



London Friends of Green Spaces Network

ZOOM General Meeting, Monday 20th June 2022

Attending: Friends Groups/Forums reps: Dave Morris – LFGN Chair (Lordship Rec, Haringey Forum), Adrian Stannard – Note Taker today (Lloyd Park, Waltham Forest), Alona Sheridan – LFGN Biodiversity Group (Mayo Park, and Lewisham Forum), Suzanne (Brent Parks Forum), Symon (Hilly Fields Park, and Lewisham Forum), Larry Herbert (Keston Common and Bromley Forum), Laura Collins – LFGN worker (Go Parks, Figge’s Marsh and Merton Forum), Peter Woodward (Chislehurst Common), Roger Chapman – LFGN Planning Group (Cherry Tree Woods and Barnet Forum), Evelyn Garfield (Wimbledon), Chris Thornton (Horn Park, Greenwich), Tricia Money (Wanstead Park), Angela, Anna Burke (Manor Park, Sutton), Colin (Hampstead Heath), Ed Stannard (Parks for London), John Poole (Brook Way Community Project), Kate Ashbrook (Open Space Society), Liz (Railway Fields, Haringey), Phil Addison (Save Greendale Astro, Southbank), Sean Wilkinson (Whitewebbs Park, Enfield), Roger Jones (West Ham Park, Newham), Simon Braidman (Stanmore Common, Harrow Forum), Angela Lewis (Fields in Trust), Alice Roberts (Hackney Downs and CPRE London).

1. MINUTES May 2022 were agreed.

2. Protecting Our Green Spaces

2.1. Angela Lewis (Senior Project Manager), from Fields in Trust, stated the trust had been around since 1925 and had 165 legally protected sites in London and 2,886 in the UK. Only 6% of UK parks are protected by FIT covenants. To protect a park a Deed of Dedication is used to protect land. The land remains in the ownership of the landowner. To set up a FIT it is necessary to agree the objectives with the landowner and register the info with Land registry. FIT offer advice, support and guidance. Good if Councils can do a lot of spaces at once.

2.2. Liverpool City Council has recently FiT-protected all of its 100 public green spaces.

2.3. UK Favourite Parks 2022 – we are asked to nominate our parks and the one with the highest number of votes in UK wins.

2.4. Alice Roberts (CPRE) said there are 5 clear steps for London to take with the Green Space for All campaign:

2.4.1. Create small street parks

2.4.2. 10 new parks are to be created from derelict land

2.4.3. Actively promote more use of parks

2.4.4. Improve existing parks

2.4.5. Stop building on our precious parks

She outlined numerous examples of open spaces which could be lost.

2.5. Kate Ashbrook (Open Space Society) was formed in 1865 and will offer legal advice for local groups where they can if they are/become members. Their website has a range of legal guidance. She suggested groups could register land as a Town Green land if it has been in use as open space for 20 years. A developer can register the open space voluntarily. Local Green Space is a designation.

2.6. Dave Morris said every green space needs a Friends Group to help protect it. Haringey had planned to FIT-covenant all their parks before Liverpool, but unfortunately their legal department has been slow in achieving the target.

- 2.7. Roger Chapman – Barnet Council have agreed to back the Barnet Green Spaces Network manifesto, including to go for FIT for all its sites.
- 2.8. Roger Jones – F o West Ham Park met the City of London and, despite a strong local campaign, were told the City are selling 1.5 acres of their site. A consultation was promised for the remaining land. An interesting Shrewsbury legal case opposing sell-offs is going to the High Court in November and then the Supreme Court.
- 2.9. Suzanne – For a Waterways restoration campaign an alliance of NW London river champions is being formed.

3. Friends Issues – a number were raised including:

- 3.1. Evelyn wanted to know of deterrents for *fly tipping*, she felt lateral thinking was needed. Suzanne said that Brent parks are covered by the Council's Enforcement Team who have the power to collect evidence and issue on the spot fines. Dave suggested improving quality and usage of areas where fly tipping occurs.
- 3.2. Pat from Wandsworth said it was a matter of Park Police or grounds people. *Dog mess* has been getting worse probably due to the extra dogs caused by the pandemic. A Facebook campaign may work and enforcement by the Contractors or maintenance staff, but will need Friends group to monitor the situation.
- 3.3. Anna Burke asked about the *benefits of CIO or CIC*. Adrian said his experience of both was a CIO is easier to manage. Park Community UK have talked about issuing a general guidance on this matter.

4. LFGN UPDATES

- 4.1. LFGN Biodiversity Group - .will circulate a summary of their brainstorming of issues and ideas.
- 4.2. LFGN Planning – supporting some of CPRE's campaigning. Dave responded to a 'Re-Wilding London' consultation.
- 4.3. LFGN Events – group not met as need a new convenor.
- 4.4. LFGN's Our Patch monthly bulletin – Laura publishing next edition on Thursday 23rd June. There were now 200 on our Facebook page.
- 4.5. LFGN / Parks for London – issued a joint statement calling for lobbying during the Local Elections. LFGN are part of the A More Natural Capital coalition.

5. LONDON AND NATIONAL GROUPS

- 5.1. **Parks for London** - This year's Good Parks for London Report will be published a little earlier than normal - 29th September
- 5.2. Enfield Chase Woodland Restoration Project won one of the top awards at the London Trees & Woodland Awards – congrats to the Friends of Enfield Chase for the role they are playing there
- 5.3. Funding opportunity - Great Big Green Week Community Fund - grants of up to £10,000 were available to deliver events and activities connecting people to nature/climate during the Great Big Green Week 2022 (24th September) - deadline 30th June.
- 5.4. **National Federation of Parks and Green Spaces** – Growing calls on Government and MPs to ensure proper funding for green spaces. Housing and Communities Select Committee of MPs has agreed to review progress on its recommendations to Government 5 years ago. NFPGS will be giving written and oral evidence to the Cttee calling for effective Government action to reverse the deteriorating financial underfunding crisis.
- 5.5. The NFPGS has set up a Longevity Challenge looking to celebrate long-running Friends groups in many boroughs and towns around the UK. Let Dave know of any such groups – chair@natfedparks.org.uk
- 5.6. The NFPGS are working with a researcher looking at examples of Friends Groups efforts to improve diversity in their membership and partnerships.

6. ANY OTHER MATTERS

- 6.1.** A discussion was held about whether we should go back to face to face meetings – we'd need to find a new venue as City Hall no longer available. It was also felt that Zoom meetings increased attendance. It was agreed a Hybrid meeting could be tried for our General Meetings..
- 6.2.** It was felt 2 months between LFGN meetings was adequate in future.

7. NEXT COORDINATING MEETING: Monday 12th September 6pm.