



Clissold Park User Group News

Notes of our 10th January 2015 meeting

The meetings of the group are the main forum for airing public concerns about the way the Park is funded, managed and developed in the future. Whatever your main interest in the Park (playground, children, trees, wildlife, fun, football, tennis, running...) you can influence future developments.

Sign up for our latest news to receive this bi-monthly news and occasional bulletins.

Our next meeting is on Saturday 14th March 2015 from 11-12 in Clissold House

Clissold Park User Group News January 2015

At the meeting

Caroline Millar (Chair), John Hudson (Vice Chair) Delilah Jeary (Notes), Bruce Irving (Park Manager), PC Dag, Café managers Paul and Zara and around 35 other CPUG reps and Park Users.

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed

Matters arising from the November meeting

Reported by Caroline:

A survey of **runners** is being organised

The **big swing repair** has been completed with a substantial payment from Thames Water

The new **picnic tables** will be in the mothers' field - between bowling green and Green Lanes

The long awaited QEW gate **litter bin** is finally installed. Locations of bins will be reviewed and some may be moved.

Fitness equipment - no funding yet but consultation on the location is planned

Repairs to the **Commemorative Fountain** caused by vandals are ongoing

It has been confirmed that the **tennis court lighting** stays on until 9:30pm

Solar powered **pathway light studs** are being tested, to guide people to the courts after dark

Cycling safety signs are being moved regularly to gain people's attention

Pit Stop **cycling education** sessions are planned for February – during morning rush hour Deborah Persaud of the Guide Dogs Association's **Responsible Cycling Campaign** offered to help with this

The **fireworks event** had been a success, despite the rain. Leanne Douglas, the organiser is running debriefs. Any comments sent to us will be passed on to her. She is now working on a schedule of events for this year, which we should have soon.

The Park Development Board has reviewed what was a very informative consultation on **extending park opening hours**. While shrinking budgets will not support extra staff costs, some changes could be implemented within existing budgets. Would a pilot be possible in the spring?

Park Manager's Report from Bruce Irving

A **WW2 mortar shell** found in a local garden last week was exploded in the park after it was evacuated. The safety bags used are biodegradable.

Police Constable Dag reported on the **dog that had sadly been found dead** in the park. There were no witnesses or CCTV and the dog's owner had not come forward. The dog had no id and it was not clear how it died.

A user has opened a Facebook group called Stokey Cats and Dogs to **locate missing pets**

After many complaints a 'Staffy' has been **impounded** in the dog unit by the police because of bad behaviour in the park.

A separate meeting on dog behaviour was proposed for next month.

Anti social behaviour in the park at night had reduced in last month with increased police presence and Neighbourhood Wardens are attending at dusk to get people out of the park. Individuals that causing trouble have been targeted by the police.

This problem has been raised at the Partnership Steering Group and is being taken seriously. Counsellor Cameron has also raised it with the Deputy Mayor, Sophie Linden. The Community Advisory Panel meets on 28th January in Hawksley Court where these issues may be discussed.

PC Dag urged people to report incidents as soon as they see them and to call the Safer Neighbourhood Team if they had long term issues. The Number for Anti Social Behaviour team is below.

Park User Survey headlines: 2013:- 94% satisfied. 2014:- 91% satisfied. A small drop in the satisfaction rating, but no rise in **dissatisfaction**.

December **user numbers** were 153,000 visits

There continues to be a lot of interest the park's **Schools Programme**. An orienteering programme had been launched; a tree leaflet will be out before summer, with details of activities and walks to follow

Eleanor Potter, Park Manager, will return from maternity leave in the spring.

The Park Cafe

Cafe managers attended to answer questions from park users

Paul will make sure all the staff know that **guide dogs are allowed in the cafe**

The pumphouse kiosk wasn't open much over the summer. It was loss making but unreliable opening means people don't use it. New opening times had been agreed for

weekends and school holidays and its performance will be monitored. Can this be publicised and opening hours maintained?

Café prices were discussed and although some items (eg tea/coffee) had been kept relatively low, they were still seen as expensive by some users. Other items were seen as poor value, such as the child's meal 'box'.

Sometimes **the service** was very poor, with incomplete and severely delayed orders; and tables aren't cleaned quickly enough. The counter area was often crowded and hectic, with nowhere to wait for orders.

The very large counter is impractical, could a replacement be considered?

There is a comment card system in the café, which the management urge customers to use.

There were concerns that this excluded the views of people choosing not to use the café.

Top Mouth Gudgeon infestation: Richard Tyler from the Environment Agency

Gudgeon had been detected in the park's lake and New River. It is a non-native, highly invasive species originally from Asia, and a severe threat by out-competeing and displacing native species through its rapid breeding cycle and carrying destructive parasites and viruses. It also threatens the wider environment and there is a European wide commitment to eradicate the fish. It has been found in 23 locations across the country and 15 sites have been cleared to date.

Clissold will be dealt with in February. Unfortunately in order to eradicate the top mouth gudgeon, all fish in a body of water have to be killed and removed. The Gudgeon's larvae are so tiny they can't be removed from other fish, where they lodge in their gills and mouth.

An approved piscicide (fish poison) is used. This breaks down very quickly and will not affect or is a danger to any non-fish species, including humans of any age, dogs, cats, squirrels, birds, terrapins (regrettably) etc., etc.

It is appreciated that this is a drastic step, but one that is needed to protect the environment. It leaves us with a clean sheet, from which the park's fish population will be rebuilt in a planned and environmentally sympathetic way. (the existing fish all came from discarded aquaria

stocks at one time or another) A restocking plan will be considered by Hackney's Parks Management.

The operation will be completed on one day in February. Both ponds and the New River will be fenced off. Environment Agency officers will attend wearing protective suits and will monitor water quality. Fisheries officers will collect the fish carcasses.

Information and warning signage will be put up. FAQ documents will be posted on the Hackney and Environment Agency websites and the EA can be contacted directly

AOB

Creating a smartphone **App Trail** for the park. There is a free programme available to build an app. It could include the parks amenities, history and trees. Volunteers with relevant skills are very welcome!

Tennis court wind breaks. These were installed by the Lawn Tennis Association, which has used a large amount of its funds in Hackney and under their sponsorship deal. They are committed to using these screens, which have the sponsor's logo on them. No objections were raised to this.

Caroline thanked the Cafe for providing the meeting with **tea coffee and cake**.

The **CPUG's AGM is at the March 14th** meeting and all its members are encouraged to help by standing for one of the 'Officer' or representative posts. Not much work is involved, but the broader the membership involvement is the better!

Reminder: **Volunteering** in the park will be on the last Sunday of the month.

The next CP UG meeting will be in Clissold House from 11-12 on Saturday the 14th March 2015

Contacts

Park Keepers: 0208 3566834. This connects to a mobile.

Park Manager: bruce.iring@hackney.gov.uk
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