



Clissold Park User Group News

Notes of our September 8th 2018 meeting

Present: Mark Forsyth (Chair), John Hudson (Vice Chair), Kath Willgress (Secretary), Delilah Jeary (Minutes Secretary), Amir Dotan (Park History Rep), Richard Crawford (Biodiversity rep), David Pitcher (Cycling rep), Daphne Steele (Dog owner's rep), Jude Cohen - Highbury Quadrant Residents Association, Betty Manning, Lorraine and Ken Worpole, Daphne Kemp, Chris Steele and several other park users

Apologies:

Caroline Millar (treasurer), Lee Stacey, Roderick Ryan, Isabelle Gore (Website manager), Theresa Boden (Vice chair), Anne McKinley, Quinten Geurs (Park Manager), Sophie Cameron (Councillor, Clissold Ward)

Minutes of last meeting were approved

Park Manager's report

Quinten was unable to be at the meeting but sent a written report:

The Park Café. Notices about compostable packaging and cups are being displayed. The police have been informed about food thefts and an incident log is being kept. Incidents of aggressive begging are being dealt with by the café management.

Buggies. A buggy park has been set up in the rose garden, with a fixed rail for security and some protective covers that can be borrowed from the house office. From the 1st October buggies will no longer be allowed in the house due to the high cost of repairing damage that they are causing (as much as £3000 per month). The room currently used as a buggy park will once again open to all. Café customers with buggies may still bring them into the house.

Park management needs to communicate these changes clearly and sensitively to users and we could offer some volunteers in the first week of implementation to explain the change of policy. The Meeting expressed concern that the deadline for implementing these changes was very close

considering that we were given no timescale at our last meeting in July.

Community groups that use the house should inform parents before the change comes into effect.

Playground. Everything other than the slide should now be working.

Repairing **the slide** is a major piece of work which has had to go through the whole procurement and contract process required of councils. Work should start in the next few months and will cost tens of thousands of pounds. This is because the surface soil and grass cover have been worn down to the core of the mound which is composed of rubble that creates a serious hazard.

The time taken and cost of this was questioned. Does the Council yet have a term contract for smaller jobs rather than use a lengthy procurement process for each one?

Could Councillor Sophie Cameron ask about this and cost of the slide mound repairs or should the CPUG submit a Freedom of Information request?

The paddling pool will be open at the weekends only until 30th September when it will close for the winter.

Report of the Development Board Meeting held on Monday the 3rd September

After complaints about litter and pigeons on the terrace, café staff are cleaning it more frequently and have provided rubbish bins.

The **new drinks cups** are compostable but degrade best in large deposits and the Park Manager will try to get a bin for this from Hackney recycling. Coffee grinds will also be put on the park's compost heaps. Could they also be used for planting?

As a result of the squeeze on park budgets, the

Butterfly dome will not now be reopened. There is also no budget for the proposed redevelopment of the whole area by the deer enclosure, including the aviary, the chicken enclosure and butterfly

dome, which will all now remain unused. The Park Manager should be required to give CPUG a report of what is the vision for that area, including costs.

Could funding come from elsewhere, such as the Awards for All run by National Lottery which gives grants of up to £10,000? Mark Forsyth confirmed that Grants were the first port of call when funds are required for specific projects

The dome structure is an asset – could we approach London Wildlife Trust who might collaborate with us? There is a lot of expertise and ideas in the community – can we get more involved in these plans and seek volunteers to make them happen?

Community groups in the house: a pricing restructure initially led to a reduction of community group-rate bookings, but these have now returned to at least one group booking on each day of the week.

Cyclists What else can be done to make the very few irresponsible cyclists be more considerate? The signs and path markings placed at some gates asking cyclists to slow down have been useful and the council is looking into having them replicated at all the gates. Everyone should be aware of the dangers of speeding in the park but we can still intervene to advise in a constructive way, any cyclists (including children) who seem unaware of the risks they can create.

The Pump House. Regrettably, the procurement process that has already taken years, is now not being continued as it is considered to be a low priority. Park user Anne McKinley finds the house is difficult to access because of her disability and wishes that the pump house was reopened. The meeting strongly criticised this failure and urged park users to contact their local councillors to complain. Mark Forsyth will discuss this with the Park Manager and ask what the User Group can do to restart this process. The Cabinet member responsible for parks should come to our meeting to discuss the gradual deterioration of the park's resources and explain why potential assets like the Pump House and The Pavilion are being left unused.

Events. The Council's events team has still not provided a list of events in Clissold Park. A Food and Drink Festival held on the 15th and 16th September was the last event in the park this year. There is no news of a fireworks display and this will be pursued.

AOB

Ilona's Bench. There is a [crowd funding appeal](#). This is for a memorial bench for a recently deceased park user.

A migrant's rights group called NELMA (North East London Migrant Action) is having a [**Picnic for Free School Meals**](#) at St Mary's Church from 12-4pm on 29th September to raise awareness about the plight of migrant families who have no recourse to public funds.

Mark has asked for the results of a report on the [**impact of jogging on trees**](#).

Raising the profile of the User Group and attracting a wider demographic. Our notices will be on the community board. Could we hold a meeting outside to make users more aware of the Group? No notices can be put up in Clissold Park without permission from the Council and must include a Hackney logo.

Duckweed in the New River – the hot weather has resulted in a lot of duckweed and it is hard to reduce it. Would opening the sluice gate more often help?

Next CPUG meeting:

Saturday 10th November 2018

11am to 12 noon

Venue: Clissold House, Clissold Park

Contacts

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

Park Manager: Quinten.geurs@hackney.gov.uk or call 020 8356 4215

Café Management:

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Police: 0208 721 2923 / 07879 603106 /

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Sargent in charge: Carroll Weeden

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Clissold Safer Neighbourhood Team: 020 8721 2923

To join Clissold Park Users Group

Sign up for our latest news and browse the [website](#) / join our [Facebook Group](#) / and just come to the meetings!