



Clissold Park User Group News

Notes of our September 12th 2015 meeting

Apologies were received from Caroline Millar, Elle Potter, Mark Forsyth, Yvonne Hill, Delilah Jeary, Lee Stacey, Betty Manning, Anthony Larvin.

10 Park users attended

From the last meeting

A cycling '**Pit Stop**' event was held in July by Hackney Council, offering maintenance, bike marking, safety help and advice.

New, more eye catching banners asking people to cycle safely will be displayed and leaflets about responsible cycling handed out.

Could signs ask cyclists to keep left on pathways, or give pedestrians priority?

A relaunch of **Micro Volunteering** is planned at the end of September when the summer litter crews leave. Volunteers have been recruited via a Facebook conversation about dog behaviour.

Could bags and litter pickers be left at the Lodge gate for dog walkers to use?

The **Butterfly Dome** has been very popular. It will close for the season at the end of September.

Vandalism - there were no incidents on the last day of term, but there has been some minor damage to history boards, wallpaper etc on the ground floor of the house over the summer.

Report from Park Manager Eleanor Potter

Park visitor numbers

June: 360,582 (up on 2014), July 344,855 (down on 2014).

Could the park become too crowded?

Corporate volunteering continues to go well - Eg a group of 52 did lots of horticultural work, including removing summer bedding and preparing the formal beds for winter and another group will mass-plant bulbs. This should continue throughout the autumn/winter. There is plenty to

do and this really helps with large scale jobs in the park that otherwise might not be done. Companies are charge £30 per person, which goes towards tools / equipment / supplies and supplements our budget. We work in partnership with the cafe to offer catering, which generates income for the cafe and also boosts our income. If anyone knows any organisations or groups that want to do some volunteer work in the park, *please refer them to Elle Potter.*

Wildlife Trust volunteering have made good progress on the woodland walk repairs and really want to increase numbers on the last Sunday of every month.

So please get in touch if you would like to join in!

The Schools Programme was very busy over the summer term and has already had lots of bookings for the autumn term. A summer nature club ran over the holidays which was very successful. Lucy continues to run 'Park in the Dark' walks which are very popular.

(A very appreciative feedback for Lucy's tours came from the meeting) There are event programmes in the leaflet rack outside Clissold House office.

Open House is on Sunday 20 from 11am to 4pm. There will be guided tours and self-guided tours with a written guide. CPUG will have a stall in the New River room where we will answer questions and sell the new historical photos postcards being produced by Amir, as well as a slide show of historic images of the park and house. Two CPUG volunteers will be around throughout the day. Lucy and her volunteers will also be in the house to welcome people and answer questions. *Contact Caroline if you can help with volunteering for the event.*

The autumn grounds maintenance programme had begun, including pathway edging, tree base maintenance, mowing meadow areas and autumn grass cutting throughout the park. More 'pictorial meadows' in the park are planned, including the

triangular piece of land north of the New River. These are beneficial for biodiversity and beautiful. 25,000 bulbs- bluebells, crocuses, daffodils - are ready for planting and volunteers will start work on 30 September.

If anyone would like to help please contact the Park Office!

The Running Survey's most significant finding is that people like the running facilities as they are, but want the wood chip to be maintained more effectively. This is tricky in winter because of staff capacity - it is a time consuming job.

So volunteers are needed – such as runners and other park users - to assist staff to top up the wood chip as often as possible, helped by large corporate groups that can cover large areas.

An assessment of compaction on tree roots etc will be made by a biodiversity consultant to find out whether this is a problem and if so what can be done to protect tree roots.

There has been no further major **vandalism** over the summer. **The paddling pool** is now open on weekends only before closing for the season at the end of September.

Repair of one of the vandalised Commemorative Fountain taps will be arranged when funds become available.

Following a detailed survey by CPUG of **litter bins** in the park, damaged bins will be repaired and replaced.

The **lake railings** damaged by a large tree fall will be repaired soon.

What will replace fallen trees?

The Play Area Water Feature should be working – *but will be checked*. Maintenance for the play area over the winter includes: topping up / replacement of sand and wood chip, replacement of some degraded areas of 'Wet Pour' rubberised play surface.

Both **New River pumps** are being restored, one pump in this budgetary year and one in the next.

There have been no further **Toilet Closures**. The Portaloos have been successful with no incidents of vandalism and are well maintained.

A permanent solution to the house water supply problem is being explored. These necessary works are planned for completion before next summer. This will be a large and expensive piece of work but an essential one.

Events in the Park: The Yoruba festival ran with no major incidents or concerns. Head of Services Ian Holland was on-site throughout the event, which sadly closed early on the Sunday due to poor weather. A debrief has been held with organisers highlighting some minor issues.

The Book People sale went well. Another is planned for the autumn.

The 16th July **Concert at the house** was a great success.

Complaints and Concerns – received since our last meeting

On Facebook:

Another dog-on-dog attack, two weeks ago. Others have not been reported. **Victims** of such attacks are *urged to report them to the office, even if subsequently*. We need to have an accurate picture of this problem

Lost cygnets: The Swan Sanctuary advise that this is from natural predation - often by foxes - and that young swans learn to choose safe nesting sites.

A complaint made to the Mayor about the lack of control that some multiple dog walkers seem to have.

Elle is working with the Council's enforcement team which will be doing some work with dog walkers at Clissold Park in the coming months. She will update the Council's web page to include our 'Lead By Example' campaign leaflet which sets out expectations for dog owners in the park. *It will also be posted on the CPUG website.*

Plans for the Lakes

Elle will give a report at our November meeting. She has received 19 responses and can still take comments / responses until the end of October. She will then assess all of the feedback together with the invertebrate survey data from the Environmental Agency.

The provision of some kind of water facility for cleaning and cooling dogs after their visit to an often muddy park was again requested.

Other Items:

Having park staff's photos and names on display was suggested, so park users can get to know them and to help prevent any abuse.

CPUG Fundraising- *Costings are needed* before we can begin seeking funding. Suggested campaign subjects are for:

- Outdoor Gym equipment
- Extra swings in the play area – led by parents trialing crowd funding?
- The Lodge entrance drinking fountain – John to explore a drinking Fountain Association grant.
- Training facility for smaller children in the space behind the Skate bowls – skateboarders have offered their help.

While a Park App is planned (as well as printed guides) there should also be *plan/guide boards at the park's entrances*. These had not been provided by the refurb as some of the Legible London street signs had been expected. *This will be raised at the Development Board meeting, on September 18th.*

Another Pyro-Musical **Fireworks Display** is planned for November.

Gates will open at 6pm and the display will be from 7.30 to 7.50

Tickets are now on sale from Hackney Empire box office

Themes and music ideas can be emailed to park.events@hackney.gov.uk

CPUG members will again act as volunteer stewards on the night. Volunteers please contact CPUG at the addresses below

Could some bookable disabled or elderly seat provision be made at the event? Many people who would like to attend could not because they are unable to stand.

Frequency of CPUG meetings. Should they be quarterly, with special meetings if needed? Post-summer and Christmas holidays are difficult for many. *To be discussed next time*

**Our next meeting is between 11am and Noon
on
Saturday the 14th November 2015**