



Clissold Park User Group News

June 2023 update

Attendees (those who signed the attendance sheet)

Theresa Boden (CPUG vice chair), Richard Crawford (CPUG biodiversity rep), Amir Dotan (CPUG history rep), John Hudson (CPUG vice chair), Alejaulia Martins, Peter Hills, Alison Heard-Mayer, Hilde Oord, Barbara Taylor, Ann O'Callaghan, Betty Manning, Tom Berliner, Natalie Teich, Peter O'Garr, Joanna Ryan, Lara Nicchi-Ghiri

Apologies

Sophie Cameron (CPUG chair), Caroline Miller (CPUG Treasurer), Quinten Geurs (Park Manager), Delilah Jeary (CPUG Secretary), Fliiss Premru (Cllr Clissold Ward)

1. Introductions

Attendees introduced themselves.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

Minutes of the previous meeting were circulated. Matters arising:

- Bird seed still not on sale in cafe apparently.
- Compostable cups will be coming into use.
- Hackney Council officers and Councillors to be asked to raise questions about the difficulties of gaining access to Clissold House. Also addressed in Chair report & discussed in AOB.
- The Splash Pad is now open at weekends and will open full-time in the school holidays (see item 3).

Action points:

- Some of the repairs to the playground have been undertaken but we don't have a full list.
- Leaf blowing machines will be operated later in the day to avoid noise nuisance in the mornings.
- Signs are being produced/designed but will not be ready until the autumn – it was felt that graphics would be clearer & more effective than words as there are many languages spoken in the park.

- Dogs on leads around the Pump House and café – A new Dog Control order is still under consideration by the Council for all parks.
- Action: Quinten & Ward Cllrs still to follow-up with One O'Clock Club
- RE: Chair's proposal to reduce the number of public meetings from 6 to 4 per year. John Hudson (CPUG Vice Chair) noted that his suggestion that it should be assessed after a year to see if it was working had not been Minuted and asked if it could be added.

The minutes were approved.

3. The Park Manager's report

The **Splash Pad** is open at weekends. A faulty compressor has been replaced. Schools and community groups have been able to book sessions in July and all the sessions are now fully booked.

Cow bins (for recycling) were used for general rubbish and won't be used again this year, but more bins will be arriving soon. Some will have a recycling compartment.

Planting: The wild flower beds in the rose garden are blooming! Unfortunately, the wattle fencing around the beds has been damaged and will have to be replaced.

Repairs to pathways and the toilets are being costed.

Volunteer sessions will take place on Wednesdays from 10.00 – 12.00.

Monthly litter picks will be held on the last Friday of every month 14.00 – 15.00. People can sign up via Eventbrite for both these events.

Community Payback are helping improve the park on Tuesdays 9.00-16.00.

Consultations will be held for "**larger improvement projects**" (details to be announced)

Walking Together – a new programme of walks is on display in the cabinet in the café and on the notice board in the Park.

Growing Communities will have a stall by the Growing Communities area selling fresh produce

(eg tomatoes, beans, cucumbers, lettuce, chard and flowers) 11.00 – 15.30 on Tuesdays May to October.

We hope to be able to commence **consultation on the old paddling pool** later this year. Exact timescales will be dependent on resource closer to the time.

FINKS is now operating the Pumphouse Kiosk – you can follow them on social media for updates on menu, opening times, and any discounts.

A **New Age Games programme** will take place from 2nd May to 24th July. Details are on display in the cabinet in the café and on the notice board in the Park.

There was a discussion on whether **Growing Communities** should be given **privileged access to park resources** when they are a commercial enterprise.

4. Feedback received by the Chair

The Chair shared some feedback from Ian Holland (Head of Services, Parks, Hackney Council) regarding recent enquiries about **damage following the London funfair**.

The damage that the recent fun fare had done to the ground in the top field will be repaired by harrowing, aerating, top dressing and re-seeding the affected areas. This will take place in the autumn as there are other events planned over the summer on this part of the park.

Question: Could any reports be circulated before the meeting to give people a chance to consider the issues they raise?

Action: Chair would consider if this was possible but we often receive the park manager's report the evening before the meeting so it is not always possible to send it out and the park manager sometimes attends to take questions and expand upon its contents. We will try and make copies available at the meeting.

5. Biodiversity report

Richard Crawford (CPUG Bio-Diversity Rep)

The **Bioblitz** took place on 21st May 2023 at the Dipping Pond.

6 people attended. 7 invertebrate species and 16 plant species were identified.

The next Bioblitz will look at biodiversity in Becksmere, which is a favourite breeding place for wildfowl. This year Grey Lag Geese, Canada Geese, Coot, Moorhen, Mallard, Tufted duck and Pochard all bred, either on the New River spur or on the bottom lakes. Richard Crawford noted that Mute Swans, Egyptian Geese and Little Grebes had not bred this year, possibly because Becksmere provided insufficient food for them to bring up chicks. A Bioblitz should answer this question. Looking ahead, it may be possible to

apply for funding to rewild the bottom ponds if their natural ecology is failing.

6. Tree Walk report

Caroline Millar (CPUG Treasurer)

CPUG has arranged for local tree and ecology expert Russell Miller to lead three guided tree and ecology walks around the park this year. The first took place on 14 May. 40 people booked to take part but about 20 more tagged along on a very hot and busy day in the park.

Russell introduced us to a huge number of different trees – for the very common to the very unusual, explained their lifecycle by introducing us to trees at various stages of vigour and decay. He explained the impact of climate change, insects, diseases, funfairs on the trees and other living things in the park. Altogether a fascinating and very informative couple of hours.

Two further (but different) walks are planned for the evening of Wednesday 19 July and the afternoon of Sunday 15 October.

Russell asks for a small donation for the walk and places can be booked via Eventbrite. We will put the link up in our website. We will also share links on social media.

7. Chair's report

A budget to **refurbish the toilets** has been approved and officers are looking into CCTV to discourage vandalism.

A discussion was held on the possibility of opening the **Splash Pad toilets** when the main block was out of order, and the need to provide better signage to discourage people from using the bushes.

Litter bins – more Eurobins will be provided but recycling bins have proved difficult due to contamination leading to the recycling centre being unable to separate. (see 3. and 4.)

Litter picks are ongoing – meet at the Butterfly Dome but there was interest in weekend litter picks as many people are not available during the week. Stig Southold has offered to lead weekend litter picks. ACTION: Chair to liaise with Stig and Park Manager to agree times/register/bags and litter picks and continue to monitor litter and bin provision. The park also needs more litterbins.

Planting – in Park Manager's report – wildflower planting in Café Garden and willow fences.

Playground & Dog Free Areas – funding and planning for self-closing gates, Park Management have identified fittings which will fit our Playground gates. No delivery time as yet.

Park Life Café and Finks Pump House – still complaints about service speed and staff, no bird seed on sale and the rose garden café does not seem to open very often. Very good feedback on

Finks – confirmed by the meeting although still a single dissent about it being named Finks Pump House rather than The Sluice House.

Access to Clissold House – still receiving complaints about lack of access via the lift. You can call the number on the website to be let in but this is an obstacle and doesn't work if there are no staff in café or office to let you in. Further discussion in AOB.

Splashpad – is open at weekends in July for the public and during the week for schools and community groups and all 30 sessions are booked up. New water bottle filler station has been installed. Feedback that families would like it to be open during the week and after school and not just at the weekends. It's difficult to explain to young children why they cannot use it during the week.

AOB

A discussion arose on the **dangers that cyclists, electric cycles and delivery cyclists** are causing by riding too fast through the park, using it as a short cut despite the cycle lanes on Green Lanes and Church St. The speed limit (5mph) and cautions to take care are not clearly signposted and Clissold Park is on Google maps and SatNavs as a cycle way. There was a suggestion that the Council could ask Google if it can be removed as a cycle route.

Action agreed: To request Park Management improve speed and etiquette signage for cyclists in the park and to discourage electric bikes and delivery cycles using it as a short cut. To ask the Park manager to put up better signs to discourage cyclists from using Clissold Park as a short cut and to ask Hackney Council to tell Google Maps to take the park off its cycleway map.

Disabled access to Clissold House is not effective. The phone number on the back door of the house doesn't always connect with someone who can facilitate access. There should be a speaker phone by the door to enable people to get in touch immediately with someone who can help. Clissold House is a public building, not a council office, and should be accessible to all, including wheelchair users.

Alison Heard-Mayer – The Park Manager's response re: disabled access to Clissold House Café was not accepted as adequate or effective. The ramps at the front are too steep for most wheelchair users, the office is not always staffed and the phone number to the café or the office doesn't generally connect to someone who can facilitate access. It was felt whilst it's understandable there are security concerns especially around private events at the House –

the café should be accessible to everyone. Action agreed: Chair & Vice Chairs to raise issue again with Park Manager & Hackney Council on improving access – suggestion perhaps registered disabled persons could have a swipe card giving them access to lift during café hours N.B. Alison Heard-Mayer- who asked for it to be discussed – happy to share with Chair or Dev Board a disabled person's view & suggestions for how it might be managed to if helpful.

Next meeting dates

The CPUG AGM will be held on Saturday 15th July. 11.00 in the Church View Room Clissold House. (CPUG AGM) we will be joined by Cllr Caroline Woodley, Hackney Council Cabinet Member for Parks.

Our Autumn meeting will be on Saturday 14th October . 11.00 in Church View Room, Clissold House

Volunteering and other events:

19 July – 6pm [Evening tree & ecology walk with Russell Miller](#)

Contacts

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

Park

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

Café Management: new details coming soon
Clissold House Venues and Events

Officer, venuehire@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

Seargent in charge: Carroll

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

Clissold Safer Neighbourhood Team: 020 8721 2923

To join Clissold Park Users Group

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