

Minutes of the Parks Forum meeting held at The Town Hall Woolwich, 15th September, 2016

Present at the meeting:

Terry Powley	Chair
Nick Day	P.C.E.G.
Julia Grollman	Sutcliffe
Bob Thomas	The Tarn
Carole Thomas	The Tarn
Laurie Baker	Shootershill W.P.
Liz McDermott	F/O Pet Cemetery
John Webb	Well Hall/Avery Hill
Stephen O'Conner	Rockcliffe Gardens
Annie Townend	Greenwich Environment Forum
Gulle Stubbs	Maryon & Maryon Wilson
Christine Anthony	Maryon & Maryon Wilson
Janet Thompson	Horn Park
Robert Thompson	Horn Park

Apologies for absence:

Rob Goring, RBG
Hazel Greig-Midlane
Carol Kenna, Twinkle Park
Bee Twidale Secretary
Dave Stevenson Treasurer

Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising:

CT Feedback on the Great Get together in Woolwich was it did not achieve very much and that we should not bother to attend in future years. TP and ND agreed.

GS Charlton Park Gate will now be closed until 9.30am to prevent staff from local school parking. This will be monitored to see if it solves the problem.

GS The Skateboard Park at Charlton Park has received planning permission.

Parks Fest 2016 Evaluation.

T.P. Feedback from the Groups taking part had been that it was successful and the weather this year was a big help.

ND Expressed disappointment in the Greenwich Festivals Brochure.

TP Advised that the Council distinguishes between May and June as this is when Greenwich Festivals now take place and that July events are only mentioned in summary. He will take this up with Greenwich Festivals.

JG Asked when the money for Parksfest is sent out.

TP Advised that 80% is sent out as soon as they receive it from Greenwich Council and that the remaining 20% is sent out when the Parks Forum give their final report to the Council. The deadline this year is scheduled for 29th September and it is anticipated that the rest of the money will be distributed in late October. But he and Dave S still had to receive monitoring reports from three participating groups, so this could delay the process.

SO'C Expressed the view that this was a long time for groups to have to wait for their money. TP said that this was an issue which he and Dave constantly took up with Council officers, but this was not one on which they were prepared to budge. So it was important for groups to respond in a timely manner with their reports!

CT From running the stall at the Great Get Together she raised the lack of knowledge by general public as to where parks are. Suggested that it might be an idea to put addresses on leaflets.

ND Advised that there was very limited room and that the information was available on the website that was detailed on the leaflet. He also thought that the requirement to give figures of attendance and ethnicity breakdowns was onerous, but TP said that it should present no problem for groups. Informed estimates were appropriate, given the difficulties of tracking a fluctuating audience over several hours.

JG Suggested that postcodes could be used.

TP Thanked everyone that took part including 2 new groups and hoped that we would be able to continue next year.

Responses to Studies and Enquiries:

TP advised that the Green Infrastructure Meeting will now take place on 31st October 2016. Some members had already attended other meetings and fed back that it was led by consultants and included the survey of parks, SINC and MOL details and was interesting.

TP advised members should have received details of the Parliamentary Select Committee Inquiry into the future of the UK's public parks. Closing date to receive written information or to take part in survey online is 30th September 2016. Members discussed some of the issues that we may want to raise.

Current Issues:

ND P.C.E.G. has been shortlisted for a grant of either £8000, £10,000 or £12,000 depending on how the public voted in stores.

AT Greenwich Environment Forum is doing a study on mulberry bushes and would like to receive details of any mulberry bushes in gardens or parks. Details where to send information will be distributed.

GS Advised people of the notice of proposed disposal of open space consisting of Hervey Road Playing Field which will be included in a new lease to be granted to Blackheath Rugby Limited. TP will follow up with Sue Proudfoot, Chair of the Friends group.

GS Friends of Maryon and Maryon Wilson Parks will hold their AGM on Thursday 10th November at 7.30pm at New Charlton Community Centre. Everyone welcome.

GS Raised the issue of the problem of getting people Active & involved in the group. It would be interesting to hear how other groups are organised so we could perhaps learn from each other.

TP Suggested that we discuss this as a separate issue at our next meeting.

GS Agreed to survey the current groups to see how they organise themselves and bring the information to the Forum as a discussion aid.

ND Thought it was time to look again at the role of Friends Groups and the way they are set up.

Any Other Business:

ND There is a large amount of money available for non-statutory bodies but he for one doesn't have time to apply. The Council should assist groups applying for money to fill the gaps in funding.

TP Advised he would raise this with the Council again.

JG Suggested that other departments apart from Parks i.e. Public Health may be able to help write funding bids.

TP A survey of litter was conducted last month and groups responded with different levels of concern but it was still felt that it could be dealt with better in some cases. TP had raised the matter with Paul Martin and he advised that they would respond promptly if there were problems.

JT Advised that Paul Martin responds quickly to any concerns they raise.

ND 7 or 8 people do litter picking everyday for Plumstead Common including 2 Council employees. He felt that the litter wardens need to be more active around the Borough.

JW thought that there were not enough staff to deal with litter adequately.

ND Thought that we need a Borough wide strategy including education

TP The trial of not locking parks had been delayed but was now taking place. 5 Parks are included but Fairy Hill is not in the new trial.

SO'C Advised that Rockcliffe Gardens is taking part and there had been no problems to date and no complaints.

TP The Council need to consult before they introduce these trials to avoid the problems experienced.

CT The Council had asked groups for details of the number of volunteer hours that are spent in parks. Groups were responding but Eltham Park had not received a request. CT will forward the email.

Members will wish to know that Sue King, the Chair of the Friends of Well Hall Pleasaunce died suddenly recently. Sue was a long-serving, knowledgeable and enthusiastic participant in all the group's activities.

Date of next meeting; Thursday 1st December 7.30, Old Town Hall, Woolwich