



Clissold Park User Group News

Notes of our May 12th 2018 meeting

Present: Mark Forsyth (Chair); John Hudson & Theresa Boden (Vice Chairs); Ken Worpole (Honorary President); Caroline Millar (Treasurer); Amir Dotan (Park Historian); Sophie Cameron (Councillor, Clissold Ward); Sylvia Anderson (Older People's rep); Daphne Steele (Dog walkers' rep); Richard Crawford (Bio-diversity rep); Isabelle Gore (Website manager); Quinten Geurs (Park Manager, Hackney Council) and ten other park users.

Minutes of the March 10th meeting

Corrections:

In the Chair's report it was Daphne not Sylvia who had commented that the park was less peaceful these days.

On the item about trees – Richard Crawford had said that he had not agreed with the current approach to tree management and had felt it needed to be reappraised.

Matters arising from the last meeting

QG reported work being done to look at the tracks where people run to see if the impact on the trees can be minimised.

Park Manager's report

The **café** tells us that almost everything they use is **recyclable** except for the coffee cups and they are looking to replace them.

House redecoration work is almost done except for a bit more floor varnishing.

There has been **replanting in the café garden** and the area for a buggy park cleared. Work on this should be finished in the next few weeks.

The Commemorative Fountain has again been vandalised, damaging one tap. It will be isolated to allow the other three to be brought back into use.

Playground – the slide has been out of use for some time because the mound has become eroded exposing its rubble core which creates a serious hazard but efforts to keep people away from the slide have failed. Group members said that warnings about the problem and its risks were inadequate.

Repairs had been delayed while a borough-wide repair and maintenance programme was being set up. The group felt strongly that this job should be prioritised so that the slide could be used over the summer. Meanwhile, if there was a safety risk then the Council had a clear duty to prevent access to it and to sort out the problem quickly, even if this meant using a temporary solution while the Council's interminable procurement processes continued to delay a permanent one. Also, fencing designed to keep children off of the 'bridge' in the playground was being regularly removed and it was not clear why it was there at all.

Water feature in playground – the pump has been fixed but will not be turned on this summer because it will get clogged with sand and stop working again. The plan is to remove the feature and install something more practical.

A survey of the **toilets' plumbing** is being carried out to try to solve the persistent problems with the urinals.

Chris Steele observed that that have been numerous problems with impractical design and build in the 2012 Park refurbishment and that it was important that the Council learnt lessons from these.

Path resurfacing work is complete and painted signs asking people to cycle slowly have been done.

There has been some **antisocial behaviour** by some children in and around the House and the park team is working with the school on this. The group felt it was important to stress that the behaviour of most of the children and young people in the park was exemplary and they welcomed the fact that teachers were often seen in the park at lunchtimes. QG pointed out that the police and Hackney Enforcement Team were called if necessary and did attend if needed. There had been an incident of **unlicensed trading** in the park. QG explained that this was not allowed. In the light of this the group asked what was being done about the various individuals and organisations running 'paid for'

activities in the park (i.e dog walking, fitness activities etc) – did these not also count as unlicensed trading? QG said that the Council would look at this issue over the coming year. Two **new goats** are arriving soon, but may be either Anglo Nubian (like Bob and Dylan) or Pygmy Goats as we had previously. Anglo Nubian require their toe nails to be cut regularly which takes three rangers three hours to do it each time!

The **paddling pool** will re-open on 26 May, the second May Bank Holiday which was normal policy. The group made a plea for more flexibility as it was a pity to have the pool but not be able to use it on such a hot weekend. QG said the pool could not have been opened earlier despite good weather because maintenance had been delayed during cold weather which prevented sealant applied to the seams from setting.

The Council will hold a public consultation on what should be done about the aviary and butterfly dome.

Pumphouse –the group was very concerned to be told that for the third year running a tender process was 'being prepared'. The pump house will therefore be unused for a third summer. The problem stems from administrative complexities within Hackney Council that are beyond the control of the park management team. Frustratingly, the bowling green pavilion will also be unused this summer.

Chairman's report

GDPR - Because of changes in data protection legislation everyone on the CPUG mailing list needs to re-subscribe. An email has been sent to the 650 on our email list. So far 160 people have re-subscribed. Around 200 people usually open our emails. A further reminder will be sent out before the deadline of 25 May, after which the original list must be deleted. But people can continue to join the list via our website.

Reusable cups – Hilde Oorde had found a supplier of re-usable cups that we could sell in the café to address the recycling issue and raise money for the group. She has found a good deal but the cups are made of plastic. There was a discussion about sourcing recyclable cups, which would be more expensive. It was agreed that we would not go ahead until we had explored some greener options.

Beck memorial plaque. Amir is organising a 'green plaque' to commemorate Joseph Beck who led the campaign to save the park in the 1880s. The plaque will be placed on the Barton House Surgery which is built on the site of the Beck family home, Barton House. An unveiling

event is planned for the weekend of 21/22 July which is almost the park's birthday. This will be followed by a picnic in the park organised by CPUG as part of London Parks City Week. It was agreed that the User Group would contribute £200 to the cost of the plaque which totals £400 not including installation.

Caroline told the meeting that two impressive **framed pages celebrating the opening of the park**, from The North London Guardian of 24th July 1889 had been bequeathed to the User group by Group founders Arthur and Christine Disney. The meeting warmly welcomed the gift and hoped that a place would be found for them in House.

Questions from park users

Could a **temporary toilet** be put near the paddling pool? This shouldn't be necessary as the Bowling Green toilets will be open. Can there be a signs at the paddling pool showing this? Now the schools programme has closed the **dipping pool** is not being used. Can schools be invited to come and use it and educational material be provided?

A representative of the **Highbury Quadrant Tenants' Association** raised their serious concerns about the impact of commercial events in the park's top field particularly with regard to noise, parking and rubbish. Users expressed their sympathy about these problems which had been discussed at great length over several years. Some of the measures now agreed with Hackney Council's Events team were explained and the Chair and Vice-Chairs offered to talk again to the representatives of the group about the steps that had been taken and the progress being made to address these matters. It was also pointed out that parking and other street scene issues in The Quadrant were under the control of Islington Council and the two authorities should work together on the issue.

Next CPUG meeting

Saturday 10th March
11am to 12 noon.

Venue: Clissold House, Clissold Park

Contacts

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To join Clissold Park Users Group

Sign up for our latest news and browse the

Website <http://www.clissoldpark.com> / join our

Facebook Group / and just come to the meetings!