

Minutes of Forum General Meeting 6th April 2019 at Bruce Castle Museum

Present: Friends Groups/community representatives from: **Alexandra Park** (Robyn Thomas), **Antwerp Arms Association** (Martin Laheen), **Avenue Gardens** (Susan Delgado), **Bruce Castle Park** (Klaus Kuerner), **Coldfall Wood** (Victoria Midwinter), **CREOS** (Glenys Law), **Down Lane Park** (Martin Ball), **Downhills Park** (Clare Parry), **Finsbury Park** (Clive Carter and Barbara Baughan), **Lordship Rec** (Joan Curtis and Dave Morris), **Nightingale Gardens** (Susan Beckett), **Priory Park** (Jenny Bryant), **Queens Wood** and **Parkland Walk** (David Warren), **Railway Fields** (Mary Hogen), **Tower Gardens** (Zoe Fudge), **The Conservation Volunteers** (Clif Osbourne and Mat Pendergast), **White Hart Lane** (Anne Scott and Hesketh Benoit) **And for Part Two:** Haringey Council (Simon Farrow, Stuart Hopking)
Apologies: **Chestnuts Park** (Ceri Williams), **Wolves Lane** (Phil Chinn), **Hartington Park** (Chloe Tait), **Parkside Malvern** and **Haringey Rivers Forum** (John Miles), **Priory Common** (Joyce Rosser).

1. Dave Morris as chair **welcomed all present**, and circulated various key documents including February 2019 minutes.

2. Minutes of 2nd February were accepted with the following comments and amendments:

Item 43 - The group agreed to support the Friends of Bruce Castle in relation to opposing applications from NFL to use Bruce Castle Park for their Tailgate events. Item 19 - Should have read 'embraced the importance of getting external funding with support of friends and community' rather than 'limitations of external funding' Item 28 - Delete 'not dynamic enough' Item 42 - WHL would like to comment that Simon Farrow did not respond to questions regarding small grant fund. Item - Error correction 'Lew Smith' should read 'Lew Taylor' from Haringey Council.

3-8. Resources for Haringey Parks Campaign - The Forum at its previous meeting had agreed to launch a campaign for resources for Haringey Parks. The first Forum campaign meeting for Friends Groups to plan the campaign was the 23rd February. 5 groups' reps attended. The minutes of this meeting were circulated to our list and at the Forum meeting.

4. It was confirmed that our aims were to get the **LBH Scrutiny Cttee recommendations** implemented, and for funding for parks to return to pre 2010 levels. 5. Dave Morris distributed the **Forum's 2011 Parks funding campaign leaflet** and the forum agreed this would be updated and redistributed. 6. The forum agreed a **questionnaire** would be a useful tool for engagement and confirming park user requirements. 7. Joan had proposed a **day of local action by Friends Groups** in their local parks on July 14th (this could include a petition and questionnaire + activities and events in parks)

8. A Forum delegation (Dave, Klaus, Ceri and Phil) met with Cllr. Hearn (LBH Cabinet Member for the Environment), David Murray (Assistant Director Environment) and Sarah Jones (Events and Partnership Manager) to discuss the future of parks funding, to lobby for greater resources and implementation of the Scrutiny Cttee recommendations. They felt Cllr. Hearn was engaged with the discussion and admitted that the current funding levels were not adequate. The forum members spoke of the situation as at crisis levels, but David Murray did not agree with this statement. Cllr. Hearn agreed that the parks and green spaces benefit a wider set of issues such as children's health, adult mental health etc. The delegation stated that however bad finances are parks still have to be managed properly and the council needs to work with the HFoPF and see parks as a precious and essential asset, otherwise more money will have to be spent further down the line due to increased crime, residents' ill-health etc. Cllr. Hearn called for another meeting with HFOPF and David Murray to progress discussion of potential for obtaining further funds for the parks budget. Insight will also be given into parks finances in more detail. Could the Council's budgets for public health, transport (paths), planning gain etc, or other budget areas contribute to the parks budget as each dept will benefit in the long run? This meeting was seen as a positive start to our campaign. An open ended invitation was given to Cllr. Hearn to attend the HFOPF meetings, however she must give notice if attending. **9. Overall Campaigning** - next planning meeting hopefully to be arranged by the end of April. It was agreed to redo the campaigning leaflet and to have a day of action to engage the public on the 14th July 2019 during Love Parks Week. The questionnaire and petition would be discussed at a follow up meeting.

Other reports 10. Parks have been **assigned project officers**, the officers catchment areas are zoned with several parks in each zone. **11. Strategy for Parks** - To be raised in part two of the meeting with the council. **12. Pesticides and Herbicides** - To be discussed in part two of the meeting with the council. **13. Email List** - The new parkforum_internal@haringey.org.uk email list is up and running. Notify Dave if any Friends Groups reps wish to be added the list. LBH officers and Councillors are not on the list as its an internal list. The exception is TCV as previously agreed by the Forum. All agreed that a Forum 'news' list for updates to any interested persons could be activated but would lead to additional work and would require someone to manage it. To discuss at the next meeting. **14. Haringey Rivers Forum** – Going from strength to strength. To be discussed in part two of the meeting. **15. London and National** - No updates at this meeting. **16. Inappropriate development** - Friends of Finsbury Park would like a statement of support from HFOPF to stop TFL removing a 5m x 700m strip of park to build a dedicated cycle path adjacent to the road from Finsbury Park to Manor House. The unanimous response from the Forum was that the Forum is already in principle against any loss of parkland, and further comment could be given once the detailed submission from FOFP had been distributed by email. **17. Ward Budget Grants** have been abolished. Is the Small Grant Scheme therefore getting further Budget? This needs to be clarified by the council.

Part two

Site/Friends Reports **18. Queens Wood** Have continued their programme of walks and talks. Had their AGM, Ed Santry (Nature Conservation Officer Haringey Council) gave a talk on green initiatives. Issues - The Lodge has been released, the friends group would have liked to have seen the lease, to be discussed further with council. There was a fire in the wood in February. E scooters are becoming a nuisance, what can the council do about this? **19. Parkland Walk** They continue with litter picks. A wildlife trail has been developed which is open every weekend from May. Highgate Neighbourhood Forum have money from the CIL planning gain funding to spend on natural play areas in the open space at the junction of Shepherd's Hill and Archway Road, and in Parkland Walk. Frances Place - a house with no road access but right of way on foot through parkland walk has planning permission for works to the property. There are covenants with restrictions and the friends of Parkland Walk opposed the planning application. The owner is pursuing legal action to lift the covenants. **20. Downhills Park** Stuart Hopking is meeting with the friends group to walk around park to discuss volunteering opportunities. Tidy up Tottenham and the friends group have carried out litter picks. Works on the paths have started and the outdoor gym has been installed, there has been an increase in litter as a result. Litter is still an issue generally. Tennis for free is starting and the pond has been re-planted thanks to TCV. Drainage to the sports pitches continues to be an issue. The AGM is on the 28th April. Quantum Theatre - Wind in the Willows 22nd June. The Friends annual Art in the Park is on the 21st July. **21. Nightingale Gardens** Twice monthly litter pick. Beds to be planted and weeded. Tree stumps to be removed. Have paid for litter bins that will be installed soon. **22. Finsbury Park** Rise in parks staff numbers has had a good effect. This year marks the 150 year anniversary of the founding of Finsbury Park. There will be a photographic exhibition and a new updated publication by Hugh Hayes on the history of the park. They had their AGM where 30 people attended. Jeremy Corbyn is a patron of the park. Security is a big issue, discussions continue with the police. **23. Crouch End Open Spaces** London Wildlife Trust have helped with their management plan. TCV and Good Gym have been helping and have created a hazel coppice, a 200sqm wildflower meadow. Their Summer event is on the 7th July. There are still issues with rough sleepers. Pesticide use is a concern. The friends group is being sidelined in relation to Highgate School playing field which is being turned into a cricket pitch, this will build on the wildflower meadow that was installed and there will be no public access. **24. Down Lane Park** Successful seed swap event at Cafe Connect. A lease for the bowling club site has been given to the community cafe, which is now thriving as a meeting place and food growing hub. There are general repairs needed for the outdoor gym, play area and tennis courts which are all well used. There is a continuing delay in installing the MUGA. **25. Bruce Castle Park** Litter picks the 1st Sunday of the month, working with Tidy up Tottenham, going well. 15th June there is a dog walking event with the Police. Quantum Theatre - Midsummer Nights Dream, 21st July. Forthcoming meeting with Park Project Officer. At the end of the month there is a meeting with the NFL who will present new plans for the tailgate event. Thank you to the

forum for supporting FoBCP in opposing this highly inappropriate massive scale commercial event proposed for Bruce Castle Park. There is a tree report happening this year. There is digging adjacent to Bruce Castle close to an Archeological Site, how is this being monitored? 26. **Tower Gardens Park** The council are improving and refurbishing the children's playground in 2019/2020. Friends' litter picks and planting sessions the last Saturday of the month, going well. Received ward budget funding for £500.00. Constituted, new bank account and have insurance. Drug dealing and rough sleeping still an issue. Walk around with the park project officer due. 27. **Lordship Rec** Had AGM in February. The Hub has signed a lease for the building with rent offset by the services they provide, it took 5 years to negotiate the lease. Trees for Cities and the Friends have been jointly organising corporate volunteering sessions in the park (6 last year, the largest being 170 volunteers on one day). They have now signed a 5 year plan/contract for regular maintenance sessions, with some payment to the Friends. The Orchard and Meadow projects are ongoing. The adventure playground has been demolished as it was condemned as unsafe. There is a meeting on the 14th April to discuss a way forward. Two volunteers are running in the London marathon to raise funds for The Hub. There is a 5k sponsored walk on Sunday 7th April. 28. **Ducketts Common** Issues with litter and debris on Basketball courts before events, who is responsible for making sure this is clear? Basketball events very successful with up to 1500-2000 attendees on occasion. Improvements to Basketball and Netball facilities are needed for all parks. These events and activated sports pitches drive away drug dealing. Coaching sessions are ongoing to increase safety. 29. **White Hart Lane** Working with parks project officer to put new Masterplan in place. Community engagement sessions carried out at the end of 2018. 3500 leaflets delivered to surrounding properties. Friends group would be keen to see a copy of the report on drainage issues. The friends group request a meeting with Simon Farrow. Events taking place in the park 27th June to the 4th July. 30. **Priory Park** Dumped green waste an issue adjacent to gates. There are regular litter picks by the Friends Group and future work parties will be organised. An equipment and tool shed is being purchased. New playground equipment has been bought, but there is no money to install it. The group has started using the time credit scheme for volunteers. An outdoor gym is the next project. 31. **Avenue Gardens** A friends group is being established. Parks project officer is carrying out an assessment to create a management plan. Fly-tipping is an issue. Japanese knotweed has not been removed. A barrier is required to keep caravans out. Ed Santry is attending the next friends meeting. Signs have not been replaced. There is a tea party on the 22nd June. 32. **Coldfall Wood and Muswell Hill Playing Fields** Have had a dawn chorus walk and bird survey. There are some boggy patches. Waste bins need replacing, Japanese knotweed is an issue. 33. **Alexandra Park** Continued work parties and litter picks. Talks from Ed Santry and the Swift Conservation Trust. Haringey Rivers Forum is proposing a wetland area. There are activity days for families as well as a microscope club for children. The Great Fete is on the 17th August. 34. **Railway Fields** Monthly programme of volunteer days the 2nd and last Sunday of the month. Dawn chorus walk on the 28th April at 4:45am. David Bevan gave a biodiversity talk on the 29th June.

Simon Farrow's and Stuart Hopking's responses

35. **Queens Wood** Electric Scooters to be discussed with enforcement. The lease for The Lodge had a right to renew. 36. **Parkland Walk** Frances House - The council won the court case so the property owner of Frances House won't be able to remove covenants. The Neighbourhood Plan CIL will give contributions to parkland walk. 37. **Downhills** Groundsperson from Twickenham Rugby assessed the sports pitches and advised on some methods to reduce flooding. 38. **Three Avenues RA/Nightingale Gardens** - Council will follow up issues. 39. **Finsbury Park** Focus is on the 1st-10th August 150th anniversary celebrations, and launch of the new playground equipment. 7th August is the actual anniversary, 10th August is the Festival. 40. **CREOS** Council will follow up re. Highgate School proposed cricket pitch. 41. **Down Lane** The MUGA is going to tender and will be complete by the end of 2019. 42. **Woodside Park** Playground closed as unsafe. Funding to be identified and discussions re a new playground are afoot with Friends and councillors. 43. **Bull Lane** Haringey Council green space next to Selby Centre, but in Enfield. Saved from being sold off for housing after a 35 yrs long residents' campaign. There is now a master plan for new sports facilities. 44. **Bruce Castle Park** Digging is to do with the museum drains. 45. **Tower Gardens Park** No further update. 46. **Lordship Rec** De-silting of the Moselle silt pond is at last taking place. 47. **Ducketts Common** Council will clean courts prior to events, new nets can be installed. 48. **White Hart Lane** Meeting to go ahead with Glynis and Simon. Need to confirm status of paths on master plan. School works will affect the park at the Newham Road entrance. 49. **Priory Park** LBH project officer for area is David Theakston. Play equipment will be installed before the Green Flag Judging in June. 50. **Avenue Gardens** Japanese knotweed has been sprayed or

injected. Simon to arrange walk through with Sue to look at issues. 51. **Coldfall Woods** Ed and David looking at zonal issues, council will update. 52. **Alexandra Park** No further update.

53. TCV Update Lease has been signed. Plans developed to improve the cabin. An education officer has been sponsored for a whole year. Over 1200 children came through the teaching programmes last year. Volunteering is going well. New sites have been added to the portfolio. Protecting and improving the St Ann's Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) ie the land along the railway line, being discussed in collaboration with London Wildlife Trust, the GLA, NHS and Network Rail. Need to update the TCV contact list, friends groups to give details. Matt to send email to the group to reply to with contacts. Friends are very welcome to join the work days. Clif is retiring! The forum would like to say a big thank you to Clif for many years of service to improving our parks and green spaces.

54. Parks Staffing update. Les Harris, a team leader in Tottenham, is retiring after 33yrs service. Friends of Lordship Rec have organised a farewell/thank you event on the 2nd May at the Lordship Hub for parks staff and the Friends.

55. Strategy for Parks The development of the new strategy in partnership with the Forum has stalled due to the increased workload following the Green Flag concerns identified. Dates are being put together which Simon will send once clear whether European Elections (ie purdah) are going ahead. A second Forum/Parks Service meeting to be set up.

56. Bins – Future / replacement Bin Styles for our parks are being looked at again, there will be different bins for different types of spaces. Dog faeces now goes in general bins – the dedicated dog waste bins are gradually being removed.

57. Paddling Pools - maintenance works will be undertaken to open all 3 pools as usual.

58. Resources strategy The Forum reiterated our view that the parks service is in crisis due to chronic underfunding and understaffing. We are lobbying for more funds for parks - avenues to explore include Transport for London (incredibly none was allocated for parks paths), CIL, Section 106, Public Health etc. We encourage Park Officers to brief Cllr. Hearn and other Councillors on the true needs of the service.\

59. Pesticides/Herbicides Members presented concerns regarding pesticide use in green spaces and discussed potential alternatives and whether pesticide use was necessary everywhere it was used. Simon confirmed there was currently no viable alternative financially or technologically, the finance & staffing levels for manual weeding is not there, strimming is limited due to hand/arm vibration syndrome. Zoe proposed developing a network of pesticide-free green spaces where pesticides were already low in use or not used at all. Simon agreed there could be pilot areas as part of the review.

60. Green Flag Inspections The Council reiterated their commitment to these standards. They will deal with 9 red ratings for Green Flag sites to be inspected before June, others to follow September to November. Community Green Flag being encouraged as a mechanism for improving green spaces – a number of local Friends Groups have received this for the sites or part of sites they manage. See: <http://www.greenflagaward.org.uk/how-it-works/> Should flags be lowered where they have been given a red status? Council response is that Keep Britain Tidy have not requested that the flags be lowered as action is being taken to address their concerns.

61. Football Foundation plan for investment in Haringey. Consultation with key stakeholders last year (including the Forum). Simon to issue report when complete.

62. Next Forum general meeting. June 1st 2019. Minute-taker required.

ZF: 21/05/2019