**Sunderland Open Spaces Forum**

**Action points arising from an inaugral meeting held on April 4th, Function room, Chester's pub**

**Present**

Clare Wayman, Grow Sunderland

Jackie Wayman, Friends of Backhouse Park

Mary Todnor, Friends of Backhouse Park

Paul Brickle, Grow Sunderland

Graeme Jobes, Transition Sunderland

Allan Rowell, Transition Sunderland

David Newrick, Sustainable Sunderland

Sue Atkinson, Friends of Barnes Park

Carol Essl, Friends of Barnes Park

Allan ? Friends of Herrington Country Park

Ann Huntley, Friends of Herrington Country Park

Margaret Smith, Friends of Herrington Country Park

John Ellis, Friends of Rectory Park

Joyce Dixon, Friends of Rectory Park

Paul Crouch, Friends of Rectory Park

Alan Wright, Friends of Barnes Park

Tim Wright, Sunderland resident, Friends of Barnes Park, Red Machine Allotment Associaton

Apologies

Karl Sabler, Friends of Doxford Park

**Background**

Tim welcomed everybody and explained the background to the meeting (as per letter sent to contacts):

* How can local residents be better involved and engaged with SCC on the open spaces agenda? This is from a strategic position to shape and design an open spaces vision but also operationally. What mechanisms are there to work more co-operatively with SCC on the day to day management of greenspaces.
* SCC appear supportive of an approach to create such a network, following initial and subsequent meetings with Colin Curtis and colleagues during winter 2016/17. What the relationship with any new network/forum will look like will need further discussion.
* Good practice highlighted in the NESTA report, the recently released report by Parliament All Party Committee on Parks and Newcastle City Council’s recent announcement on the future of their parks and allotments, could provide learning to assist residents and SCC shape any future vision.

**Role and function of a forum**

Tim had devised a number of group activities to help shape the meeting’s discussion of the proposal.

Much of the discussion focused on what actions or activities individuals were doing or had done in their respective groups (This could be an agenda item for future meetings)

Feedback was overwhelmingly in favour of a forum. However, it was unclear as to who should be invited. (Tim explained it was difficult to find details of all the parks contacts let alone other groups who may be interested in engaging, coastal landscape, Site of Special Scientific Interest, Bowls and Football clubs, allotments)

**What currently exists and could this be used to fulfil what is emerging?**

This was suggested to see if people knew of any other citywide that could fulfil our own needs. No agreement was reached because we were not clear about who we are and what we want.

**Identifying people’s assets and how they can best be used.**

This item was not discussed.

**Next steps/actions**

* Future meetings –suggested and agreed monthly
* Volunteers to be part of task and finish group to address actions from tonight
* Identify what our shared values and principles are
* Structure and what will do
* What, how, or should we work with SCC
* Communication mechanisms (suggested development of website/facebook page)
* Gaps in contact details for other groups with shared interests –AW/TW to check lists

**Information exchange**

The following is a list of information people shared at or following the meeting:

* Friends of Houghton Rectory Park offered a guided walk around the park. Meet at entrance to park on Tuesday 18th April, 18.30
* Friends of Herrington Country Park have a drop-in with a free lunch on Wednesday 19th April, 12.30-14.00.
* Friends of Barnes Park, Easter event, Sunday April 16th, 2017, 11.00-13.00
* Parks for People (UK)Local Authorities as well as not for profit organisations that own public parks and gardens can apply for grants of between £100,000 and £5 million for the regeneration of parks and public gardens (including squares, walks and promenades). To be considered for funding, applicants need to show that:

•The community values the park as part of their heritage

\*The parks meet local social, economic and environmental ne

\*The park management actively involves local people.

Previous awards include:

A grant of 1,917,800 for the restoration of historic structures and improvements to the landscape of Raphael Park in Havering, London and a grant of £3,238,000 to Bute Park, a Grade I listed park in Cardiff, that was restored in order to protect and enhance one of Cardiff's most cherished and popular attractions.

The next closing date for applications is the 1st September 2017.

<https://www.hlf.org.uk/looking-funding/our-grant-programmes/parks-people>

* Let’s Talk Parks <https://letstalkparks.co.uk>

**Date and time of next meeting**

Tuesday 18th May, 2017 18.30-20-30, Chesters pub, Chester Road, Sunderland