

London Friends of Green Spaces Network

On-line Coordinating Meeting held on Monday 14th September 2020

Attending: Friends Groups/Forums reps: Dave Morris (lordship Rec, Haringey Forum – LFGN Chair), Adrian Stannard – *Note Taker* (Lloyd Park, Waltham Forest), Alona Sheridan (Mayow Park, and Lewisham Forum), Richard (Wandsworth Common, and Wandsworth Forum), Pat Gross (Wandsworth Park, and Wandsworth Forum), Symon (Hilly Fields Park, and Lewisham Forum), Roger Chapman (Barnet Forum), Lucy Clouting (Hackney), Peter (Croydon Forum), Mary (Harrow), Jenni (Islington Forum), Suzanne (Brent Parks Forum), Stephen Mills (Harrow Parks Forum).

And: Alice Roberts (Campaign to Protect Rural England [London] and Hackney Downs), Tim Webb (Go Parks), Laura Collins (Go Parks, LFGN and Figge's Marsh), Abi (TCV).

1. Forum Updates

- 1.1. Roger (Barnet) Inactive but hope to resume in October. Parks have remained open but concern about budgets and coordination required.
- 1.2. Jenni (Islington) Have been meeting via Zoom every 2 weeks. BBQs an issue as is litter. Lost revenue but there is a Parks Health Project underway.
- 1.3. Peter (Croydon) Croydon Council in financial difficulty therefore pressure on green spaces. They are planning a Zoom meeting and would like a guest speaker to join them.
- 1.4. Stephen Mills (Harrow) AGM held a while ago and a new team elected so nothing to report.
- 1.5. Alona (Lewisham) New parks strategy including analysis of the value of open spaces. Council bringing contract back in house from Glendale and staff will be TUPI over.
- 1.6. Abi TCV (Waltham Forest) Johnny taken over Green Gym and planning to get Forum running.
- 1.7. Dave (Haringey) have been lobbying for more resources. 2500 petition forced a full council debate. The councillors agreed with the Friends but no resources available. The group is collaborating with the council on a future strategy document.
- 1.8. Pat (Wandsworth) Biodiversity strategy. Maintenance and tree contracts up for renewal. Need information from other parks about park keepers.
- 1.9. Laura (Merton) new contract.
- 1.10. Suzanne (Brent) have linked up with green organisations.
- 1.11. Dave is planning to set up a mailing list just for Forums.

2. London Groups

- 2.1. **Go Parks** – Laura reported the web site was up and running and has 150 parks registered with their details. An appeal will be sent out to all Friends Forums to make sure they register their parks. CPRE is developing a manifesto ready for the Mayoral election in 2021. Protect Parks and Greenspaces launch will be at the end of September.

3. **Influence** – Alice reported Go Parks promote parks in Boroughs and are planning to hold festivals such as walking/cycling in each park. Brent, Merton and Enfield will be the first to trial the idea. Sustrans and Ramblers will be helping to get it started.

4. Reports –

- 4.1. Abi (TCV) reported the Community Network can help. Green Gyms up and running again. Funding is being arranged for the Public Health Report.
- 4.2. Our Patch – thanks were expressed to Alice and Laura for producing Our Patch. Friends are urged to distribute it to their members.
- 4.3. Parks Community web site, to promote community empowerment, to be improved.
- 4.4. A health check for Better Friends being launched on the 24th September. Friends are urged to fill in a questionnaire and get a report.

5. Future of LFGN

- 5.1. After discussion it was agreed individuals need to take ownership of particular issues so they can be promoted. It was agreed short term groups should be set up to progress issues i.e. biodiversity/planning/campaigning. Alice recommended a task and finish approach rather than long

term commitment to identify 3 or 4 issues we want to achieve over a 3 or 4 month period. Suggested an idea could be a Protocol on conflict between cyclists and park users. Or litter issues.

- 5.2. **Planning** - Roger agreed to own Planning issues relating to the new Government Planning approach and Peter would approach a friend who was keen on planning to join Richard.
- 5.3. **Litter** - Pat believed litter needed an educational approach and connection with schools. Volunteers are needed to own this group. Abi pointed out clear up kits are available.
- 5.4. **Biodiversity** - Alona was interested in Biodiversity and took ownership of the group.
- 5.5. **Cars in Parks and Cycling Protocol** - Alice to champion with Pat Goss's support..
- 5.6. **Calendar** - Dave suggested a calendar of all greenspaces events.
- 5.7. **Care of Dogs in Parks** – no supporter.
- 5.8. Alice will email around the achievable ideas and see what support we can get for each group.

6. Improve LFGN

- 6.1. If LFGN were constituted it would be able to raise funds and employ resources.
- 6.2. A constituted group wastes a lot of time on bureaucracy. Alice prefers a formal group and Dave is happy with the existing structure. Pat believes in lean and mean.
- 6.3. LFGN constitution already exists and states the group is to have regular meetings and encourage Borough Forums to be set up. There needs to be a way of involving members between meetings.
- 6.4. Roger, with help from Dave and Alice, agreed to write a paper outlining the pros and cons.
- 6.5. What as a Network do we want to achieve over time?

7. NEXT GENERAL ZOOM MEETING: Monday 26th October between 6pm and 8pm.