

## Minutes of meeting 4<sup>th</sup> November 2017

**Present:** Rodolfo Alvarez (Friends of Bruce Castle Park), Martin Ball (Friends of Down Lane Park) (part), Phil Chinn (Friends of Wolves Lane), Ivana Ćurčić (Friends of Chestnuts Park), Quentin Given (Friends of the Paddock) (part), Pamela Harling (Meadow Orchard Project and Hornsey Church Tower), Klaus Kuerner (Friends of Bruce Castle Park), Dave Morris (Lordship Rec) (part), Clare Parry (Friends of Downhills Park), Joyce Rosser (Friends of Priory Common) (part), Robyn Thomas (Alexandra Park), David Warren (Friends of the Parkland Walk and Queens Wood), Chair. From 11.00, Tony Healey (Haringey Parks Service). **Apologies:** Emmy (Friends of the Green, Bounds Green), Deborah Burkett (?), Joan Curtis (Friends of Lordship Rec), Clif Osborne (Railway Fields and TCV), John Miles (Parkside/Malvern Res Assoc)

1. **Minutes of the last meeting.** Phil Chinn had some amendments to the Wolves Lane entry:

*“Unfortunately the position at Wolves Lane is less rosy than that described in the minutes. A Metropolitan Open Space which was open to the public 7 days a week until the end of March has been partially open to the public for a few hours 3 times since then. Since July one of the two teachers, who were made redundant at the end of March, has been working with a small group of people with learning difficulties and their support workers one day a week to maintain the site. Since September she has recommenced the teaching of a group of teenagers with special needs from a local school, on the same day. This activity was agreed with London Grown. It is not part of their work on the site. There is no teaching of groups from mainstream schools. The teacher, myself and a few others are doing what we can to keep some of the key areas of the site in a reasonable state – primarily the Palm House, desert garden and rain forest. Other than London Grown and Crop Drop, the main user of the site is a commercial cut flower company who were a part of the third bidder for the site. The OrganicLea consortium do not have the resources or people to maintain the site and the Friends are concerned at the resulting deterioration.”*

2. **Scrutiny update:** Dave Morris reported that a site list had been produced (circulated) with the legal status of each site. Missing Wolves Lane and Ally Pally? Of 49 current Parks staff, 27 work solely for Homes for Haringey. When 50% cuts were made in 2011, these came only from parks staff. The budget is complex, but this too was circulated. Dave has presented to the review. Councillors are convinced that parks need to be properly run. Dave stressed again the importance of each site completing the satisfaction survey he has sent around (15 sites have returned them so far). A second hearing with health and planning officials (closed) has also taken place. Revenue money is required. A request has been tabled that all green space in the Borough is put under the protection of Fields in Trust (8 sites currently supported). There is more detailed evidence to be submitted.
3. As a result of a **national inquiry** about green spaces, a group of **governmental and national greenspace** representatives has been set up. The first meeting was to have been at Lordship Rec on the 23<sup>rd</sup> November, but was **transferred to Westminster**.
4. How can the Forum support the **court case concerning Finsbury Park**? Circulation of sample letters would be helpful.
5. Joyce Rosser raised the issue of **planning applications** no longer being notified to neighbouring sites. It was noted that resident’s associations are not always best placed to respond to planning applications.
6. Joyce also raised the ongoing issue of **water misconnections**, causing sewage to be released into the Moselle. This has still not been fully addressed (in particular the case of Alexandra Primary School). Love the Lea will be organising a rivers forum in 2018. Hale Wharf and potential flooding was briefly discussed.
7. The proposed **Haringey Development Vehicle** does not directly affect parks at this stage (although Woodside House and St James’ arches are in the proposal areas).
8. Items for discussion with **Tony Healy**: rough sleepers in parks, traveller caravans in parks, drinkers in Bruce Castle Park, booking parks for community events, acid crimes.

Site reports:

**Alexandra Park:** has had a successful year of walks and events (important for the kids) and intends to have an evening meeting programme. There has been some discussion about having a zipwire in the Park (which would involve having a large tower in Redston Field).

**Bruce Castle Park:** Successful celebration for 125 years of the Park. The sunflower competition completed successfully. There has been liaison with the police over travellers in the park (a gate was broken and there is damage to the grass) and knife crime.

**Chestnuts Park:** there are now monthly garden sessions in the willow garden and orchard and the council are providing spring bulbs for planting. The gate on the children's playground needs replacing and some of the play kit needs repair.

**Finsbury Park:** Friends were at the High Court this week to get a ruling on the use of the park for the Wireless Festival. The ruling will affect all London parks. Next year will be the 150 anniversary of the park.

**Downhills Park:** the travellers, who were in the park are now gone. There was some discussion as to why they come to parks in the Borough. There is due to be a TCV task there. A tree has come down in the pond, there will be some bulb planting and some of the orchard trees are dying.

**Down Lane Park:** there is continued concern about when the money promised to the park will be delivered. The perimeter of the park is under continued pressure from development plans close to the park. Vandalism continues to be a problem. The Café Connect (in the old bowling club house) is about to open.

**The Paddock:** scrub clearing and path maintenance work continues with TCV. Veolia has proved a grant for a pond. The Friends are due to meet Simon Farrow to discuss use of S106 money from the Hale Wharf development (which will completely overlook the site).

**Parkland Walk:** there continues to be regular work sessions. There have been recent repairs to benches and work to bridges continues. Work on the Gospel Oak rail line continues.

**Queens Wood:** recently had a fungus walk. The Friends are preparing guidelines for group leaders who use the park (which will be circulated when ready).

**Wolves Lane:** it was noted again that the minutes of the last forum need amending. The Friends AGM was held on 21<sup>st</sup> October. There is continued concern over the lack of public access to the site and deterioration of buildings. The Friends are getting a quote for repairing the palm house glass. The local councillors are meeting OrganicLea (the leaseholders) next week. The lease with the Council has now been signed.

#### **Responses from Tony Healey:**

- Lewis Taylor is now head of parks Operations. Current recruitment is for a Nature Conservation Officer, a Parks Development Manager, a Parks Project Officer and an Allotments Officer.
- A survey of rough sleepers in Haringey green spaces is about to take place. Assistance with hostel places will be given, as the survey is carried out.
- As part of the current scrutiny process, protection by Field in Trust is being looked at.
- The suggestion about collecting green waste in parks (now that free house collections have been stopped) has been tried before, but unfortunately attracts all sorts of other waste, so is not practicable. He agreed that putting a charge on green waste collection may increase fly tipping in green spaces.
- As part of the current scrutiny process the Council is looking at protecting its green spaces, which could include registering with Fields in Trust. There was some discussion about what makes a site suitable for registration and how this fits in with Green Flag designation.
- Water misconnections are now being handled by a new member of staff, who is working closely with Thames Water.
- Travellers in Haringey parks have all now been moved on. The Council may put in more bollards to prevent access for vehicles to vulnerable sites. Enfield deal with this problem through the use of High Court orders. Haringey has two travellers officers and there are two small sites in the Borough for them. There was some concern about moving them away if they have nowhere else to go.
- There is to be a new engagement and education programme on littering with new bins. Joyce's suggestion about dog waste bin notices (telling people that all bins can now be used) will be part of that process. Liaison with Friends groups and new signs will be part of this process. There was some comment that KingdomSecurity staff, who tackle littering offences, can be aggressive and tend to target vulnerable people.
- Tony stressed the importance of reporting anti-social behaviour to Pauline Siddall (Community Neighbourhood Watch Link Manager). Park staff are often unresponsive. Could Neighbourhood Watch groups be involved?
- The problems with the Bruce Castle fence is an ongoing ownership issue.
- There was some concern that some sites are not as well maintained as others. Tony was not aware of any Council owned green spaces that did not have a Friends Group. All spaces are on the maintenance roster and no distinction is made between sites.

The meeting closed at 1pm.