

# CLISSOLD PARK USER GROUP

NEWSLETTER AND MINUTES OF MEETINGS

**January/February 2008**



To join the Clissold Park User Group (CPUG) mailing list and for this newsletter by email, contact [clissoldpug@yahoogroups.co.uk](mailto:clissoldpug@yahoogroups.co.uk)  
Or see [www.clissoldpark.com](http://www.clissoldpark.com)

## Next meeting:

**Saturday 1st March 2008  
11 - noon**

**Red Room  
Back of Café  
Clissold Mansion**

**All meetings are open, public meetings, anyone can attend and active participation from park users is always needed and very welcome.**

## **At the meeting on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> January:**

**Present:** Ken Worpole (Chair), John Hudson (Co-Vice Chair and Email Secretary), Yvonne Hill, Penny Crick (Newsletter Secretary), Simon Lissner (Co-Vice Chair), Caroline Millar (Co-Vice Chair), Betty Manning (Post Secretary), Cllr Linda Smith, Cllr Matthew Coggins, Diane Knill, Gar Powell-Evans, Liz Butler-Graham, Jim Blinko (Park), Chris Wills, Mark Douglas, Dan Epstien, Steven Epstein, Anna Gidman, Sue McIntosh, Jonathan Clark, Liz Friedrich, Steve McGuire, Joanne Marshall-Casson, Joanna Poulson, Jonathan Shattock, Don Giddens, Hettie Sears, Sylvia Anderson, Ingo Hippisley, Nyambe Ikasaya, Richard Metcalf.

**Apologies** Michael Dixon (Parks Manager), Chris Sills

**Minutes of last meeting:** To be taken at next meeting and in the meantime, action points not covered today to be reviewed by Chair.

## **Playground**

The large turn out for the meeting indicated something of the strength of feeling about the Playground, recently 'refurbished'. Not only is it "desperately disappointing", a "meccano monstrosity" but also unappealing and dangerous to children – eg large gap between platform and top of baby slide.

It was generally agreed that the playground is causing extreme concern for safety, suitability, ecological and aesthetic reasons, and there were calls for immediate removal of some parts on Health and Safety grounds. Poor consultation, poor choice, demonstration of incompetence by responsible officers.

Ken and John walked the Park with Mayor Pipe and Chief Exec Hackney last week and the view of the meeting had apparently been endorsed. Denis Holmes, acting Head of Parks, has promised a meeting after 21<sup>st</sup> Jan with parents and others concerned. Hackney does seem to be acknowledging that a mistake has been made and needs to be rectified. **(Stop press: This meeting will take place on Saturday February 2<sup>nd</sup> 10 am at/near the Playground, hopefully with proposals in place)**

This is an urgent matter: Proper play equipment must be in place as soon as possible – lengthy consultation not necessary as 'like for like' replacement was what had been commissioned and as each week passes, more children will be 'switched off' the Park. Deferring until 'lottery bid' is unthinkable – several generations of 'toddlerhood' would have missed out by 2011. New equipment, allowing for increased capacity, must be in place by Summer holidays at the very latest. Questions to be asked at Stoke Newington Forum 22<sup>nd</sup> January. (This happened, Mayor gave positive response)

Proposal: Place Notice Board for Park in the Playground, giving details of what to do in emergencies, re dog nuisance, lottery developments, user group notices etc. **ACTION: Michael Dixon**

**Park Managers report** (given by Jim Blinko in Michael Dixon's absence):

Low levels of water in lakes and new river solved by heavy rainfall. Duckweed being removed but slow job, partly due to small net (suggestion from group that bigger net is acquired.) Can a contractor be brought in to deal with duck weed and prevent build up next year? Six new oak trees have been planted along QEW avenue, mulched and with tree guards. Spring bulbs also planted along QEW b local schoolchildren. 'Whips' (little hedges) to be planted in place of collapsing paling fences to deter tree root

impacting runners under trees on QEW avenue. Soil heaps by 'circus' field are to be spread out when weather permits to level grass areas. Graffiti is a big problem at the moment, nightly onslaughts. Park users noted several places where railings are missing making night time access to Park even easier.

**Dogs** Incidents of dog fighting were reported, eg by playground, in daylight with owners encouraging dogs. Report fighting and other dangerous dogs to **Safer Neighbourhoods Police number: 020 8721 2924 or 2030** and incidents will respond and be recorded. Do rangers keep record of all reported incidents, re dogs, death of rabbits etc?

As before, the need for clear policy on dogs as well as how policy should be enforced was emphasised. Head of Parks and Community Police to be consulted. **Action: CPUG write Head of Park and invite community police to next meeting.**

#### **Lottery update**

There is a £4.5M award from the Heritage Lottery fund plus a £1.5M contribution from Hackney to work on the House and Park and things seem to be progressing well so far. Specialist consultants and architects have been appointed and the user group has a good working relationship with all concerned. Surveys on the Park are underway and so far the tree survey confirms that many of the trees in the Park are dying – a good planting scheme will need to be a priority in the work. Consultants will be invited to present plans to date to the user group soon.

#### **Walking and cycling route**

We were informed about a walking and cycling route across London to the Olympic site that is planned to go through the Park – more details to be obtained so that we can comment. Could fit in with implementing sensible cycling policy in the Park.

#### **Kings Crescent**

Plans for redevelopment of this estate on Green Lanes overlooking the Park are again being considered. Linda Smith, Caroline Millar and Steve Epstein will have a look at plans in Brownswood project office (near Costcutters on Brownswood road) and report back especially re impact on Park. (Previous plans had big shadow implications for Park)

#### **Stoke Newington School**

Dionne Thompson at SNS liaising with John Hudson re representative from SNS school council joining the CPUG.

#### **St Mary's Old Church**

Jonathan Clark reported that the Big Lottery Fund has approved stage one proposals for development of St Mary's Old Church. Liaison with Clissold consultants and architects is essential concerning the sight lines, physical and functional boundary between Church and Park, and could be incredibly creative and rewarding.

#### **Road improvement works**

Stoke Newington Church Street works will involve widening of pavement at two points along boundary with Park, which will mean a couple of meters taken off the side of the Park at those places. Seems sensible, provided the boundary is reinstated as existing and as aesthetically and sympathetically as possible. Shouldn't have any impact on trees.

#### **Toilets**

Baby changing facilities still not installed!!! Snagging still not completed. CPUG to contact Mark White about this and urge speedy completion of works.

#### **Neglected appearance of Park**

A few things were mentioned such as the Freight containers in various places in the Park, the continuing neglect of the down pipes on the House which are causing further damp problems, and the dilapidated and graffitied state of the One o'clock club. Neglect attracts graffiti and vandalism which attracts neglect. **Action: Michael Dixon**

It is to be hoped that the One o'clock club will be relocated/rebuilt as part of the Lottery work.

#### **CONTACTS for the User Group**

- Clissold Park User Group Website [www.clissoldpark.com](http://www.clissoldpark.com)
- Join CPUG <http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/clissoldpug/join>
- Contact the CPUG secretary [clissoldpug@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:clissoldpug@yahoo.co.uk)

#### **CONTACTS for The Park**

- Park Manager: Michael Dixon: Rangers' Office or 8800 1021 [michael.dixon@hackney.gov.uk](mailto:michael.dixon@hackney.gov.uk)
- Rangers' office and Tennis bookings: 7923 3660 Tennis Club: 7254 4235 and [info@hackneycitytennisclubs.co.uk](mailto:info@hackneycitytennisclubs.co.uk)
- Head of rangers' service: [balavant.barber@hackney.gov.uk](mailto:balavant.barber@hackney.gov.uk) or 07985 692585 Hackney Council 8356 5000

### **Next meetings:**

**Saturday 1st March 2008  
11 - noon**

**Agenda will include a review of  
the facilities in Park for children**

**Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2008  
6.30 – 8 pm**

**Proposals for Lottery work on  
House and Park will be presented**

**ALL WELCOME!**