

CLISSOLD PARK USER GROUP

November/December 2009



With the fantastic news of a successful outcome to the Clissold Park Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) bid, and £8.9 million coming to Clissold Park, YOUR views are needed more than ever! Consultation will continue throughout the redevelopment.

The meetings of this group are the main forum for airing public concerns about the way the Park is funded, managed and developed in the future. Whatever your main interest in the Park (playground, children, trees, wildlife, fun, football, tennis, running...) you can influence future developments.

Meeting Minutes of 7th November 2009

Present:

CPUG elected Reps:

John Hudson, Co-Vice Chair (Chairing this meeting); Caroline Millar, Co-Vice Chair; Yvonne Hill, Newsletter Secretary; and Barbara McFarlane, Treasurer

Leads: Simon Lissner and Mark Forsyth (dogs), Sylvia Anderson (senior citizens).

Simon Biss, HLF Project Manager; Michael Dixon, Park Manager; Councillor Linda Smith

Elinor Zuke, Hackney Citizen newspaper

PLUS 30 approx Park Users (full list available on request)

Apologies: Ken Worpole, Chair; Matt Jeary, Co-Vice Chair

John Hudson welcomed all to the meeting.

Matters Arising

• Eleanor Johnson, Parks Development Officer, LB Hackney, has met with Annie Gammon, the Head Teacher of Stoke Newington School, to discuss sports education provision needs, and vandalism. The Head Teacher is to liaise with Eleanor re sports termly, is considering an arts project for the new hoardings soon to be erected, and is working towards ongoing engagement.

Cllr Nargis Khan replied to our query re lack of rangers' visibility: *"The office is staffed for two hours per day, because we want the rangers out in the park"...* *"The Head of Service is also considering the particular needs of Clissold Mansion*

and Park once the HLF is completed...to respond to anticipated use"... *"The Park rangers have a mobile phone...this number is on a sign on the rangers' office door."*
ACTION: John Hudson agreed to contact John Wade, Head of Parks, for further update.

Park Manager's Report

- Michael Dixon reported an improvement in responsible **dog ownership**. The Council will meet again with the Dog Trust to provide dog training.
- There was an incident in which people inadvertently got locked in the Park after closing time, even though the bell had been rung. Michael is reviewing/considering lengthening the **opening hours**. Michael said the current Park opening time was 7 a.m. but it takes time for staff to drive from the Parks' yard. CPUG pointed out that the notices state a 7.30 a.m. opening. It was felt that this can lead to conflict and that clarity in practice and communication was needed. Could this be part of the review? ACTION: Michael Dixon
- **3 Queen Elizabeth's Walk** – planning permission has been submitted to allow the tennis club to take it over.
- **Rats** – baiting continues with a reduction noted in the New River but continued sightings in the lakes.
- Debris has now been removed from the **New River**.
- **The toilets** are subject to continuing graffiti but culprits have now been caught and charged. It was remarked that wet leaves around the toilets are dangerous, especially for the elderly.
- **51 terrapins** have now been safely captured and sent to a refuge. They will be checked by a vet and relocated.

The Lodge in the Park was discussed. It was reported by the family of the long-term resident that LB Hackney has written requesting vacant possession. This is apparently in line with policy to encourage single people to transfer to smaller premises and bring all park lodges into Council use. LBH wish to get rid of portacabins in the depot yard and use the Lodge as a mess. However, Simon Biss, Michael Dixon, Cllr Linda Smith and CPUG had no prior knowledge of this development. This has not been part of the consultation process or plans.

There were two issues: the eviction, which if forced would be wrong at a personal level; and the issue of planning permission and the change of use from domestic to office use. Would this be suitable? There has been no consultation and from which budget would this come?

CPUG wished to express dismay at the process and would like to press the Council for information on this and other non-disclosed park issues.

Heritage Lottery Fund Manager's Report

Simon Biss reported that the **tendering process** is well underway and will be submitted to the Council cabinet on 24th November 2009. Contractors would then be on site mid/end January 2010 setting up on the hardcore near the paddling pool, with work starting at the end of February. The tendering for the temporary café is nearing completion and '5 Star Caterers' have been nominated. Planning permission has been sought for it to be sited near the

bandstand area. The current House café will remain open until the temporary café/ kiosk opens in the 2nd week in January. Concern was expressed about the lack of indoor facilities attached to the kiosk. It was reported that this had been discussed and a marquee would now be provided. A request was made for hut-type accommodation instead, akin to the contractor's but it was emphasised that this was a temporary solution and monies provided here would be taken from the permanent, long-term facilities. A question was posed as to the position under the trees in the shade but Simon said there were logistical reasons for this e.g. access to electricity and location of other temporary facilities.

• Simon Biss also reported that the paddling pool would be out of action next summer. CPUG felt this was not satisfactory and Simon agreed to review this.

ACTION: Simon Biss.

The House – Hoardings will be erected around the House, the rose garden, extending up to the toilets, and will also be placed around the animal enclosure. There will be temporary portacabin-style units for toilets, rangers and tennis club. Temporary toilets will be positioned near the playground and bowling green.

Public safety and Works Traffic. Simon stressed that there will be pre-determined routes and intersections with the public will be supervised. There will also be a need to avoid tailbacks of traffic onto Church Street.

John Hudson thanked Simon for his report and invited questions and further comments:

Communication and consultation. Barbara MacFarlane felt that the communication and consultation process was not satisfactory and that promises to keep CPUG in the loop had not been met. CPUG felt that it is Hackney's responsibility to disseminate information more clearly. The revised plans are not in the public domain and Ken Worpole, Chair of CPUG, has been asking for proposals, management structure and business plans to be placed in the public domain.

ACTION: Simon Biss agreed to look at communications.

Space for the elderly. Sylvia Anderson reported that she had asked about provision in the new House for senior citizens and had been advised that they would be able to hire room/s for the same fee as other community users i.e. for about £25 per hour, which she felt was unreasonable. CPUG recommended that Hackney consider concessionary rates.

The Stakeholders Forum has begun and includes CPUG, the tennis club, the one o'clock club and the Growing Community. AFTERNOTE: Simon Biss to post minutes on the Council website please.

The Wheels/Skatepark is to be repositioned 15 metres west of the previously proposed site, towards Playground area, taking into account consultants' advice re noise nuisance and proximity to local residents.

The meeting returned to the discussion about communication. It was agreed that, in view of public interest in imminent developments, a means of interactive dialogue and debate could be explored. Thanks were extended to Isabelle Gore who manages the CPUG website. The general consensus of the meeting was that it is not appropriate or sensible for our website to try to provide detailed information about the project; this should be provided by the Council and on the Council's website. It is not our job to do this and we do not have the resources to do so. CPUG reps report all current issues back to CPUG meetings, but the ability for information and comments to be posted on our website could be useful, subject to our being able to screen out unacceptable content. ACTION: John and Caroline to review and contact Isabelle to investigate.

AOB:

The Soccer club would like space to store kit.

ACTION: Simon Biss to investigate.

There is a proposal to install floodlights for the Tennis Club. The Tennis Club is in favour. There were many questions: When will planning permission info be submitted? Does this mean only the Tennis Club will be allowed night access? What route would be taken? (Simon Biss suggested this would be via new entrance on Church Street). What are the implications for other night uses – vandalism, the night noise of nearby skateboard park etc.? There are concerns from local residents that this will bring trouble into the Park. ACTION: Simon Biss to keep CPUG informed and place details on the website.

Water management. In view of time constraints, it was agreed to follow this up outside the meeting.

ACTION: John Hudson to report back.

Cycling. It has been confirmed that there are plans for a permanent cycle route as part of the Greenways project plus a temporary route for the Olympics. CPUG felt that volume, speed and possible pinch points need to be carefully managed. Local cyclists are mainly considerate but an increase in commuter cycling might be problematic. This issue should be open to consultation and referred in particular to vulnerable groups e.g. the elderly and those with disabilities.

For HLF Project issues contact

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For Council issues contact

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To join Clissold Park Users Group contact

clissold@googlemail.com and visit www.clissoldpark.com

...or just come to the meetings!

Next meeting of CPUG:

Saturday 9th January 2010 @ 11 – noon

Venue to be advised. ALL WELCOME!