

## Environment Group Meeting 15.6.15

### Minutes

Present: Julie Statham, Carolyn Hargest

Apologies: Di Paton, Gordon Jardine

1. Welcome

2. Minutes approved (23.3.15)

Environment group meeting was postponed from 25.5.15 (however informal discussions of environmental projects between G. Jardine and C. Hargest took place).

Actions update:

VAO collection 110 pairs glasses -many thanks to Colinton Parish Church for helping to collect glasses

Rag bag unit – to be reviewed for viability, decision for Sept. (JS & DH)

Eco Awards for Celebration of Achievement proposed for pupils (JS)

Eco meeting with Mrs Barley postponed

Hands up travel survey 7-11<sup>th</sup> September –school to pick a typical day & put date in school calendar (RN)

Travel Plan action points - yet to be addressed by Pupil Council

School cycle leaflet still needs to be made prominent on web site (CH)

Eco notice board now in use in foyer and new folding notice board displays the Firrhill Newsletter

School gardens

Anne Frank Garden

- Bench returned, looking lovely, having been oiled by Tipereth.
- Lilly of the Valley to be planted, (in commemoration of Anne Frank who was born 12.6.29) flower beds weeded and mulched
- Arran Pilot Potatoes planted in bags 12.5.15 moved to the area near Anne Frank Garden, need “earthing up” regularly and watering, over summer to avoid potatoes becoming green and poisonous.

Celebration Garden

- 50 trees - Mr Mulholland advised that a spirit based gloss varnish should be applied after washing with warm soapy water (JS )
- Log pile for biodiversity introduced into Celebration Garden, some more planting was done and the raised beds refreshed and mulched
- Celebration garden gravel area requires spraying over summer (JS)
- Tool store erected, 11.5.15 & a second one which belongs to janitors needs to be removed from garden
- Moongate painted red 20.5.15 & looks great - thanks to pupils, parents and Parent Council funding
- Magnolia planted by the Lord Provost flowered this year!

School grounds

- swift nest boxes– pupils to request Amey to site boxes ( all need elevated positions), money from rag bag collections to be used to buy boxes made by Saughton Prison £10 each
- Edward Meyer (Swift Conservation) & John Wilson 9.6.15 advised on positioning of swift nest boxes - best on end of Tower block, 3 floors up and beside Anne Frank Garden, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor up, block (both aspects facing golf course)
- Hedges planted 26.3.15 by Eco Committee, Mrs Barley and Mrs Hargest

#### Meadow

- Meadow - bulbs and seeds planted, unfortunately the meadow was mowed 8.6.15; discussed this matter with Land Engineers, area now staked and the Urban Pollinator notice repositioned
- Need Yellow Rattle (Vampire plant) to reduce grasses (PTA funding request)

#### Pond Garden

- Log pile for biodiversity introduced in Pond Garden (lower level)
- Pond gravel area needs weeding /spraying over the summer(JS) and water added from butt ( tap water needs to sit for a week to dispel chlorine which harms water life)
- Blue tits have been seen occupying the bird box made by pupils, in the pond garden
- Fat balls - bird food, PTA have asked Home Economics if school can make some and they have kindly agreed to do so.

### 3. Eco Schools

Energy Audit: Eco Committee members went to City Chambers to present the energy audit work for the eco group. 5 pupils from S3 accompanied Miss Duffy and presented their work in front of other schools and Edinburgh Council staff in the Main Chamber. They were a credit to the school and spoke very well

Transport: Bike Shed door was repaired but broken end panel is still to be removed. (JS to sort, but if not possible, CH to ask MS) Still awaiting signage for dual use pavement (CH)

### 4. Firrhill News continues

### 5. Other eco projects within the school:

- a) Wetlands - PTA asking Amey to assist
- b) Waverley Care Milestone house, shed project meeting 1.5.15, now awaiting planning permission, pupils to make cob bricks after summer
- c) University plants study, ( Maria Chamberlain) this year is for primary schools but we are invited to have 2 sessions delivered and to make a folio of plants (JS to speak to Mr Ayers)

6. PTA funding requests made by eco / environment groups – meadow yellow rattle £50, stationary – newsletter £125, compost & watering cans £50, swift boxes £70, wetland £200, bird food £50 all awaiting formal reply.

### 7. AOB

a) Discussed whether school could consider bee hives in grounds – but two pupils have anaphylaxis reactions to bee stings - however use of the virtual hive would be welcomed

b) Sleeper benches planned for lower area of the pond garden

c) Senior Student Council keen to continue to address litter- litter picks have taken place regularly this academic year. Pupils may wish to contact Jonathan Reed (Environmental Warden)

[Jonathan.Read@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:Jonathan.Read@edinburgh.gov.uk)