

London Friends of Green Spaces Network (LFGN)

The London network for the 600+ Friends and User Groups for all green open spaces

www.lfgn.org.uk

*Protecting and promoting green spaces * Improving and enhancing the quality of green spaces
Expanding the amount of green space generally * Improving staffing and management
Seeking adequate resources for green spaces (capital and revenue)
Ensuring the involvement of Friends/Users groups as partners in the management of their parks and green spaces*

Notes from LFGN General Meeting 4th June 2018

1. Attendees: 30 Friends Groups / Forum reps from a range of London boroughs including Bromley, Hackney, Hammersmith and Fulham, Haringey, Hounslow, Hyde Park, Lewisham x3, Lambeth, Richmond, Sutton, Tower Hamlets, Wandsworth Common, Westminster (Royal Parks) Waltham Forest, (check list). Apologies: Parks for London.

2. Minutes of Last General Meeting: It had been well attended. Covered the LFGN's Parks Charter being transformed into a UK Charter, Elections. National Parks City. London Assembly. LFGN website and Tweeting. Petitions. Planning, Fields in Trust, Royal Parks Charity. Launch of Open Space & Biodiversity strategies..

3. Discussion: Tranquillity in GS. Alice of CPRE spoke about how noise can have negative impact on people's wellbeing. Had produced a detailed noise audit of London's green spaces. 880 Parks and Green Spaces and 29% are impacted. SW Parks are good generally. The best is Sutton. She said the roads within Parks are noisy. General discussion followed: Hyde Park and Victoria Park have big events lots of noise with neighbouring houses. Also, there are Lots of source of noise - skateboarding, ball games, children and events. Heathrow airport noise. Helicopters (Battersea) are very noisy. Pollution. Flyovers. Planting bushes around edges and barriers can help. Wandsworth Common's motto 'Respectful use of Park'. Yoga classes in in Parks are peaceful. Simon mentioned Police helicopters over Hillyfields in Lewisham. This all has a physical effect on people and wildlife and bird population. Someone mentioned drones. There are byelaws in the Royal Parks. Noise causes Stress and Anxiety. Redhill with Gatwick. Walthamstow wetlands have byelaws- No aircraft no drones.

4. Brief Borough Reports: **Lewisham** - Have active Forum. Swift Group in borough are encouraging swift boxes to help the swift population (May- August) as there is 50% decline of swifts. **Waltham Forest** - they have inadequate levels of parks staff. Controversy over 81 lime trees cut down in town centre green space. They have no Forum so hard to support each other and raise strategic issues. **Wandsworth** - Have a 'semi-forum' being developed, with some active links being created. Commons groups meet with Council. Discussing procurement issues and legal action to protect commons and prevent encroachment. **Tower Hamlets** - Arts in Parks event. Save the Mulberry Tree campaign. East London Society helps with communications among some Friends Groups. **Sutton** No Forum but Council/Contractors/Friends meet up regularly. Issues re BBQs and cycling. **Royal Parks** - Summer Festivals. **Hammersmith and Fulham** - Have no forum. Progress on getting all parks protected through Fields in Trust covenants. **Haringey** - Forum attendance rising, now averaging 12-20 groups every 2 months. Producing 10,000 copies of a parks walks booklet. Following Forum lobbying, Council conducted extensive Scrutiny Review on the need for greater funding and protection of the borough's parks, with 16 good recommendations. Used this to lobby (with some success) all parties at recent Council elections. **Lambeth** - Forum meet 3 times a year. Council has £11-17 million funding gap (?). New events strategy. **Bromley** - Strong and active Forum. Town centre controversy. **Richmond** - Dog walking issues. **Hackney** - Long- established Parks Forum now inactive. Seem to be good relations between most User Groups and the Council. **Hounslow** - Forum issues

include Biodiversity Plan, protection, Council Space protection orders, Dog Walkers reduction from 6 dogs to 4 dogs per walker.

5. Major Commercial Events in Parks: Discussion with mixed views re challenging / accommodating / getting perks from events in Victoria Pk, Finsbury Park, Brockwell Park, Battersea Park, Clapham Common, Crystal Palace, Hyde Park.

6. London and National Reports LFGN Our Space project: Alice is creating a special online platform re local activities. We're promoting **Love Parks Week and National Parks City Week** in July, with over 100 events planned by local parks' groups. LFGN invited to speak / do stall at LNPC event in Conway Hall. **Parks for London.** Produce Good Parks Guide annually - few printed but can be seen on line. Taking up issues of litter and water fountains. Progress re development of a Health Parks audit app. **Parks Alliance** – 200,000 signed their petition calling for the Lottery to restore the Parks For People funding stream. **London Plan** – consultation underway. LFGN will continue to be involved. Also new Environmental Strategy produced. **Park Action Group.** Dave continues to be heavily involved in this Govt/Greenspace organisation liaison body, including chairing the Community Empowerment work stream. Real Govt commitment needs to be nailed down, as underfunding crisis continues to spiral out of control. **Charter for Parks** Being launched on 22nd June – 12 national organisations backing it. **CPRE** (London) continue to produce excellent green space bulletins. **London Councils Scrutiny Committee** – invited LFGN and Pfl to session on Parks. **London Parks and Gardens Trust** gearing up for their annual London Open Garden Squares weekend, and supporting campaigns v inappropriate development threats to green space.

6. Next LFGN Meetings: Co-ordinating Meeting 16th July, 6pm City Hall. General LFGN Meeting 3rd Sept, 6pm at City Hall.

Minutes taken by Monika Mitchell, with additions by Dave Morris