

# Minutes of Friends Groups Meeting

**Saturday 6th June 2015**

**Present:** Dave Morris (F of Lordship Rec, and of Tottenham Cemetery), Anne Scott (White Hart Lane Rec), Phil Chinn and Mandy Hawting (Wolves Lane), Ceri Williams (Chestnuts), Catherine Appleby (Coldfall Wood), Martin Ball (Down Lane Park), Cliff Osborne (TCV and Railway Fields), Joan Curtis (Lordship Rec)

+ for Items 6 onwards: Simon Farrow (LBH Head of Frontline Services)

**Apologies:** Deborah Cawkwell (Markfield Park, Manchester Gdns and Paignton Park), Joyce Rosser (Priory Common), Pamela Harling (Meadow Orchard Project), Gordon Hutchinson (Alexandra Palace), Michael Johns (Queens Wood), David Warren (Parkland Walk), Chris Setz (Tree Wardens), Mal Hawley (Downhills Park)

**1 Minutes of last meeting** Accepted.

**2 Marathon** Thank you to Tony Healey who ran the marathon for the Forum and raised a considerable sum (including £560 through our PayPal button). Deborah to 'approve' those donations in order to get the money released to us.

**3 Haringey Walking Weekend** Joan suggested the possibility of organising a Haringey Walking (Festival) Weekend for next year with a partnership between the Forum, Federation of RAs, Haringey Sports and leisure officers and perhaps TfL and any other relevant or interested bodies. The idea would be to publicise our existing walk maps and create a brochure with details of other Haringey walks throughout the borough including as many parks as possible. Joan will follow this up.

**4 LBH Budget** The Forum wrote to all Councillors with our proposals for proper funding and management of the parks service in light of impending cuts but we are shocked we have had no response from any Councillors or leaders of parties. We recognise the great job the parks service staff have been doing in keeping up parks and green spaces under very difficult circumstances.

**5 London and National** London Friends Picnic in the embankment park next to Parliament on the last day of Love Parks Week on 2 August from 12-2pm. All urged to continue to promote the UK Save Our Parks Petition for adequate funding and statutory protection for public green space.

## **6 Parks Reports**

**Coldfall Wood** All going well and meeting regularly with growing membership. Organising lots of walks in the wood with money raised from local people. A few problems with burnt out bikes and fires but mostly good news. Are doing water testing of the stream.

**Wolves Lane** Had a useful meeting with Simon Farrow, discussion ideas and options for future. Fourth meeting of the Friends coming up in June and have around 10-13 people attending with around 150 on membership database. Are developing website, twitter and facebook. Held a

successful Open Day with bouncy castle and facepainting and people expressed strong feelings about Wolves Lane with lots of anecdotes of positive experiences they had there over generations. Planning a woodland tree spotting walk with den for children at the end. **Simon Farrow response:** *Active discussions ongoing. Met with scrutiny members and with Organic Lea to draw on experience in planning future developments. Decisions will be made by next spring.*

**White Hart Lane Rec** Have put in their ideas for improvements and a long term vision for the park to the Council. Also a risk assessment has been done on the safety of paths in the park for walking which at present have trip hazards which need to be addressed to make the park more usable. The pond needs repair urgently. Park is about more than just sport. Need to get a more comprehensive response from the Council in order to feel that things are moving on at all. **Simon Farrow response:** *Noted that Forum members are very keen to see improvements to this neglected park. There are proposals to divorce White Hart Lane Rec from the sports strategy and change its designation as 'football pitches' to make way for other plans for the park as a whole. There are no resources at present for a complete masterplanning exercise for the park. Time Pyall's team should address any health and safety issues with paths, pond etc.*

**Lordship Rec** All going well. Now have 21 distinct and dedicated user groups in the park organising a variety of activities. The latest is a new skateboard club. Tottenham Ploughmans put on River Fest attended by Thames 21. The groups are organising a Youth Event on 18 July, a Blockorama steel band event on 8 August, One World Folk Festival on 5 September and Tottenham Flower and Produce Show on Sept 19. The Hub centre will be celebrating its first birthday on July 11 with an open day. Formed an alliance with the Broadwater Farm Res Assoc and Broadwater United FC to campaign against planning dept draft policy proposals for future demolitions / redevelopment of local social housing and housebuilding on a third of Lordship Rec - see petition: <http://chn.ge/1lhtHoa>. 200 local people attended a public protest meeting about this. The River Moselle Group is developing a management plan for the river. Report from Thames Water identified 1,000 polluting misconnections upstream but no legal enforcement has yet been done by Haringey to put this right. £100k has been obtained to build an outdoor gym. **Simon Farrow response:** *Misconnections: some progress in getting funding for enforcement action.*

**Tottenham Cemetery** New group have been meeting monthly. 40 members. Controversy over some recent tree cutting. Friends trying to get a walkabout with management. **Simon Farrow response:** *Site visit took place re tree cutting/planting*

**Chestnuts** Have new committee and active members in the group. Now meeting monthly on the first Saturday of the month for work and activity days and general meetings. Event on 7 June. Obtained £14.6k from Trust for London for creating arts and gardening involvement in the park. Work has begun with local people to create a peaceful area for people to sit with benches, plants and trees. Doing a mown path through the meadow area and orchard planting. Council has obtained money to put in an outdoor gym. Obtained Public Health funding to research what activities girls do in parks as Chestnuts tends to cater more for boys. They have researched Tree platforms in Arundel Square, Islington – seems girls like to sit up high where they feel less vulnerable. Since the demolition of the derelict pavilion work has not been satisfactorily finished off and communication with the contractors is not good and they are not sure who are the people to deal with in the

Council. The Beech hedge cutting has not been done. The friends now have use of a standpipe and hose to maintain areas they have developed with People's Postcode funding of £1.9k.

**Down Lane Park** All going well. Engaging Council in improvements; fencing, paths and drop down pavements at entrances. Have stopped some proposed commercial events as they were thought to be too large and damaging. The friends feel that the park is too small and the area too residential to have large music events. Campaigning against the planned 'Green Road Link' going through the park as it is felt the park is a green link in itself and has paths across it. More positive forms of links to the marshes are being discussed. It is possible to view scale models of the council's proposed nearby Tottenham Hale developments (including many controversial new tower blocks) at Council's regeneration event. ***Simon Farrow response:** the Tottenham Green Infrastructure Partnership used to be a developer-led organisation but now has transitioned into a Councillor-led group to develop the green link (now called green web).*

**Bruce Castle** Pavillion Café now open (allow Friends of Cemetery to meet there for free). Tottenham Active family festival on June 4th.

**Tropical Gardens** New pocket park has been developed in Houghton Road, West Green Road.

**Railway Fields** Friends going well. Held a dawn chorus walk attended by 30 people. Organising small events and a Wild Flower ID Course.

**7 Staffing and Personnel** Simon reported that 4 new staff have been recruited. One will replace Bridget as Events Officer, One will be major projects officer (eg for Wolves Lane, Lordship Rec etc), one will deal with leases for parks buildings and one will deal with Homes for Haringey and Health and Safety. Andy Briggs has been moved to Children's Services and Simon has been promoted to interim head of Direct Services. Martin Hall dealing with equipment. On the ground there are 2 new apprentices in Lordship and Finsbury Park and there will be 2 more by September. 3 new team leaders: Bruce Castle, Finsbury Park, Grass cutting. Some long term agency staff converting to permanent Council Staff. Agreed to give us an updated diagram with all posts when filled by July.

**8 Corporate Plan / Budget for Parks** Started 1 April. Looking at options for Wolves Lane, Park Events (generation of income, events policy is on Council website), Parks Efficiencies, Parks Commissioning. The budget is stable for a year and after that cuts will be incorporated into budget.

**9 Landscape Review** Officers and partners to look at landscapes in parks with a view to how they can be maintained more easily and cheaply.

**10 Commissioning Review** To look into alternative ways of doing things based on research across the country. Options to be produced in Autumn for further consultation.

The meeting expressed concern that the Parks Service was getting smaller and dependence on commercial events was growing with the direction towards more privatisation and the growth of the importance of developers and s106 money. Instead the Council must ensure the Parks Service has

adequate funds to provide the service required.

**11 TCV** Contract has been renewed for one year and then reviewed with the possibility of another 2 years. Plan to start a weekend volunteering group in addition to the 2 days in the week. Have advertised for new post. Are able to support training for friends groups and will send out a list of possible courses.

**12 Groundwork** Contract extended for one year awaiting new arrangements to extend further. They are planning some work in Woodside Park.

**13 Next meeting Saturday 5 September**