

Greenspace Groups Forum no. 15 – Historic green Spaces

Meeting held 3/3/16 at Friends' Meeting House, Lancaster

Present: Rita Gerrard (Poulton Cemetery), Kamilla Elliot (Parks for the People), Pete Turnbull (Barley Cop Woods), Simon Gershon (Lancaster Green Spaces), Joy Greenwood (Williamson Park), Hilary Smith (Williamson Park & Dorrington Road Woods), Helen Ryan, (Lancaster City Council), Ian Procter (Fairfield Association), Roger Frankland (Carnforth Coke Ovens, Civic Society), Gill Davies & Sarah Blackler (Greaves Park), Garry Clemmy & Paula Halcic (Four Seasons/Heysham woods), Valerie Anderson, Lindsey Wilcox, Sue Wood, Winnie Clark, Liz & Howard Feather (Civic Society), Louise Belcher (Thwaite Brow Woods), Gail Capstick (N Lancs Community Land Trust), Sarah Clements (Greaves Park/County Council)

Good News Stories

Walney Extension community Fund of £600K p.a. for the next 25 years will start to be available soon. Administered by Grantscape, see <http://grantscape.org.uk/fund/dongenergycommunityfunds/walney-extension-community-fund/>. T: 01908 247634, E: wecf@grantscape.org.uk

Friends of Dorrington Road play area is a new group, working closely with the scout & cub groups to manage the woods and wider area.

The Carnforth Coke Ovens group is looking to care for additional ovens in Bolton le Sands and Carnforth. Has run a biochar production session

The Civic Society is planning on a historic restoration of Lunebank gardens, donated by Lord Ashton. This is also a new Friends group, although the path is often muddy and really needs some capital investment. (Note: Miss Whalley, donor of the field below Derwent Road, was Lord Ashton's second wife)

Green Spaces Forum Facebook site is now being actively managed by Rita and Kamilla www.facebook.com/lancashiregreenspacesforum. You are encouraged to link to this and actively post so that other can see what you're doing.

Registration is going well for the Greenspace Groups Conference on May 16th, with 20 delegates now signed up and all speakers booked,

Lancaster City Council has not cut funding for play areas, although weed spraying is due to stop and grass will be cut less frequently. Tree work will be reduced and road verges left to grow events in pars will now pay a booking fee. However, the Community Payback team will continue to give services, and Lancashire Environment Funding will be available in full.

Historic Green Spaces

We welcomed members of Lancaster Civic Society (www.lancastercivicsociety.org)

Many parks contain historic buildings. Greaves park has several, now in private ownership. The coach house is being left to deteriorate. City Council has served notice on the owner but this only extends to making it safe for the public. They do not seem to have more power than this. Note: this is not correct – they have powers to acquire the property through Compulsory Purchase Orders or make a house habitable through a Empty Dwelling Management Order. More information at www.emptyhomes.com/what-you-can-do-2/resources/local-authority-powers/

Fairfield association discovered more strip lynchets on the town fields than they expected, and they have sought to preserve this legacy of medieval farming. But they also wanted to plough their fields for arable crops. They have retained these as 'beetle banks' with rough ground. Also, the Lunesdale metal detector group found loads of stuff in the fields – mostly Georgian coins and buckles. Far more stuff than expected, two wheelbarrow loads so far. The reason for this is thought to be the frequent trips that townspeople made to the fields to farm and deposit sewage.

Friends of Greaves Park are planning to reinstate some of the lost Victorian paths in the park, as part of the recently adopted masterplan. This includes restoration of the gateway which has stone steps and urns – requires a large grant from HLF. The Friends are planning to run some historical guided walks – something others might like to do.

Dallas Road Gardens would also benefit from restoration of its stonework although there is not an active Friends group at present. Happy Mount Park is developing its three areas (Traditional, Japanese Gardens and Woodland) with good collaboration between Friends and City Council.

The bandstand in Ryelands Park came originally from Morecambe Prom and has become a landmark feature despite not being used. It has been fenced off recently for safety reasons and Helen is waiting a condition survey that will determine whether it's just the floor-boarding or main structure that is unsound.

Finding historical data

Maps are one of the best sources of information – two or three OS maps are viewable on MARIO, but County Council has more map layers on their internal version. The local history library in Lancaster has many of the paper maps. You should also ask the local history librarian to help you. City Council also has original maps and plans – ask Helen Ryan. Helen also has maps on the City Council internal system but she can't give these out as the accuracy has not been verified.

Lancashire County Records office in Preston has lots more historical information such as plans and title deeds. The staff are very helpful and you can arrange a visit – with some notice, they will get items out for you beforehand. See:

www.lancashire.gov.uk/libraries-and-archives/archives-and-record-office.aspx

Lancashire Lantern is the on-line collection of historical information:

www.lantern.lancashire.gov.uk

- Lancashire Lantern, a major resource for both public and staff, stands for Lancashire Life and Times E-Resource Network and is the umbrella for Community Information and Local Studies Resources.

Community Information contains details of local community, voluntary and self-help groups, clubs and societies, and other resources and facilities throughout Lancashire. Local contacts of organisations not currently in the database can register their details by asking for a form which will be available from reference libraries.

Local Resources consists of the following:

- **Armed Forces Index** - A list of references from Local press including Obituaries and Cuttings about local people who have served as members of HM Armed Forces.
- **Obituaries Index** - An Index to Printed Obituaries from the Local Press in Lancashire.

- **Transactions Index** - Enhances our knowledge of Lancashire's history by providing an index to some of the papers published by learned societies in Lancashire, Cheshire and Cumbria and also to articles in other local journals held in the Library Service.
- **Newspaper Index** - A general index to Newspaper articles current and historical from the Local Press in Lancashire. The Newspaper Index mainly covers Preston, Chorley and East Lancashire at present, but it is under continuous development.
- **Census Index** - This is a compilation of Head of Household Indexes for Burnley and District, Surname Index and Place Name Index to local records from some of the ten year Censuses taken between 1841 and 1891. These indexes are incomplete.
- **Parish Registers Index** - An Index to St. Peter's Church Burnley Burials Register. It is intended to add from Parish Registers across the County.

You will also find the **Lancashire Pioneers** web site under the Lantern umbrella. The Pioneers are famous local people in science, technology and innovation. These pioneers were either born in Lancashire or their endeavours made a significant contribution to the development of the County.

The Lancashire **Image Archive** will be incorporated into Lantern. This will comprise collections of local photographs, postcards and other images held in libraries, covering many aspects - people, buildings, streets, transport, architecture, customer, traditions, celebrations and much more!

Lancaster City Council legal department may have additional items, if the land or property was transferred to or from the City at some time. The Whalley Playing fields group was given on request a copy of the deed of gift, which had the terms on which the land was to be kept (covenant) – so they are now reminding the council of this.

Parish registers are also a good source of information although many are now with County Records. For more recent information, you can ask the elders in the locality. County Records also has a huge collection of photographs. Note – cuts are likely to bite here soon, so you may find charges imposed and/or long wait times.

For more ancient records, you can consult the County archaeologist and there are amateur archaeological societies. Also, Stephen Gardner City Council Conservation officer is very knowledgeable. Lancaster University also has an active Archaeology Dept, although we are not sure how much local information is available. Additionally, there is the Lancaster Archaeological & Historical Society which organises monthly lectures. No website but I have a contact details of: Sec. Dr Keith Horsfield, Great Cragg, Clifford Hall, Burton in Lonsdale, Carnforth LA6 3LW Tel: 015242 62108

Lancaster University has a Regional Heritage Centre (based in the History Dept) and has loads of PhD theses and other research material. But they are not a public information centre with just a couple of part-time staff.

Lancashire Gardens Trust are all about restoring and enjoying gardens, their website is www.lancsgt.org.uk. Thomas Mawson who designed Westfield War Memorial Village also designed several gardens and his work has been researched and documented. <http://westfieldmemorialvillage.co.uk>

The Quaker Burial Ground in Golgotha, Lancaster has an interesting history but no-one at the meeting was too sure of it – a nice project for someone!