

Clissold Park User Group

NEWSLETTER & MINUTES

March 2002

**EVERYONE WHO USES CLISSOLD PARK IS A MEMBER OF THE USER GROUP
EVERYONE IS WELCOME.**

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON SATURDAY 26TH January 2002

IF YOU WOULD LIKE MINUTES BY EMAIL, GIVE ME YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS:
pennycrick@btinternet.com

NEWS:

We have our own website! www.clissoldpark.com

Temporary mobile cafe to be set up. Tree and History walks coming up in April Paddling pool and animal enclosure - we thought they were saved - but of course it's not as simple as that. Will Hackney Council undertake to give reassurances that there is a long term vision to reinvest in the Park and to stop the endless round of cuts? If not, then we will continue to campaign vigorously to protect the facilities of the park in their entirety. See below and on the website for further details.

NEXT MEETING

**11 am Saturday,
20th April 2002**

Red Room, rear of
Clissold Park Café

Ken Worpole introduced the meeting and Mark White gave his **Park Manager's Report:** The cargo net (spider) climber in the playground is to be replaced; a picket fence is to be put up around the Rose Garden; funding is still awaited for more benches; pot holes in paths around the park are to be repaired from next week; the refurbishment of the toilets continues and should soon be complete; tennis courts 1-4 are to be refurbished (thanks to LTA) with work starting 18th March - in view of the problems that occurred during the refurbishment of the tennis courts last year, particular care has been taken to agree with contractors details of entry/exit from Park and all lorries coming into Park will be walked through correct route, etc. Mark further reported that there is a possibility that the Head Office for Parks might be moved into the top floor of Clissold Park House - this would have the advantage of the house being occupied and seen to be in use and he assured us that it would not result in any change to the

rule of no cars in the park. Finally, when standardised locks have been acquired (allowing emergency services access), fixed bollards will be placed near Park gates, preventing entry to unauthorised cars.

Future of the Animal Enclosure, Paddling Pool and Bowling Green.

Michelle Guimarin for Hackney Council talked about the current position and short, medium and long term proposals. A review of the expense of these facilities shows that as a short term measure, if the goats are taken out (and re-housed at a nice City Farm) the deer can be managed. Money could be raised from charitable grants to maintain children's activities around the pool and butterfly tunnel. In the medium term, rental money from the Cafe will be available to provide Park facilities and in the long term, Heritage Lottery money will, it is confidently predicted, sustain and improve all Park facilities. There was much discussion and the User Group were keen to impress upon Hackney Council that we cannot give support to the short term proposals unless we feel confident that Hackney has a vision and management programme for the whole Park and a clear statement that this includes the intention to reinvest in the Park in the longer term. We do not want to get onto a slippery slope of cuts and more cuts with more and more basic facilities having to seek 'sponsorship'. Michelle said that the Director does want to see the Park improved and that effort will now go into the Heritage lottery bid, CPUG will be involved in that, and that she would like to see the CPUG involved in seeking sponsorship/charitable monies for park activities in the meantime. **Ken will write to Director Ian Hook stating our position.**

The Cafe

has now been closed for nearly 3 months to everyone's dismay. Mark White was able to show us the draft leasing document, including specification for the future cafe and time scales etc. **Penny Crick and others to look at this and get back to Mark** with responses in the next few days so that this can be finalised. In the meantime, the CPUG feels it is essential that a **temporary catering facility** is set up in the Park to see us over the Spring and Summer months. A potential mobile caterer (suitably licensed etc.) has been identified and volunteers (Isabelle Gore, Anita Young & Penny) from the user group will meet with them together with Park manager to assess suitability. This facility would be placed near the House. It was not thought that the decision to set this up would need to go through committee processes at Hackney and so it should be something that could be up and running .. by Easter?

Tennis

Jan Coombs for the Clissold Park Junior Tennis Club outlined the history of the club and its relationship with the Lawn Tennis Association which has resulted in the very welcome refurbishment of the tennis courts in the Park (last 4 courts being done currently). It is hoped by the club that further facilities can become available (changing rooms, suitable place for teas after tournaments with visiting teams, etc.) and there was some discussion about the possibilities including use of Clissold Park House, e.g. development of the basement changing

and shower facilities etc. The general feeling was that such developments could benefit all users of the Park and should be taken into consideration when thinking about future planning and investment in the Park/House. The question of the Club's use of courts and the booking and use of courts by other players who do not choose to play via the Club was raised in relation to the Club's **block booking** of courts, particularly at weekends when it can be very difficult to get a court. The refurbished courts will mean that there will be more good courts available, but will these also be block booked by the Club? Jan said that in general, the Club will not block book more than 4 courts at a time, though sometimes this may be 6. It was pointed out that at times of high demand, holidays, weekends etc. this will mean that only two courts will be available to non-club users. Ken noted that there is a lot of feeling about this and that it is very important that club use and public use must be balanced and a way must be found to do this. **Anyone with an interest in discussing this matter should contact Ken Worpole.** Clearly there is a genuine concern about general public access and club access to the courts, and relates to issues of access to facilities at Clissold Leisure Centre - we don't want to see a creeping privatisation of publicly funded facilities. Ken will be meeting soon with Sport England and will raise these issues. Kate Last showed us her extremely good design for the Clissold Park User Group Website (see at www.clissoldpark.com). Kate invites anyone who would like to develop a 'microsite' about some aspect of the Park (trees, wildlife, sport etc.) to get in touch with her on: banshee_kate@hotmail.com.

Heritage Lottery Fund

It had been pointed out earlier in the meeting that this group (CPUG) has put enormous amounts of work into pushing along this lottery bid over the years that has been thwarted by Hackney's apparent reluctance to follow it through to a successful conclusion. We are now pushing Hackney to open negotiations again and Ken, together with Council members, will be meeting with the Heritage Lottery organisation to discuss how best to start the process again with a blank sheet (avoiding repeated, redundant and expensive external 'consultation'), with the aim of getting Heritage Lottery money spent wisely and well in our Park.

Kings Crescent Estate development

The plans for this are on display in the shopping area in the estate (along Brownswood Road) and all and any should look at them and take part in the planning process. CPUG to discuss the impact of the plans on the Park at our next meeting in April but in the meantime Ken and others are delegated to comment on behalf of CPUG. **(Action Ken Worpole & others)**

Park Walks

Thanks to funding from DISCOVER HACKNEY, the CPUG have organised three walks in the Park: an over 50's Tree walk on Thursday 25th April 2.00 with tree expert, at a gentle pace. Saturday 27th April 3.00 pm History walk - Park and local history with a local historian. Sunday 28th April 11.00 am Tree walk for children and adults. (See notice boards in Park or www.clissoldpark.com for further details)

Present:

Ken Worpole (Chair);
Penny Crick (secretary);
Mark White (Park Manager);
Kate Last;
Cllr Sylvia Anderson;
Don Giddings;
Hettie Sears;
Anne McGinley;
Joyce Palmer;
Isobelle Gore;
Anita Young;
Michelle Guimarin (Hackney Council);
Trish O'Hare;
Daphne Kemp;
A. Rushin;
Jan Coombs (CPJTennis Club);
M. Jarrett;
Matt Hette;
Janet Palmer;
Kitty Novy;
Jonathan Shattock;
Sue Ford;
Fliss Premru;
Jorinda Barnbrook;
Betty Manning;
Mark Kelly;
Bob Chivers;
Lorraine Worpole;
Cllr Chit Chong;
Steven Week

Apologies:

Cllr. John Hudson;
Lucy Sommers;
Robbie Richards;
Barbara McFarlane;
Bea Pemberton.