

CLISSOLD PARK USER GROUP NEWSLETTER

May- June 2011



Ken Worpole, CPUG's new Honorary President.

Note of the meeting of Wednesday May 4th

Attendance – approximately 25 Park users.

From Hackney Council (LBH): – John Wade, Head of Green Spaces for LBH and Michael Dixon, Park Manager

Apologies – All Councillors sent apologies and best wishes to outgoing chair Ken Worpole. They were prevented from attending by a meeting of the full Council that night.

Arthur Disney also sent his apologies and his warmest regards to Ken.

Note of last meeting

A CPUG member questioned the note in the last newsletter about the size of the deer enclosure. John Wade clarified that before the work began the enclosure had been 6000 square metres. On completion of works the enclosure will be 6800 square metres: 800 sq. metres larger. The note of the last meeting had confused this with a comparison between the current temporary restricted area and the much larger new paddock. (*Apologies for any confusion*)

Manager's report on project developments

John Wade gave an update on the refurbishment project. Work on the house is four weeks behind schedule and will now be completed in June. The cafe will then have to be fitted out which means that the house and cafe won't now open until September.

Other completion dates are:

Animal Enclosure: 18th April (except Deer Enclosure)

Bowling Green pavilion: 2nd May

Front of house i.e. the new slope and path: 6th May

Butterfly Dome: 6th May

Multi Use Games Area: 9th May

Deer Enclosure: 16th May

Expanded dog free zone next to bandstand area: 16th May

Sluice House (Green Lanes gate): 16th May

All planting: 16th May

Removal of contractor's compound: 30th May

Children's playground: 3rd June

New Bridges over New River: 24th June

The delays are unacceptable and LBH is meeting regularly with the contractor to impose a more robust management of their sub-contractors to avoid any further slippage.

John Wade then responded to questions and comments–

Planting should have happened sooner. In relation to concerns about the care of the new planting he confirmed that the Contractors were contracted to maintain all the new shrubs for a year and the new trees for three years.

Concerns that trees planted by the Robinson Crusoe/Green Lanes gate are not in the right place as per the original plan. **Action: JW to check.**

Grass on the new slopes by the skate park has been worn by a combination of use and the dry weather. Caring for this is part of the maintenance contract.

The group welcomed the opening of the new wheels park which has proved extremely popular. There is concern that it has been extensively graffitied. LBH policy is to cover graffiti with paint that won't damage the special surfaces. Also concerns that the wheels park is being used at night which could lead to anti-social behaviour problems. LBH is looking to set up a group that would encourage community ownership of the skate park and discourage graffiti and bad behaviour.

View expressed that graffiti in the skateboard park shouldn't necessarily be seen as a problem. It is part of that culture and perhaps local artists could be commissioned to decorate the skate park in a similar way to the one on the South Bank. **Action: JW to explore**

Comment made that earthworks by the wheels park gave effective soundproofing though there are issues about the noise of skateboards in the wider area.

Concerns about the small number and poor standard of the temporary toilets. Opening those in the Bowling Green pavilion was suggested but police have advised that there is a high risk of vandalism if these toilets are open when the pavilion building is not in use for events etc. JW will explore whether the new main toilets in the house could be opened prior to the rest of the house opening. Meanwhile extra portaloos will be installed.

Concerns that uncompleted areas such as the children's playground are being left unsecured by the contractors. Also concerns about the wrong fencing having been installed around games area then removed. What is happening? Worries about whether games area will drain onto tennis courts. **Action: JW would check on all of these issues.**

Interviews for the café contract will be on 28th May and a CPUG rep is included in this process. Key elements of the contract will be:

value for money, healthy eating, customer experience, choice and quality of service.

Those hiring function rooms will not be required to use the Café contractor's services. JW is confident that room hire prices for the house are affordable. Planned fees and charges are publicised on the LBH web site.

The position for a single "Park and Programme Manager" covering both the Park and House will be advertised soon.

GLL, who run Clissold Leisure Centre, will initially be responsible for house admin and bookings on an 18th month contract. An LBH manager will have overall control. LBH may then take over the whole running of the house perhaps combining it with that of the SN Town Hall Assembly Rooms.

Complaints that the Rangers' emergency mobile phone numbers are still poorly displayed and when found, people can't reach anyone who can help. **Action: Michael Dixon to check and correct**

It was suggested that the best solution in an emergency would be to call the local community police. There was a general feeling that the Rangers were being swamped by ever increasing user numbers. Their morale is low and this will get worse as the new facilities attract even more people. JW expects the Rangers' service to fare better under the new management structure of a single Park and House Manager, plus the new Interpretation (visitors and information) Manager to oversee the newly opened areas, plus the admin support from GLL.

Use of the new Bowling Green as an education centre will be encouraged– this will be a free resource for groups of all ages.

There was concern about the poor state of the notice boards and that these need sorting out quickly to make communication with users more effective. **Action: Michael Dixon to check and correct**

CPUG disabled and elderly user representatives will be shown around the

house to look at its accessibility provision before it is opened to the public.

No 3 Queen Elizabeth Walk is now scheduled for early demolition with the new tennis club build to follow.

Plans for the tennis court lighting scheme use spotlights not floodlights, to ensure that only the courts are lit. Work has been carried out to ensure that the light will not affect nearby homes and that it will not adversely affect the bat population.

A Special General Meeting then followed in which an updated CPUG Constitution was unanimously approved. This included the new position of Honorary President and Ken Worpole was unanimously elected as the CPUG's first holder of this post.

Warm tributes were made to Ken's long and crucial leadership of the group and his patient but persistent approach to maintaining and improving a park for which he clearly had such a genuine affection.

His knowledge and appreciation of the positive effect on the community of such a valuable space has had a big influence on the park's development. CPUG is very fortunate to have such a loyal and eminent friend.

Ken was presented with a watercolour showing the newly restored vista of the house and his wife Lorraine with a bouquet in appreciation for her own hard work and support for the group over many years.

Ken thanked everyone for the presentations and expressed his pleasure in taking up his new role. He emphasised that he would keep up his association with the group and of course with the rejuvenated House and Park.

Date of next meeting:

Saturday 9th July. 11am to 12 noon in the New Church Rooms behind St Mary's Church.

Contacts:

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To join the Clissold Park User Group:

Email: clissoldpug@googlemail.com

Go to our website:
<http://www.clissoldpark.com/>

Join our Facebook Page - or just come to our bi-monthly meetings!