

CLISSOLD PARK USER GROUP

NEWSLETTER AND MINUTES OF MEETINGS

EVERYONE WHO USES CLISSOLD PARK IS PART OF THE USER GROUP – EVERYONE IS WELCOME.

For this newsletter by email, contact cpug@gew.clara.co.uk

August/September 2004

Next meeting, Saturday October 2nd Clissold Park House 11.00 am – 12 noon in the Red Room, crèche provided.

All meetings are open, public meetings, anyone can attend and active participation from park users is always needed and very welcome.

NEWS: Heritage Lottery Bid rides again! New officers in place in Hackney working on the bid – will it get anywhere this time? **BIG DRAW DAY** – come and draw out your impressions of Clissold House and Park on **Saturday 16th October** – look out for details. See the website for further details www.clissoldpark.com and come to the open and public meetings to contribute your views and thoughts about our Park – future dates: 2nd October, 13th November (every 6 weeks) Saturdays 11.00 Clissold Park Café, crèche provided.

Minutes of the meeting held on Saturday 21st August 2004

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Present (& signed list): John Hudson (Vice Chair); Penny Crick (secretary); Karan Balam (Asst. Director Culture and Leisure); Joanne Potter; Lyn Franklin; AnnMcGinley, Jim Blinko, Simon Lissner, John Crisp, Lynette Gill; Helen Rawlins; Betty Manning; Danny Braverman; John Coxon (Police); Terry Barker (Police); Dave Tylor; Jorge Samaniego; Roderick Ryan, Cllr C.Sills, Daphne Kemp, Jan Coombs (tennis club). Hettie Sears, Don Giddings, Ayhan Aksu, Kathryn Willgress, Lucy Sommers.

Apologies: Ken Worpole Lorraine Worpole, Mark White Caroline Millar Cllr. Tessler; Cllr. Aussenberg; Jen Barton, Chit Chong, John Miller

Minutes of previous meeting: Accepted.

Matters Arising:

Fete – A successful and pleasant day. Many thanks to Don and Hettie for providing a great information stall for the user group.

Summer Fun for kids – going well, despite the rain. Many thanks to Caroline and all her helpers.

Barrier at Queen Elizabeth's gate – this is not going to be possible as it would then seriously impede prams, pushchairs and wheelchair access along the pavement and into the Park. Rather the User Group and the Park will pursue the alternative solution of traffic calming measures in Grazebrook Road and Queen Elizabeth's Walk. **(Action Mark White and Penny Crick)**. The User Group remains concerned at the risk of children running or cycling into the path of vehicles.

Park Manager's Report (Jim Blinko, Park supervisor) **Duckweed on the lake** is being removed by contractors. The **Bandstand** has been badly damaged by fire (vandalism) and a building surveyors report is awaited.

Fencing around the **rose garden** is to be completed and gates put in to make it a dog free zone. A **ramp** has been put in to ease access to the Café garden. Someone pointed out that there has been a broken drain cover leaving an open hole at the side of the House – to be made safe **(Action: Jim)**. **Fencing to the side of the House** is to be raised as children climb on it and there is a big drop to the ground. Used to be safer because a climbing rose was in place ... replace?? **(Action Jim)**

Traffic in the Park Jim reported that this is less of a problem but others disagreed. When Mannings fair moves on, the gate on Green Lanes will be closed and this will help. There are not enough rangers to allow for gates to be locked and unlocked to allow specific authorised vehicles access to Park. It has been suggested that a raised barrier be put in place at the main Church Street gate. **Lavatories** Jim reported that the ladies lavatories are to be renovated and a baby changing area put in somewhere (hopefully where men can also change babies nappies). There were a number of very serious complaints about state of the lavatories – waste pipe from basin in ladies is disconnected, toilets often filthy, children's toilets in the playground so dirty that they are unusable and should be locked to protect

children's health. Rangers often do not seem to have reliable access to toilet paper and soap supplies. Although toilets are cleaned and checked daily, this is clearly not enough. Suggestion made that a one-off massive industrial cleanout be done and that this may make daily cleaning a bit more effective. (**Action?? Mark??**)

Rangers Service It was noted that there have been a number of problems over the summer concerning rangers presence and effectiveness where there have been hundreds of children in the Park daily involved in formal sports and other events and activities as well as informal play, There has been a shortage of rangers (extra recruited for the summer months have not been able to start because of delays in getting police checks completed...) There was a lengthy discussion of the rangers service with a wide range of complaints and examples of problems ; Individual rangers are clearly committed and demonstrate a high level of service, but on the whole, the service is erratic and unreliable; the User Group has still to receive a statement from the Council on the responsibilities of rangers and what can reasonably be expected from them (See January newsletter). It was eventually agreed that the problems seem to boil down to ones of communication and co-ordination – between management and rangers (e.g. broken playground equipment, management know and will act but haven't told Park staff), rangers and the public, and between managers of different services within the Council (e.g. sports and Parks – eg loads of free sports activities offered in the Park over summer, but with no publicity, rangers knowing nothing about it etc etc leading to tragically low numbers of kids being involved...). A suggestion was made that notices be put up around the Park explaining the facts about the shortage of staff and stating clearly what the public can expect of the rangers, what the basic duties of the rangers are, and including the Park depot and rangers office telephone numbers. (**Action: Karen Balam to speak to Carole Stewart re concerns and suggestion**)

Heritage Lottery Bid – progress report

Karen Balam explained the structure of the new management team in the Culture and Leisure directorate (responsible for Parks & Sport among other things). One of her key jobs is to get the Clissold Park HLF bid through. Glen Grey has been appointed to work on the bid. They intend to work closely

with the User Group on the bid. Ken and Penny have already had a positive meeting with Karen and Glen. Karen will be contacting us formally soon regarding representation on the project development team. £2M Hackney capital has been ringfenced for the House and Park should the bid be successful. Will previous consultation and development work on this bid be used? We were assured that it would. How long will it take? Well let's not hold our breaths! There will be regular and public reporting on all committed funding. (And don't forget, the lavatories will be a significant part of the Lottery Bid!!)

Trees A great deal of concern was expressed about the state of the trees in the Park, particularly following the report from an independent tree expert, regarding the tree stock and care and maintenance programme (many trees dead, sick or damaged). It was suggested that a meeting of all relevant people be arranged with a view to positive and constructive action. **Action: Lucy** will get a copy of the independent report & ? coordinate a meeting.

Complaints – about **smoking** in the playground – this is not allowed, and it was clarified by police that smoking cannabis in public places is an arrestable offence.

Dogs in the playground, paddling pool area, pond dipping platform and swimming in the lakes **Action: Mark/Jim** Notices about smoking and dogs to be put in place, and rangers reminded of the rules.

3 QEW – decisions pending... but it is not to be sold off. Squatters have returned.

We are continuing with efforts to set up **Young Park Users' Group** – Roderick, Danny and Jorge will link up to progress this idea.

Useful Contacts:

Mark White Parks Manager: 8800 1021
Rangers office/Tennis bookings: 7923 3660
Tennis Club: 7254 4235 and
info@hackneycitytennisclubs.co.uk
Clissold Park User Group cpug@gew.clara.co.uk
www.clissoldpark.com

Next meeting is on **Saturday 2nd October 11.00am – 12 noon**. Creche available in adjoining room for anyone attending the meeting. Your active participation will be very welcome.
www.clissoldpark.com or
cpug@gew.clara.com or CPUG, c/o Rangers Office, Clissold Park House.

