



# Clissold Park User Group News

Notes of our May 11<sup>th</sup> 2019 meeting

**Attendees:** Committee members - John Hudson, Theresa Boden, Caroline Millar, Daphne Steele, Sylvia Anderson, Betty Manning and four other park users. Dominic Benjamin also attended from 11.50am to the end of the meeting at 12.00.

**Apologies:** Mark Forsyth, Cllr Sophie Cameron, Kath Willgress. Richard Crawford.

## Matters arising from the March meeting

The park would not provide a **drinking bowl for dogs** due to time and maintenance costs.

Although only Hackney Council materials can be posted in the park noticeboards, it has been confirmed that an exception will be made for **User Group material**, to promote greater engagement from other park users in its activities.

The proposal for a **new food market** to be in the park on a regular basis is still being explored and nothing will happen before 2020.

## Park Manager's Report

**Café** – a new menu is in place. Some prices have increased. A discount of 25p is offered if customers use their own cup, which equals the price increase. Reusable cups are also on sale in the café. People are reminded that dogs are not allowed in the building.

**Repairs** have been carried out on Clissold House including to plaster work and the pigeon wires.

**Butterfly dome** – will not open this summer the Council has agreed for CPUG to clear and replant in and around the dome in preparation for populating the dome with native butterflies (rather than tropical species which were used in the past) next year. CPUG volunteers will staff the dome from next summer.

*Please contact us to help with this very popular feature.*

**A new Park Management Plan** is being drawn up. Suggestions have been received from a number of park users. The meeting asked for the following to be included: a shelter for older people; tighter controls on motorised vehicles (concern about motorised scooters being used in the park); a closer integration with health and well-being services in the borough (this ties in with changes to the organisation of

primary care services that are currently in development); making better use of the Bowling Pavilion and Green which has been unused now for three summers; and for the New River to be cleaned and dredged and to flow again so as to reintroduce more and diverse species.

**Dog Owners** – are reminded that their dogs should be kept on leads around the café and New River (particularly important at this time of year because of nesting birds). The meeting asked when new signs (promised for over a year) about not feeding ducks would be put in place. Nor have the signs on the gates to the animal area been re-positioned, so that people can see the sign that telling them to keep the gates shut to protect the animals.

**Open House** – will take place on Sunday 22 September on the same day as the CPUG's celebration of the park's 130<sup>th</sup> birthday. Amir Dotan has offered to do a talk and we may also do guided tours but we understand there is a wedding that day so these may not be possible. *Mark/Caroline to check.*

## Chair's update

The Chair, Mark Forsyth was away so Vice Chair John Hudson gave the meeting an update.

**Park Security** – Seven people have been arrested in connection with recent muggings in the area. Two other incidents have allegedly occurred in the park in recent weeks at night and the police are involved. The meeting discussed whether people should be warned about possible risks of being in the park after it is closed. It was agreed that we should discuss this with the park manager and seek advice from the police on what messages should be given and how. The police, Safer Neighbourhood teams, park management and schools are working together on this. Some shops and businesses on Church Street have been designated as safe spaces where children and young people can go for help if necessary. *Please inform police if you see anything of concern.*

**Revamped website** – the revised website has been launched. This has involved a considerable amount of work by Isabelle Gore who designs and maintains the

website for us. It was agreed that she should be paid something for all the work she had done on the website over the past year. The meeting readily agreed to this, subject to the committee's procedure for authorising expenditure. *It was also agreed that the Group's appreciation and thanks would be passed to Isabelle.*

**Events** -Although the user group was now being consulted as part of the approval process for events, we are still not being given adequate and timely information about when events are happening once they have been approved. This makes it impossible for us to provide people with accurate information on our website. *It was agreed that this matter would be raised with the Council once again.*

**Pump-house tender** – still no news on this! This will be the fourth summer that it will be unused. Group was asked to *lobby councillors to see if this could be made to happen.*

**130<sup>th</sup> birthday event**- sadly not one person turned up to the meeting called for possible volunteers for the originally planned event on 22 June. Five people had emailed to say they might be able to help on the day. As a result of this apparent shortage of volunteer support we will downsize the event and combine it with Open House on 22 September. We are hoping to work with a local housing association (Peter Bedford) which is celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. We need to agree an overview of the event with them and then prepare a proposal for the Council events team *but we will need more volunteers!*

#### **Biodiversity report**

Richard Crawford, the CPUG biodiversity rep had sent his report and will provide monthly updates for us to share with park users.

The ducks and geese are breeding on the ponds, but a heron has been preying upon the mallard chicks. Now there are only two mallard ducklings left on the Runtzmere and two on the New River. The only protection they have are the reeds that were planted on the banks. On one day last week he saw five Canada geese chicks, four coot chicks and three tufted duck chicks and their parents and a reed warbler in the reeds on Runtzmere. That's the 50th species he has seen in the park over the last five years.

One of the park rangers has offered to do a **park 'bird walk'** possibly on the day of the 130<sup>th</sup> celebrations.

#### **Complaints policy**

In March a park user made a complaint to the user group against the CPUG Chair. The matter was investigated by three of the elected officers and a full and formal written response was given at the end of March. The complainant has replied to say that she

does not intend to pursue the matter further and there will be no further action taken by the group. A new complaints policy was agreed by the meeting and has been posted on the About Us page of the CPUG website. This relates only to complaints about the user group. Complaints about the park or park staff should be addressed to the park manager, Quinten Geurs.

#### **Any other business**

Park user Dominic Benjamin attended for the last ten minutes of the meeting. He wanted to raise a complaint about the behaviour of the Chair of the User Group. The one hour bi-monthly User Group meeting is not an appropriate forum for complaints to be heard and he was asked to put his complaint in writing, in line with the Group's agreed policy.

#### **Next CPUG meeting: Saturday 13th July 2019**

11am to 12.30.

Venue: Clissold House, Clissold Park

#### **Contacts**

Park Keepers: 0208 3566834. This connects to a mobile.

Park Manager: Quinten.geurs@hackney.gov.uk or call 020 8356 4215

Café Management: clissoldhouse@capergreen.com  
Clissold House Venues and Events Officer, Christine Rupprecht: christine.rupprecht@hackney.gov.uk or call 020 8356 5505

Head of Leisure and Green Spaces

Ian.Holland@hackney.gov.uk

Lead Councillor for Parks:

feryal.demirci@hackney.gov.uk

Police: 0208 721 2923 / 07879 603106 /

Clissold.snt@met.police.uk

Sargent in charge: Carroll Weeden

Carroll.L.Weeden@met.pnn.police.uk

Clissold Safer Neighbourhood Team: 020 8721 2923

#### **To join Clissold Park Users Group**

Sign up for our latest news on [clissoldpark.com](http://clissoldpark.com) / join our Facebook Group / and just come to the meetings!