**FRIENDS OF
VAUXHALL PARK**

**MINUTES OF THE OPEN MEETING OF THE FRIENDS OF VAUXHALL PARK HELD AT 10.15 A.M. AT THE BOLNEY MEADOW COMMUNITY CENTRE ON SATURDAY 16 NOVEMBER 2019**

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| **Committee in Attendance:** | Charles Vyvyan – ChairCharles King-FarlowMathew GwytherLouise Norwood | Polly FreemanJohn RoomeFaith BoardmanMandy Knight - Secretary |
| **Friends:** | Anne Rogers (Membership Secretary)Tessa King-FarlowJean GaffinVin YorkeStephen LizandMiranda  | Jill GregsonLiz VyvyanFran YorkeAlice LizandSusan Smith |
| **Guest:**  | Rob Kelly, Lambeth Council Project Manager for the Masterplan |  |

1. **Welcome and Apologies**

Charles Vyvyan welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained that the purpose of the meeting was to update the friends on the committee’s activities and give them a chance to discuss any concerns or issues. He also welcomed Rob Kelly, who would provide an update on the progress of the Masterplan.

Apologies had been received from Jane Wenlock, Robert Hardwood and Annabel Stein.

**2. Minutes of the last meeting**

Unfortunately, it was not possible to locate the minutes of the last open meeting held in November 2018, so they cannot be amended or approved. The minutes of this meeting will be circulated and put on the website.

**3. Masterplan**

The masterplan has been five years in the planning and negotiations and thanks to Polly Freeman and others that it has reached the stage it has today. Rob Kelly has been closely involved in the refurbishment for the last twelve months and is acting as LBC on the project covering the landscape architects Turkington Martin and the landscape contractor Idverde.

Rob Kelly addressed the meeting and reported:

The work commenced on 2 September, but following soil tests for contamination, a few bits of asbestos was found in fragments such as tiles and bits of roofing. Fortunately, this type of asbestos (known as non-friable) does not easily crumble and therefore does not release the asbestos fibres unless it is disturbed or damaged in some way. It is not uncommon for asbestos to be found where buildings have been destroyed/pulled down. When asbestos is discovered, there is a process to follow: i) it has to be tested ii) it has to be monitored iii) the extent of the contamination needs to be identified and finally iv) a decision is them made on how to extract it. As soon as asbestos is found, work stops on the area immediately, and the area concerned is then covered and a fence put around it. The contractors found the same type of asbestos in other areas of the park as well. Therefore, the most economic decision was to demobilise the contractor and work with external consultants to sort out remedial action over a period of three weeks up to the last week of November. It is hoped the work on the park will start again shortly. Concern was raised about the impact of the delay on the schedule and the replanting which might have to be postponed until Autumn 2020 if does not happen soon. Asbestos is not everywhere in the park. In the formal area they found a curious structure under the soil but no asbestos, so the work could restart there so the planting will not be held up. They will remediate the grass destroyed by people unable to use the path due to the discovery of coal tarmac and ash. The delay will mean the end of phase one will be extended to the end of March. They are trying to keep the additional costs down but there is a contingency budget so it will not mean that any part of the project will not happen.

Members of the FOVP committee (Charles Vyvyan, John Roome, Polly Freeman with Tessa King-Fallow) have fortnightly meetings with Rob Kelly, Theresa Hoare (Lambeth Council) Joe Todd (Turkington Martin) which are sometimes attended by someone from Idverde, so there is a system in place to take these matters forward.

**4. Anti-social behaviour/ Unlocking of the park/ Liaison with the police**

There has been an increase in anti-social behaviour in the park due mainly to the for two reasons: there are more holes in the fence and the success of the measures taken by Vauxhall One in Vauxhall Pleasure Garden. It is hoped that the new railings along South Lambeth Road will help with this situation.

Three years ago, the FOVP had managed to persuade the Council to keep locking the park (Vauxhall Park being one of six parks in Lambeth currently closed at night). Recently, Kevin Crook at the Council informed the FOVP that they were reviewing again the locking up of the park due to the costs involved. Faith Boardman, who also sits on the board of Vauxhall One as well as the FOVP committee, kindly approached Vauxhall One to see if they would consider supporting the locking of the park even though the park does not fall under its remit. Vauxhall One recognises the general issue is not helpful to the area and have agreed to speak to the parks department at Lambeth Council to see if they can work together on this. Charles Vyvyan thanked Faith Boardman for her help in this matter.

FOVP Committee members have met with PC Thomas Kullman (Kennington Police Station), and there is a Safer Neighbourhood Oval Ward, which is attended by Jill Gregson and Matthew Gwyther has volunteered to attend the meetings as well, on behalf of the FOVP Committee. The police need to be told of every incident that happens in Vauxhall Park, as at present the police’s main concern and priority is Kennington Park. To report any incidents, visit the Oval Ward section of the Metropolitan Police website[[1]](#footnote-1) and use the “Contact us” form to let them know.

**5. Lavender Harvest**

The last harvest of the current plant from 2004, took place on 7 and 8 September with over two days with 100 volunteers. The lavender picked produced 5 litres of oil and will be put up for sale shortly, details will be announced through the FOVP website and twitter. The same variety of lavender will be replanted in a new design, which will make it easier to harvest without trampling on the lavender. The human sundial is being refurbished and will be put back in the middle of the design.

Ruth Morgan has been keeping back the money from past sales and the committee is proposing to use the money for a mosaic for the base of the fountain. which will tell the story of Vauxhall Park’s lavender field. This will be carried out over the winter months through workshops in the old One O’Clock buildings, which used to be owned by the Education Department at LBC but now back under the Parks department, which means the Friends can now use this building.

**6. Anniversary Celebration**

There will not be a Summer Fair as in past years in 2020; however, the FOVP are planning to hold an event to celebrate the re-opening of the park with the 21st anniversary of the FOVP. If anyone is inspired with ideas, do let the FOVP Committee know by contacting any of us individually or through the website.

**7. Future meetings and events**

Saturday 23 November 2019: Gardening day from 9.30 a.m. start at Parco Café. Essentially to tidy up the three main beds.

Saturday 28 March 2020 Easter Egg Hunt in the park

Saturday 25 April 2020 10.00 a.m. FOVP AGM at Bolney Meadows Community Centrel.

**8. AOB**

At 4.30 p.m. every day an owner with two dogs and a duck appear in the dog area of the park. The owner apparently has been bringing up the duck. He had bought the duck egg from Sainsbury and put it in an incubator

The Chair thanked everyone for coming and thanked Polly Freeman, Tessa King-Farlow and John Roome for keeping the show on the road.

1. <http://www.met.police.uk/a/your-area/met/lambeth/oval/> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)