



Clissold Park User Group News

October 2023 update

Minutes from meeting on 14th October 2023

Apologies: Paul Reynolds, Caroline Millar

Minutes of the last meeting were passed as a correct record.

Matters arising from the last minutes:

The chair moved a vote of **thanks to Quentin Geurs**, the park manager, who will no longer be attending CPUG meetings as he has been promoted to Parks Area Manager.

The **Council markets consultation** mentioned the possibility of a farmer's market in Clissold park. There has also been a discussion about a regular Stall for 'Growing Communities' in the park. John Hudson stressed the importance of keeping Clissold park for recreation rather than commercial activity. There is some doubt about whether a Farmer's market would be commercially viable in Clissold park.

Following on from the presentation given by Caroline Woodley, Hackney council cabinet member for families, parks and leisure, at the AGM, Richard Crawford suggested that he could organise an open meeting on the management **of biodiversity in Clissold park** in the New Year.

Chair/Park Officer's report

In the absence of Quinten, the Chair reported on recent developments.

The Hackney Council consultation on the **control of dogs** has provoked opposition from dog owners. These proposals include a requirement to keep dogs on a lead in the Abney Cemetery local nature reserve and a limit of 4 dogs per dog walker. The chair urged members of CPUG to respond individually as CPUG was an umbrella organisation representing a wide range of views. A discussion ensued on the pros and

cons of having dogs under better control in Clissold park.

It was noted that more people could have attended the meeting if it had been better advertised. Richard offered to put up a notice with information about the next CPUG meeting on the park notice board.

The **park toilets** are in need of renovation and we are waiting for proposals from council officers.

The **Splash Pad** was operational for most of the summer but did experience regular outages and we had hoped for a report on its use and any work required.

Refurbishment is due to take place on the **playground equipment** – for example, the toddler swings should be brought back into use soon.

The **park café** service has declined in quality recently. Opening times are unpredictable and complaints have been received about the service it provides. Unfortunately, the management have proved unresponsive to complaints and suggestions.

Disabled access to Clissold House: A direct phone number will be put up beside the back door of the house.

Events

A **festival** is due to take place next weekend. Waste management could be an issue. Recycling bins have replaced general waste bins using black and clear sacks to differentiate rubbish from recyclables. A separate bin for cardboard would make it easier to dispose of pizza cartons.

An **Open House** event took place at Clissold House in September. Amir prepared a slide presentation on the

history of the house which was displayed on a laptop. About 50 people attended.

Biodiversity officer's report

A **bioblitz** took place in May at the dipping pond in Clissold park. Kirsten Foster from the Abney Park ecology group helped with water sampling. Samples were sent to the Natural History Museum 'Gene Pool' programme for analysis. Many insect larva were present in the pool, including Midge larva, Mosquito larva and Gnat larva. These insects form an important element in the food chain. We found 7 invertebrate species and 16 plant species in the fenced off area at the end of the New River spur, and submitted water samples to the Gene pools' project. The 2021 'Gene Pool' results found that the pool has over a hundred types of bacterium and DNA traces of the common frog.

Russell Miller is leading more 'tree walks' around the park during which he gives insights into the origins of the unusual trees we are lucky to have growing in the park. These walks are fascinating and highly recommended.

Volunteers are sought to help with park maintenance and litter-picking volunteers are welcomed on the 4th Friday of each month. See <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/cc/clissold-park-volunteering-opportunities-885039> for more details.

It was noted that **better barriers are needed around the flower beds** in the rose garden because the willow withies that made up the existing fences have been taken by children.

We discussed the need for **more interpretive boards** to raise public awareness of the exceptional variety of trees, wildfowl, wild flowers etc. we have in the park. Dog walker may not realise what a natural asset they have when they come to exercise their pets. Unfortunately, a review of signage in the park is still awaited, and nothing can be done until it is published. CPUG has some funds that could be used for interpretive signs that could encourage greater appreciation of biodiversity. An impact assessment of how dogs are actually impacting on biodiversity would be valuable in this context.

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

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