



## Clissold Park User Group News

### Notes of our November 12<sup>th</sup> 2016 meeting

#### At the Meeting

Caroline Millar (Chair), Laurence Pinturault (Park Manager)

CPUG: Ken Worpole, Mark Foster, John Hudson, Delilah Jeary, Yvonne Hill, Hilde Oorde, Lee Stacy, Richard Crawford, Sylvia Anderson, Isaac Jeary, And 16 park users

#### Chair's Report - Caroline

**Fundraising:** – for two new swings for the playground we are using the crowdfunding website Spacehive .Going live next week.

Picnic tables are very expensive – about £2000 installed - so not a high priority.

**Events: - Bulb planting** – 10am next Saturday. Meet in front of cafe by New River

**Open House** - very successful with 250 people on the well-received tours and Amir giving two packed-out talks on Joseph Beck.

**Fireworks Display** – sold out and better organised than last year, but more signage needed e.g. to exit gates.

Tarquin the deer was in rut that day and so unconcerned by the fireworks!

**A Sad Loss** - we mourn the passing of Arthur Disney. Penny Crick suggested planting a tree to commemorate Arthur and his wife Christine, pivotal CPUG founders who lived on Queen Elizabeth Walk. Their neighbours are collecting money, could CPUG contribute. Set up a just giving page. CPUG will donate £100.

**Laurence Pinturault - Park Manager's Update** on line [here](#)

#### Biodiversity Report - Laurence Pinturault

Laurence presented a very detailed and well written paper, which Richard helped produce - see [here](#) for a

full copy. The park is an important site for nature conservation and all its functions depend on the health of its biodiversity.

With three million visitors a year it is difficult to set aside large areas but some can be done. Reduced mowing regimes would allow natural growth and attract wildlife.

The Borough- wide biodiversity targets include planting bulbs, hedgerows, trees etc

This needs to be balanced with the park looking well-kept and its many other uses.

The report also looks at deer management, wildflower planting, (e.g. between new river and the bowling green, and by the path leading to the Pump House) and caring for the parks 1000+ trees. The succession of the trees in the park needs urgent attention, with ageing and diseased ones being replaced. Leaf management is important. Removing leaf drop disrupts the trees' lifecycle and in effect starves them. Many native species are not doing well and we may need to look at other species that will thrive, perhaps Mediterranean varieties.

More marginal vegetation around the lakes should be encouraged, which will reduce habitats for rats and terrapins. The islands will be surveyed to see if their vegetation can be improved. Reduced access by dogs to the New River would improve its natural habitat. The Butterfly Dome could be redeveloped for native species.

Improved information to park users about the role of the park management is needed.

Laurence and Richard were warmly congratulated for the report.

The Group responded -Does Hackney have funding for trees? A detailed work schedule is needed implement the report's recommendations.

Interpretation boards need to be funded and the Group Reps would meet to discuss.

Willows by the pond would protect wild fowl.

**Animals:** - Laurence reported that the last chicken had died and the future use of the pens will be considered. A fox trap has been in place in the deer enclosure for three weeks with no result and it seems that the foxes have moved on.

Caroline reported that the Group is developing maps showing biodiversity, trees and park history. Paper versions are being costed - can Hackney help with funding them? Information/educational boards might also be placed around the park.

#### **Storage for community groups:**

The severe shortage of storage space in the house meant that equipment used by community groups could no longer be stored. eg the Art Group's boards and easels.

Two members of that group spoke to the meeting and explained that for their classes, the loss of equipment storage must mean the end of their class.

It's used by all ages, is a real benefit to the community and they are passionate about it continuing. They had always been allowed to use a small room for their equipment, but it had to be removed in December.

Storage is a problem for the house but there should be a way to reach an understanding with house management that would remove any safety concerns and allow venue users (eg weddings) full access. Laurence described the continued problems that the lack of storage space created for the staff and house users. Various options were discussed. The vaults might be used but had been found to need structural work. The park's Development Board meet in January and will discuss this issue.

#### **Suggested Events**

Sunday afternoon talks in the drawing room, every three or four weeks during the winter, with speakers who have a Stoke Newington connection.

A fundraising comedy night was suggested, perhaps in Ryan's bar.

A summer concert would be held in July and perhaps an open mic evening in the garden.

Who would like to run the annual quiz night? Yvonne and Hilde have stepped down after many successful years. **Volunteers are needed to continue this very successful event!**

Would someone organise carols or wassailing in the park?

We should hold a Fifth birthday party for the House in January.

Ken spoke about a **Council consultation on the library and town hall buildings**

A Recent public meeting was well attended but there had not been consultation with local groups. There is an online form that can be filled in by Monday 14th November

Many community rooms had been priced beyond most groups' means. Generally, people want spaces for creative, educational and leisure pursuits, particularly for young people. e.g. a room locally for scouts and brownies. If planned imaginatively the complex could provide more space and storage for community use. An audit of available spaces in the area would also be useful.

Caroline reminded the meeting that new Clissold park survey was open until 11th December and could be completed on line or on paper – available in the Café .

#### **Contacts**

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