

Minutes of August Meeting

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Clissold Park User Group NEWSLETTER & MINUTES
EVERYONE WHO USES CLISSOLD PARK IS A MEMBER OF THE USER GROUP –
EVERYONE IS WELCOME. SEPTEMBER 2002

NEXT MEETING – Annual General Meeting 11 am Saturday, 12th October 2002 Red Room,
rear of Clissold Park Café

NEWS: CAFÉ – open now on short term lease. One o'clock club under threat. Kings Crescent Development – is the Park going to be enhanced with more towering tower blocks? See the website for further details www.clissoldpark.com and come to meetings to contribute your views and thoughts about our Park – future dates: October 12th (AGM); November 23rd; January 4th; February 15th (every 6 weeks)

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON SATURDAY 31st August 2002. IF YOU WOULD LIKE MINUTES BY EMAIL, GIVE ME YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS: pennycrick@btinternet.com

Present: Ken Worpole (Chair), Penny Crick (secretary), Lorraine Worpole, Hettie Sears, Don Giddings, Bob Chivers, John Hudson, Diane Tanners, Rhiannon Tise, Kate Last, Lucy Sommers, Dave Wainwright, Daphne Kemp, Sylvia Anderson.

Apologies: Betty Manning, Geoff Wass, Daphne Steel, Barbara Read, Chit Chong, Anne McGinley, Mark White (Park Manager)

Park Manager Mark White was away on a well deserved holiday – so no report from him.

Café The café is now open in the House on a short term three month lease, renewable every three months until a long lease can be sorted out. There were 5 applicants for this short lease, and there was considerable disquiet about the terms of the 'contract' on offer and about the whole of procedure for selection. At this time we do not know whether funding will be forthcoming from the Heritage Lottery Fund – this will have huge implications for the House and Café. The user group believes that we need a long term fall back plan for the café if the bid is not successful but we also need a medium term plan to cover the time until the House is renovated – e.g. a 2-3 year lease for the café until that time. It is of paramount importance that all future procedures for leasing out the café are should incorporate the brief for the sort of café that people actually want as drawn up by the User Group on the basis of a detailed research

survey, and that it is all transparently conducted with the interests of Park and Café users having priority. Any comments or feedback on the café arrangements should go to Ken or Penny of the User Group (email, website or via Rangers office) and also to Mark White the Park Manager (tel. 020 8800 1021).

Lottery Bid This has gone in but in a scaled down version that concentrates largely on the improvements to the House and surrounds. The Heritage Lottery Fund received 3 major bids from Hackney and it seemed prudent to reduce the scope of the Park bid in order to retain a chance of success.

Kings Crescent development Considerable disquiet was expressed about the proposals for this site – three blocks, 19, 16 and 12 storeys high, overlooking and possibly overshadowing the Park and being sold with the proximity to the Park as a major selling point. What are the implications for the Park and for related facilities and concerns, e.g. road safety on Green Lanes? Agreed that we will look at the proposals in more detail and make a submission to the Planning Officer representing the concerns of Park users. (Action: Barbara McFarlane and Penny)

One o'clock club We hear with great concern that the future of the one o'clock club is again uncertain. This essential service should not be under threat. We will write to the new Education Trust that now runs all education services in Hackney seeking clarification and expressing our strong support for it. We will also try to arrange a meeting between the Education Trust, the one o'clock club and the user group. ACTION: Ken Worpole. If you have strong feelings, come to our next meeting on October 12th and get in touch with the one o'clock club, your local councillors etc. Suggestions were made concerning broader use for the building, like some other 1 o'clock clubs, e.g. morning use for a playgroup, rental of building for children's parties etc.

Pond life ... Duck weed rampant on Runtzmere lake and New River and it will only go when the weather cools down. Terrapins in the New River have been reported to be attacking ducklings – and there have been concerns about how few ducks seems to be around on the lakes. Can Mark White please advise on these matters for the next meeting? ... And Deer Some worry about whether the herd of deer are interbreeding to the detriment of their gene pool. Are, as some believed, the deer intermingled from time to time with other herds? Watch this space for further detail next month.

Hackney Parks Forum This is a forum of representatives from all of Hackney's Park user groups, which has meetings set up by Hackney Council every three months. At the last meeting, no management representative from Hackney Council was in attendance. One of the matters that nonetheless came up was that of Hackney's biodiversity strategy, other user groups in Hackney are more actively involved than us in thinking about strategic issues concerning flora and fauna in green spaces in Hackney. Lucy Sommers will look into these issues for the User group – anyone with environmental expertise who could help her with strategic issues, should get in touch with her via the User Group (at Rangers office or on the website).

Old St. Mary's Churchyard We have been advised that the Parks service is responsible for the 'gardening' aspects of the upkeep of the graveyard and we would therefore ask that an effort be put into tackling some of the serious problems there caused by rogue saplings forcing their way through gravestones and into the fabric of the Church Action: Mark and we will write to Gary Thomas (Head of Parks). Children's Dog Free area. Seems that this was hired out recently for a private party thus depriving Park Users of access – the user group does not support the exclusive use of any area of the Park – to be checked out with Mark White.

Councillors We have had a letter from Cllr. Karen Alcock expressing her interest in the Park and apologies for not being able to come to the user group meeting today. The other 8 councillors whose wards are next to Clissold Park will be contacted and invited to attend meetings. (Action: Penny)

Mayors Two of the prospective mayoral candidates have approached the Park user group – it was agreed that all known candidates will be contacted by us so that we can offer them the opportunity to meet with us and visit the "jewel in Hackney's Crown" that is Clissold Park.

Events Provision of a bouncy castle for toddlers over the August Bank holiday was applauded – but the sound system that came with it was horrifically loud and unsuitable for the children. Paddling pool – excessive heat from the sun melted the old sealant which stained children with sticky black tar... so it was closed but fixed in time for more sunshine days! Fun Fairs – it was generally felt that three weeks of Mannings fair was too much, especially as they had been in the Park earlier in the year for a couple of weeks – important that we get the balance right about the number/duration/quality of fairs etc. Mannings is felt to be excessively noisy, not responsive to complaints, poor value for money, and with stall holders having a bad attitude towards customers. User group not in favour of their renting the Park in the future. The demise of the Stoke Newington Festival was noted with sadness but the suggestion was made that some Park related elements of the Festival could be retained as an annual event – e.g. the family campsite. If anyone is interested in thinking this one through, get in touch.

Trees – can a clear diversion sign be put up to prevent runners from further compacting ground under trees around edge of the Park? Action: Mark

Thanks The secretary was thanked for the way the newsletter is put together and Kate Last was thanked for the amazingly impressive work she has put into initiating and developing our website – we will miss her when she leaves to live in New Zealand.

Future Dates: AGM on 12th October; 23rd November; 4th January; 15th February. Meetings are held on Saturdays at 11 am EVERYONE WHO USES CLISSOLD PARK IS A MEMBER OF THE USER GROUP – EVERYONE IS WELCOME. For further information: www.clissoldpark.com or c/o Rangers Office, Clissold House, Clissold Park.