



FRIENDS OF ARNOLD CIRCUS
Committee Meeting

24th September 2009, 6:50pm, Leila's Shop.

Attending: Naseem Khan (chair), Jean Locker, Sabeha Miah, Judy Cox, Leila McAlister, Jalal Aziz (minutes)

Observers: Abigail Pogson, Gail Burton, Katrina Blannin, Sam Lee

1. Apologies: Alix McAlister, Jenny Bernard, Finn Williams, Jamie Baxter
2. Minutes: the August minutes were accepted as an accurate record.
3. Matters arising: No matters arising.
4. Finance and Fundraising:

Naseem announced that an independent examiner for the accounts had been found. David Bond will reconcile the accounts with Jenny once statements had been received from the bank. Naseem reiterated the need to finalise the accounts so that they can accompany funding applications, of which four more are planned. Applications have been submitted to Bishopsgate, Mercers, Abbey, the Worshipful Company of Gardeners and the Worshipful Company of Coopers.

Naseem reported that FOAC was in receipt of a cheque of £640 from the Canary Wharf group.

The current bank balance stands at £15214.67 of which, approximately £7000 is restricted.

Naseem announced that Sabeha will take over the role of Treasurer from Jamie. For the record, Jamie was warmly thanked for his sterling efforts since his tenure as treasurer, particularly in the face of escalating demands from academic examinations. Going forward, Naseem reiterated the need to establish rigorous book keeping procedures with the immediate intention to work with Jamie and Jenny for an orderly transition of responsibility to Sabeha. Gail said she was sure that BETRA's Treasurer would be willing to help and advise her and that LBTH had a resource centre to train TRAs. It was agreed that training options for Sabeha should be established and paid for from existing funds. Naseem will investigate further.

Naseem asked the trustees whether remaining funds should be spent this year or carried over to next year. Jean suggested purchasing compost to replant flowers and shrubs before the redevelopment of the Circus, where existing soil will be turned over. The plants could either go to the school or to the periphery of the circus. Judy will ask Kate, Virginia's headteacher, whether the school can take on some of the plants. Another idea was to spend some funds on a newsletter. Naseem would put together ideas for expenditure for further discussion at the next meeting.

5. Regeneration Report & 25 Calvert Avenue

Naseem reported that the ACCS steering committee had particularly asked for the Ivy remaining on the last tree to be retained, and for community participation to be valued. Agreement had also been reached on the more informal of the two planting options and to have a mixture of height to the proposed planting. The design team had been provided with a plan of planting that could be saved.

Naseem reported that the Council have agreed to allow the windows of 25 Calvert Avenue to be used as an information notice board. She was keen to get this up and running as soon as possible, and asked for assistance. Sabeha and Jean stepped forward, while Gail agreed to assist when she could. Naseem to contact Leila and coordinate a plan of action.

6. Arnold Circus 100 Programme

Naseem outlined the theme for next year's programme. There will be four major events:

- Sharing Picnic. This will be expand on the picnics held so far, and will be bigger and better. To ease the burden of planning and organisation, the event will run in conjunction with a partner organisation,



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Home Live events. Home Live are running an event this forthcoming weekend at the South Bank which Naseem will attend.

- Music Road event. In conjunction with Spitalfields Music festival, the Friends will plan and organise a musical extravaganza that will feature a carnival of music along Calvert Avenue culminating with a show on the Circus. A diverse range of music and workshops are planned with the aim to incorporate local businesses in some way. Spitalfields will be responsible for providing the main music and organisational structure (the event will open their Season). Their booking will open in February, so the programme (and funding) need to be set by the end of November. A concern was raised about loud music events, and whether the redeveloped circus would in fact, amplify sound. Sam said that some measures could be taken to soften the sound, say by having multiple low volume speakers dotted around the circus. This would increase the costs of running such events which is something to consider when making application for funds. Naseem said that the intention was to raise £6.5k for the musical events.
- Carrom, to be organised and managed by St Hilda's Centre.
- Open Circus. The aim of this event is to open the Circus to members of the community to run their own events, in two hour slots, on consecutive weekends. Publicity and bookings will be made through a website and online calendar. Example events could be a hairdressing session, tai chi class, chess tournament, etc. Judy suggested that Virginia school have recently established a choir, and that they could book the circus to run an event. The suggestion was warmly received. Those who book the use of the circus would need to abide by a set of ground rules, of which Jean has offered to draw up a draft which can then be discussed at the next meeting.

7 Film Money Discussion

Naseem and Gail Burton reported that £2.5k had been disbursed by the tenants/residents association BETRA, specifically from contributions made by film makers who film on Arnold Circus and around the Boundary Estate. As a matter of course, any money from this activity goes initially to the Film Unit within the Council, who then forward some of it to BETRA. When BETRA ceased to function, it divided up the funds in its bank account and sent contributions to eight organisations of varying sizes. Gail Burton, a BETRA member, asked the Friends to take on gathering the film money and then disbursing it to local causes.

The trustees felt uncomfortable with distributing these funds in future as it would present an administrative burden and could be seen to fall outside the remit of its Constitution. The receipt of funds would also affect its accounting procedures, as the money does not relate to the FOAC's own events (except where it itself is one of the recipients). It was suggested that LBTH's Film Unit should be approached to divvy up the funds to nominated local voluntary groups, such as the Laundrette and Shoreditch FC. It was agreed that the focus should be to benefit voluntary groups who are working to improve the immediate locality and groups to whom these small grants would make a significant difference.

8 AOB

Gail mentioned that Tower Hamlets would have a new tenants association federation, an umbrella group that assists local resident associations. A meeting is scheduled for next Tuesday. Gail will forward details to Naseem and Leila.

Naseem reminded folks that her Eikal birthday party on Sunday, where Bollywood and folk dancing could occur, but reassured them that the music would not be loud. It starts at 2pm on the circus.

Jean inquired about Andy's employment status. Naseem said continuation over the renovation at a reduced number of hours looked highly likely, but needed to be part of the overall financial review.



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9 Date of next meeting

Next meeting 29th October 2009, Leila's Café at 6:50pm.