

# London Friends of Green Spaces Network

## Minutes of the general meeting, 7<sup>th</sup> February 2022

**Present Friends Groups reps:** Dave Morris, LFGN Chair (Lordship Rec, Haringey Forum); Adrian Stannard (Lloyd Park, Waltham Forest); Alona Sheridan (Mayo Park, Lewisham Forum); Suzanne (Tenderden Park, Brent Parks Forum); Larry Herbert (Keston Common, Bromley Forum); Antonia Savvides (Pinner Village Gardens, Harrow); Laura Collins (Figge's Marsh, Merton Forum + Go Parks and LFGN); Peter Woodward (Chislehurst Common, Bromley); Simon Walton (Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, Westminster); Roger Chapman, took minutes (Cherry Tree Woods, Barnet Forum); Roger Jones (West Ham Park); Dee (Horn Park, Greenwich); Annie (Hervey Road, Greenwich); Margaret (Colliers Wood, Merton); Richard (Wandsworth Common, Wandsworth); Fiona (Waterlow Park, Camden); Jenny (Southwark Nature Park, Burgess Park, Southwark); Simon (Stanmore Common, Harrow); Marie Claire (Harvard Hill, Hounslow); Tricia Morley (Wanstead Parklands, Redbridge); Stephen Brice (Pinkham Way, Haringey) **Also:** Tony Leach (Parks for London); Ed Stannard (Parks for London); Daija Angeli (Habitats and Heritage, formerly SW London Environmental Network).

1. **Intros** (name, group, borough) – Everyone introduced themselves.

2. **Minutes of last meeting** (13th December) – Agreed as a correct record

### 3. SPECIAL DISCUSSION:

#### 2022 - THE LOCAL CHALLENGES

What do each of us - as local Friends and user groups - want to achieve during 2022?

**Lordship Rec – Haringey:** Want a complete overhaul of all 7 interpretation boards which were designed by the Friends and installed 10-15 years ago and are now in a declining state. Raising money is a problem for noticeboards. What funding streams might be useful? **Response:** *Tesco blue token and waitrose green token are easy for little amounts, funding hub on Parks for London website may be useful:* <https://parksforlondon.org.uk/opportunities/funding/>

**Figge's Marsh – Merton:** Use of Better Friends tool has shown the need for a strategic Management Plan. Keen to work on one but need examples of a Parks Management Plan. **Response:** *Parks Community UK website suggested.* [https://parkscommunity.org.uk/how\\_to\\_guide/a-guide-to-producing-green-space-and-park-management-plans/](https://parkscommunity.org.uk/how_to_guide/a-guide-to-producing-green-space-and-park-management-plans/)

**Burgess Park – Southwark:** With Local elections coming up very keen to get a seat at the hustings to raise issues.

**Pinner Village Gardens – Harrow:** Looking at Management Plans. Have already introduced bee banks, looking at rewilding approaches. Seeking a no pesticides policy and campaigning against leaf blowers.

**Hervey Road – Greenwich:** Blackheath Rugby Club in charge of field. Concentrating on care of margins for wildlife. Build planting on perimeter. Will sow wildflower seeds in June. Looking to hold a Field Day (Fields in Trust) in July.

**Wandsworth Common - Wandsworth** – seeking more engagement with local schools. Looking for a continuation of Parks Police and Local Authority crackdown on badly behaved dogs with Fixed Penalty Notices for dog owners.

**Response:** Number of ideas for schools involvement discussed including, Duke of Edinburgh engagement, supermarket tokens to raise money. Bulb planting can engage primary schools children; work through school newsletters, engage with school offices/head teachers.

**Mayo Park - Lewisham:** Challenge to get more volunteers plus diversity of volunteers. Strong borough forum could be a good place to discuss this. Current Forum treading water.

**Cherry Tree Wood - Barnet:** Promoting a Pollinator trail project linking with other open spaces nearby and creating stepping stones. <https://mailchi.mp/b8ade48ba2d8/pollinator-launch-action-notes>

**Colliers Wood – Merton** Aiming to get spaces managed as nature reserves, working on a bee bank. Growing group – had good success via social media, WhatsApp, next door. Sending out links in local councillors’ newsletters.

**Pinkham Way - Haringey:** Campaign to keep green space on this site has been effective for many years now. Biodiversity key element and looking to link greenways locally to other sites. <https://www.buglife.org.uk/our-work/b-lines/>

**Response:** From interest shown it was agreed people could join the LFGN biodiversity group. Bug Life’s B-lines were mentioned. Issues with GiGL recording system noted with disconnect on information provided and what is available on records. INaturalist and Irecord could also be used.

#### **4. Borough forums - very brief updates**

**Haringey:** The Council, with Parks Forum involvement, are organising a Parks Summit and Trees Summit to discuss issues and collaboration – this arises out of the joint work to develop a new 25yr open spaces strategy. Parks staffing levels are being increased. Council to progress its partnership with Fields in Trust to adopt protective covenants for all 60+ designated public green spaces, but concerns growing over threat of development on non-designated green spaces.

**Bromley:** Council reorganisation being undertaken. Parks 10 year open space strategy being reviewed.

**Lewisham:** Mayoral meeting to be held with Forum which needs strengthening.

**Merton:** High turnover in Parks Team with new people coming in and time needed for them to bed in.

**Barnet:** Forum meeting next evening to discuss their Election Manifesto and borough wide issues.

**Wandsworth:** Forum working well and met quarterly. Looking to hold post LFGN meetings as feedback from LFGN meeting can be given. ENABLE management increasing staffing levels.

**Camden:** Friends of Parks meetings convened by the Council. Maintenance schedule for the year has been issued.

**Brent:** Forum is supporting pocket parks. Currently good liaison with Parks Service. Have secured £10k for a biodiversity project which is to be shared across the borough.

**Redbridge:** Unclear if a Forum still currently active. Vision Redbridge runs parks open spaces and cultural services – a social enterprise.

#### **5. LFGN brief updates - eg working groups (biodiversity/planning/events), social media etc**

**Planning:** Local Green Space designation being promoted by CPRE and to be looked at and lobbied for across London. General support given to groups fighting development of parks.

**Biodiversity:** As discussed earlier. Group looking to expand and meet (probably March 7<sup>th</sup>) before next LFGN general meeting to discuss potential programme of work.

**Events:** New working group concerned mainly with large inappropriate commercial events.. they are beavering away in the background. Simon (Hyde Park) noted that slot-booking for public access to Winter Wonderland in Hyde Park worked well this year and spread the load.

**LFGN Social Media:** No key issues at moment.

**LFGN Support:** Laura's important post supporting GoParks and LFGN is currently based at CPRE (London). It is looking for additional funding and a new 'home'. London National Park City may be an option.

## **6. London and national greenspace organisations v. brief updates (eg GoParksLondon, Parks for London, A More Natural Capital coalition, London Gardens Trust, NFPGS, CPRE, Wildlife Link etc)**

**GoParksLondon:** promoting green spaces and Friends Groups. Promoted Ealing recently. Looking to register every Friends group onto the Go Parks map. Can all groups check the Map or contact [laura@cprelondon.org.uk](mailto:laura@cprelondon.org.uk)

**Parks for London.** Current survey of 16-25 young Londoners views on parks and open spaces going up to 28<sup>th</sup> February. Green Infrastructure guidance being reviewed later in year by GLA. Working with Mayor on Green Skills hub to address workforce skills shortages across London – Looking at potential routes into work including volunteering. <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/CTDL7NK>

LFGN and Pfl have drafted a joint Local Elections appeal to make parks an issue in the London local Council elections in May – to be circulated in March.

**A More Natural Capital:** A coalition of around 20 environmental NGOs across London produced a manifesto for the last London Mayoral election and are continuing to meet. They have reviewed progress of current Mayor on green issues, and are planning a call for Local Council candidates in May to back effective environmental policies and action (including support for parks).

**Wildlife Link:** Coordinating a major campaign by 60 national greenspace and health organisations (including the NFPGS) calling for #natureforeveryone, with a legal right of access to quality greenspace, backed by a £5.5 billion levelling up fund from the Government. To be launched 21<sup>st</sup> Feb. Note: a recent poll found that 80% of the public backed a legal right to local nature.

## **7. AOB Including next meetings**

The calendar of 2022 LFGN meetings is on the LFGN website.

Next meeting Monday 21<sup>st</sup> March, 6pm (Co-ordination Meeting)

Monday 9<sup>th</sup> May, 6pm (Showcase meeting).