

CLISSOLD PARK USER GROUP

July/August 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.

To join the Clissold Park User Group (CPUG) mailing list contact clissold@google.com

Meeting Minutes of 4th June 2009

Present:

CPUG elected Reps:

Ken Worpole, Chair; Matt Jeary, Co-Vice Chair; Caroline Millar, Co-Vice Chair; Yvonne Hill, Newsletter Secretary.

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

Park Manager: Michael Dixon

Hackney Councillors: Councillors Nargis Khan (Parks and Leisure), Karen Alcock (Deputy Major), Matthew Coggins, Linda Smith.

Simon Biss HLF Project Manager

PLUS 15 Park Users (full list available on request)

Ken Worpole welcomed all.

Matters Arising

Dogs Simon Lissner outlined the outcome of a meeting with Eleanor Johnson, the Parks Development Officer. Rangers do not have the authority to enforce responsible dog ownership so the key is training and education, and to make dog owners aware. There are plans for Dog Training courses in Shoreditch Park and in the future at Clissold Park. Neighbouring Councils e.g. Islington have byelaws that include fines for the minority of irresponsible owners, but Hackney has not adopted this policy.

Simon and Mark will remain in contact with Eleanor Johnson. If Park Users have any concerns about dogs in Clissold Park please contact simonlissner@aol.com.

Park Manager's Report

Michael Dixon mentioned recent repairs to the aviary and expressed dismay at the constant vandalism in the toilets and to the floral display in the bowling green.

The paddling pool has been cleaned and open every day in the hot weather. The group congratulated Michael and his team on the success of the pool; it was a joy to see so many children enjoying themselves.

Concerns were raised about rubbish accumulation and disposal. Why were there so few bins? Why no large bins? Are the rangers responsible for litter disposal on the tennis courts? The compost enclosure is unsightly and encourages dumping; could the gates be closed? Why can the bins not be emptied as end-of-day duties to prevent the inevitable sprawl caused by overnight fox and squirrel raids?

Michael confirmed that the Rangers are responsible for the tennis courts. The gates on the compost enclosure are too heavy to close and the use of larger bins contravenes health and safety rules. Michael thought the Park usage had increased and that Rangers had responded accordingly but he agreed to look into bins and rubbish disposal.

ACTION Michael Dixon.

Security

Concern was raised yet again about the lack of Rangers' visibility. The office is manned just two hours per day and this at a time of increase park use, children in paddling pool etc.

Where is the access to a First Aider? The Rangers need to be available both in the office and in the Park. Clissold Leisure Centre appears to have high staff presence, why not the park too? Ken addressed Cllr Nargis Khan about the need for more staff for such a high use, successful park. Cllr Khan said that this was a valid point and that she would look into it.

ACTION Cllr Khan.

Disability Access

Disappointment was expressed about the continued and oft-reported lack of handrail on the House steps. This did not come under the Disability Discrimination Act but could nothing be done for an interim period until the House is refurbished? Alas, it appears not. Councillors need to take note.

Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) Clissold Park and House Restoration Project

Simon Biss, Project Manager, gave a presentation on the project, to be delivered by mid 2011, which includes:

- Restoration of Clissold House to its original 18th century layout and conservation of its heritage features – to include three small function rooms on upper floor for community hire, with lift. There will be a fenced off area through the Park to allow secure night access.
- New animal area with walkway through deer enclosure
- Improved accessibility to the House

- New position of Rangers' office with view across bandstand and into playground
- Increased café facilities
- Re-landscaped pleasure garden (current rose garden) and new paved seating area with flat, easy access
- Repairs to the two lakes including de-silting, edge repairs and new fountain
- Extensive remodelling of the lawn and driveway to the House, restoration of original features – stone steps, railings and 18th century lamps
- Removal of old public toilets and incorporation into House
- Creation of new animal enclosure including new butterfly tunnel
- Extension of New River and improvements to existing section
- Repairs to bridge and addition of two new crossings
- Playground extended
- Five aside football enclosure on Redgra pitch by tennis courts.
- Creation of a multi-use games areas, and a wheels/skateboard park (already great interest from the skateboard community!)
- Creation of additional toilets and community space in bowling pavilion, and outdoor classroom
- Extensive arboriculture work and new trees suitable to heritage of the park
- Renovation work to paddling pool and all drinking fountains
- Repairs to/replacement of all benches, bins and signposts.

Tennis Courts and Playground will remain operational during most of project work. Temporary accommodation will be found for Tennis Club until the empty house on 3 Queen Elizabeth's Walk is ready.

Consultation

Further focused consultation will include

1. The wheels/skateboard park and
2. The café.

A new Stakeholder Forum will be established led by council staff and will include CPUG. Later on, prior to completion, the council will form four working groups to focus on:

1. Clissold Active – to develop sports, healthy living and recreational activities
2. Community Clissold – events, volunteering etc.
3. Natural Clissold – wildlife etc.
4. Accessible Clissold – ensuring the House and Park are accessible.

Ken thanked Simon Biss for his presentation and invited questions on **Key Issues:**

- Given the volume of usage and interest in the park and new plans and concerns expressed (for example, re the skate-park) the staffing issues would now have to be seriously and urgently considered. This is not just a capital cost issue but also an ongoing revenue issue. If park usage is to increase even more, adequate staffing is imperative.
- Could recycled plants be transplanted into a quiet area? Not everyone wants activity.
- How effective would drainage of the slope in front of the House be? Simon Biss confirmed drainage has been included in the plans.
- Recruitment of dedicated House Manager has not been agreed and this is still an area of concern. Simon Biss confirmed that he will lead on this during the development.
- The Redgra area remains contentious. For example, Stoke Newington School have not been consulted and at the moment use it extensively for Sports. Will this be compatible with proposals? Simon has spoken to the school about this and they have agreed as a temporary measure to mark out a field for the school to use. He will continue to liaise with the school.
- Will pond life be carefully considered? It will be impossible to simply tip pond life from one pond to the next. ACTION
Simon Biss to consult design team.

Simon Biss confirmed that the café will be closed on 14th December 2009 and there will be a short gap until temporary café opens in January 2010.

For HLF Project issues contact
simonbiss@hackney.gov.uk

For Park Management issues contact
michael.dixon@hackney.gov.uk

For Council issues contact
nargis.khan@hackney.gov.uk

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
5th September 2009
11 – noon
in Red Room of Café**

ALL WELCOME!