiversity training. So far three and Leonie is very keen to visit the walled garden and other community gardens in Forth Ward.

3, 5, 6 were not covered as we ran out of time.

There was a short discussion about links with Granton Improvement Society(GIS) and it is noted that if GIS were to offer clear support for our agenda of restoration to a working community garden, it would certainly be welcomed.

No date was set for next Friends Group meeting. When would be a good time for committee members?

N McClure 22/1/16