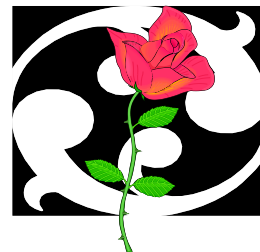


FRIENDS OF VAUXHALL PARK



**Ashmole Tenants' Hall, 2 Meadow Road SW8
Saturday 18th January 2014, 10.30am
Annual General Meeting**

1. Apologies: Anne Rogers

Committee in attendance:

Teresa Clay – Chair
Polly Freeman – Membership Secretary
Sophie Kotch – Treasurer
Laura Cook – Secretary
Louise Norwood
Helen Monger
Susan Smith

Lambeth Council officers in attendance:

Cllr Sally Prentice – Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure
Cllr Ishbel Brown
Cllr Jack Hopkins – Cabinet Member for Safer and Stronger Communities

2. Minutes of last meeting and any matters arising

All agreed minutes of last meeting.

3. Membership Secretary's report

The Membership Secretary reported that number of members 2013-14 was 104 with membership fees of £423 and donations of £726, so a total of £1,149. All agreed to keep subscription fees at same level for 2014.

The Membership Secretary advised that there are two newsletters per year and welcomed any comments or suggestions for how to improve them.

The Chair thanked the Membership Secretary for her hard work and valiant efforts to help keep the park well maintained.

4. Treasurer's report and accounts

The Treasurer reported a successful year with a balance on 31/10/13 of £26,101.26. The Summer Fair generated the largest income. Including the £2k sponsorship from Winkworth's, the balance was £1,504 with the cake stall, plant stall, bouncy castle and crazy golf each bringing in c. £300-£400.

The Chair thanked the Treasurer for all her hard work.

All discussed plan for use of funds. One member suggested pruning trees but the majority agreed that Lambeth should finance this as it was basic maintenance. Cllr Sally Prentice echoed this. It was agreed that we would renew our annual subscription for membership of the Vauxhall Society. The following proposals were then made:

- Christina Burnett suggested a fragrant garden, particularly for the visually impaired, be established on the land next to the path from the Fentiman Road entrance. This would be especially appropriate because Henry Fawcett, whose wish was to establish the park was blind.
- Sophie Kotch suggested a mosaic picnic table as some funds had already been collected specifically for this. Local children and the disabled could help make it and Cllr Jack Hopkins suggested that a local competition could be run and the Council could possibly make S106 monies available.
- Cllr Sally Prentice advised that having a healthy balance would make it easier to apply for lottery funding and other grants as there was often a requirement to match funding. The Chair reiterated that it would be an appropriate time to seek lottery funding as it is the 125th anniversary of the park.
- Model village flower beds – see 9.

5. Chair's Report

The Chair reported another successful year and thanked the committee for their sterling efforts.

5.1 Some of the highlights are as follows:

- Easter egg hunt
- Summer fair
- New Fawcett Plaque at base of Mulberry Tree unveiled by Kate Hoey, MP.
- Restoration of fountain base
- Achieved Green Flag, for sixth year
- New, lockable, notice boards
- Replanting of pergola with thanks to Tommy Candler
- Installation of human sundial in lavender garden

5.2 Cooperative Parks Consultation

The Chair reported that, following agreement at our last meeting, the Friends had supported Level 2, Cooperative Management between the Friends and Council on the basis of access to the rents from the café, nursery school and One' O'clock Club to employ staff Cllr Sally Prentice advised that disaggregating the rents from the general council budget would be a difficult task but agreed it was necessary. Cllr Prentice reported that the Council would be meeting with the Friends' groups of each of the parks in the borough to establish budgets and an agreed approach.

5.3 One O'Clock Club

Helen Monger asked why the bid for this was being treated separately from the Cooperative Parks Consultation. Cllr Prentice said that Lambeth Council was a huge and complex organisation and the One O'Clock Club came under a different budget from parks. The Treasurer and Chair reported a grave disappointment in the lack of appropriate and timely consultation over the Club and expressed concern that there was only one bidder. Cllr Jack Hopkins to provide date for feedback on consultation.

6. Election of Officers 2014

The Chair reported that Seth Taylor was resigning from the committee due to ill health. The Chair made clear the deep gratitude of the Friends for all Seth's hard work over the years, particularly with the Summer Fair.

The Chair reported that Sophie Kotch was to step down as Treasurer but wished to remain on the committee. Helena Lewis was proposed as the new Treasurer. These and other committee members were all elected or re-elected: Teresa Clay – Chair, Polly Freeman – Membership Secretary, Laura Cook – Secretary, Louise Norwood, Helen Monger, Susan Smith. Tommy Candler was voted in as a new committee member.

7. Schedule of Events for 2014

- Members' Party – Sunday 19th January, 7pm @ Parco Cafe
- Easter egg hunt – Saturday 29th March in Vauxhall Park
- Summer Fair – Sunday 22nd June in Vauxhall Park
- Meetings – Tuesday 11th March, St Anne's Hall & Saturday 27 September, Ashmole Hall
- Next AGM – Saturday 17th January 2015, Ashmole Hall

8. Maintenance Issues

The Chair reported that council budgets would be cut by up to 40% over next two years and warned that standards of maintenance might fall further.

Veolia

Cllr Sally Prentice apologised on behalf of the Council for the low standards of maintenance being delivered by Veolia. She advised, however, that trying to enforce penalties on Veolia was not an efficient use of the Council's or Friends' time and proposed a meeting with the Friends to discuss future plans and maintenance issues. The Chair and Cllr Prentice to agree date.

Cllr Prentice reported that Veolia's contract had been renewed for two years from 31st March 2014, to allow time for the Council to establish new arrangements for each of the parks. She advised that the Council might cluster some parks together for maintenance. Each park would be served by people who knew it and had horticultural experience.

Volunteering

One member suggested that 'Volunteer Days' should be designated to help with tasks such as clearing the maze. All agreed this was a good idea.

Polly reported that the 'Community Payback' team was repainting the railings around the Dog Area.

Lavender Garden

Polly alerted members to the need to propagate new lavender plants so the old lavender bushes could slowly be replaced. She suggested local people could take cuttings and foster them for replanting. It was agreed this could be done on one of the 'Volunteer Days'.

Central Path & Fentiman Road Entrance Verge

Polly raised concern that the path across the centre of the park was becoming water logged in places, which then causes people to walk on the grass and ruin it. It was agreed that substantial work was required.

Polly also raised concerns about the muddy strip along the path from the Fentiman Road entrance and said this was being exacerbated by Veolia's trucks driving on it. All agreed it was unsightly and that some sort of edging or planting might help.

These two issues are to be discussed at meeting with Cllr Prentice.

Benches

The Chair thanked Helen Monger for organising the Memorial Benches over the past c. 7 years and reported that over £70k had been spent on them by local donors.

9. Model village flower beds

Polly reported that CLS, who sponsor the flower beds around the model village would like more sustainable planting. Tessa King-Farlow suggested redesigning the whole area, moving the houses into more of a coherent group, removing the overgrown conifers and planting the beds with flowering shrubs, herbaceous plants and bulbs so it would look good all year round.

Tessa advised that the first step would be to get a survey done for c. £500-£1,000. All agreed this should be progressed and Friends' funds used at least at this initial stage. Tessa to commission a survey. It was agreed that the committee would seek further approval from the membership to spend anything over c. £1k.

Christina Burnett to provide name and contact details of gardener who worked in the park and old green houses for many years and has a wealth of knowledge.

10. Planning issues

Keybridge House

Helen Monger reported that she had lodged a Freedom of Information request to obtain the cost proposed for the development of Keybridge House. The council had not responded to this request so Helen requested authority from the membership to complain to the Information Officer about the FOI request. The membership agreed.

Helen explained that the park might suffer from redevelopment because of the many new local people using the park and putting pressure on it.

Helen advised that the next planning meeting to discuss the Keybridge redevelopment was 28 January 2014.

Bondway

Helen Monger advised that the developers had initially proposed some money to help redevelop the One O'Clock Club but had since reduced the offer and were no longer proposing anything specific.

The Chair thanked Helen and Polly for monitoring all the redevelopment plans in proximity to the park and in particular for securing £525k of S106 monies.

Laura Cook
Secretary
22nd January 2014