

FRIENDS OF LORDSHIP REC

Minutes of AGM held on 2nd February 2020

Attendance: Dave Morris (Chair), Caroline Jepson (Treasurer and minutes); Joan Curtis (Secretary), Catherine Collingborn (Woodland), Alyson Bradley (Wildlife Group), Nina Prieto (Noticeboards), Sally Haywill (Orchard), Suz Williams (Coppicing advisor), Gary Witham, Lucy Nowell, Catriona Glover, Lewis McNeil, Angela Hobsbaum, Nigel Lister, Dave McMahon, Rosemary Dunne.

After welcoming everyone to the meeting, Dave Morris, Chair of the Friends explained in his opening remarks that Lordship Rec is often cited as an exemplary park that demonstrates the success of co-management between the community and the local authority. The Friends are proud of the journey but we are not complacent. Although we operate a large email list, and hold regular meetings, we need more members to be actively involved and to feed in ideas.

Reports on projects managed by the Friends

The Orchard: Sally reported on the achievements in managing the orchard where there were now 174 very diverse trees, having planted 20-30 new ones. Orchard volunteers had worked 300 hours including 133 hours of watering and pruning. She has an aspiration to move the project concept from orchard to that of forest garden and to use the area to engage more people with nature. The Orchard has hosted two major events – Apple day attended by 100 people and the Wassail attended by 150.

The Orchard work area is expanding to include the extensive hazel hedge. Suz Williams introduced herself as a new orchard volunteer. She is undertaking a coppicing apprenticeship training; has been looking at the hazels and would love to design a maintenance and coppicing plan for these trees. She explained there was a lot of potential for reusing the materials arising from the coppicing in the Rec. All agreed that Suzanne could be the Friends official coppicing advisor!

Lordship Woodland: Catherine reported that monthly Friends volunteer sessions had taken place throughout the year. Both The Conservation Volunteers (TCV) and Trees for Cities had provided volunteers on 3 days each. The main tasks for the year had been woodchipping the paths, maintaining sightlines, replacing path edges, cutting back dogwood, clearing ivy and laying a dead hedge to try to discourage litter being thrown over from the road. The pond and stream had also been dug out and the bridge had been redone by TCV to deal with the flowing water, although the stream currently seems to have dried up. Members of the Friends had also looked after the memorial.

In May there had been a Green Flag inspection, which had been successfully retained.

For the future, as all the trees had been planted at the same time in the 80s and were at the same height there was a need to consider some tree felling to let in light for new growth. A TCV training session on tree felling was booked for February.

Gary asked if there could be a poetry session again in the woodland.

Wildlife Group: Alyson reported that as usual the wildlife group was on its winter break, and wasn't currently meeting. The group has combined its meetings with the Green Gardeners and should restart in Spring. Wildlife Group will join in with the Green/Outdoor volunteering day promotion day that the Friends planned to run on 26th April. The Wildlife group looks after the wildflower bed outside of the Hub, which all agreed has looked lovely over the year. They will try to keep records of what comes up this year.

The Wildlife Group had undertaken a lot of surveying of plants/insects and butterflies over the years and all agreed that there was a need to make sure it is collected centrally.

River Moselle. Caroline reported that the long awaited 3-year maintenance contract between Haringey Council and Ebsford was going to start in February, something we had been raising and calling for many years. There would be a workday, clearing out the channel of debris and vegetation and the application of Siltex, a natural product to help with the dispersion of silt. This would be repeated in the Autumn. In the second year of the contract, it was intended that Ebsford would deliver some volunteer training and there would be increased volunteering input into the Moselle maintenance in the future.

Lake: Joan reported that she really wanted to design a lake project focussing on the island which is disintegrating and raise the funds. She was seeking out good ideas that would help support the island, benefit wildlife and involved planting which would not be eaten by geese!.

Communication with members and park users. The Friends have maintained regular communications in a number of ways from the information table in the Hub maintained by Dave; the noticeboards maintained by Nina and the Friends email list which now has 1380 members. The Friends Facebook is growing and this is maintained by Joan.

National Co-management project and Parks Community UK Funded by Nesta since September 2018, our two project contractors, Dave and Paul have been supporting 10 other Friends groups across the country. We are now in the last six months of the project and the 2nd conference will be run at the Hub at the end of February 2020. A website www.parkscommunity.org.uk has been set up and is running as a one-stop shop for Friends groups. This will be the project's legacy.

Partnership Working with other groups working in and around the Rec

Dave reported that the Friends have signed a 2 year partnership agreement with Trees for Cities who bring corporate volunteers to do practical volunteering in the Rec. Although it is a lot of work for members of the Friends, it will be a very useful income stream and has already brought in £2000 since 1st April 2019.

The Lordship Rec Hub: The Friends continue to work closely with the Hub on many levels and the Friends send a representative to the Hub Management Committee. The Hub AGM is on 14th March. Joan reported that The Garden Classroom has been back in touch with the Hub to explore running urban forest school sessions from September 2020 in the Rec. The Hub would apply for funding, but there will be a need for liaison with the Friends who are leading on areas where the sessions would like to operate.

Harmony Gardens: Joan has been liaising with the Friends of Harmony Gardens and giving them support to develop as a separate organisation and become financially independent.. A

grant has been secured by Harmony Gardens to develop community gardening on the Broadwater Farm Estate.

Lucy Nowell from Homes for Haringey introduced herself and explained that her patch covered Broadwater Farm Estate. She is very interested in developing opportunities for young people to volunteer in the local area. Joan and Lucy agreed to liaise.

Cycling groups: The cycling groups in the Rec are providing a wide range of cycling opportunities and there is a great deal of partnership working between these groups and the Friends. The Tottenham BMX Club for the loop track was relaunched in the last year and there are now regular Saturday sessions and schools using the track during the week. Rockstone Bikes has agreed a 7 year extension of their 5 year lease with the Council. Demand for their hire bikes is really high. Wheelytots are running very successful sessions encouraging cycling in young children

The Shell Theatre. Dave explained that the Shell may be underused, despite the Shell Performing Arts Collective (SPAC) organising a couple of events per year there. It has become a hangout area for teenagers who unfortunately have been setting fires. A mural was painted several years ago, but this year the graffiti became so extensive that the mural was painted over.

Lucy Nowell expressed the view that another mural project should be considered, to promote some positivity around the Shell and young people using the area. She would like to engage older young people with artistic abilities. After some discussion, Dave summed up that there was a need to work up a project design and Lucy said she would lead on it. It was agreed that the Friends would support a new mural project.

Annual Accounts (for year ending 31st March 2019).

Caroline presented the accounts which were agreed. The accounts showed that the Friends financial position had been precarious at 31st March 2019, as there were only unallocated reserves of £10.71. However, the signing of the partnership with Trees for Cities had alleviated the problem by generating a steady stream of income not tied to any particular project.

The Friends bank account is now computerised which had made making payments much easier. However now that payments could be made without the need for two cheque signatories, there was a greater need for transparency by the Treasurer and financial safeguards. This was something that members needed to be aware of.

As a result of the Lottery funding for regenerating the Rec, there is a separate Small Grant fund for Lordship Rec held by Haringey council. However, the Treasurer noted that Friends and other stakeholder groups in the Rec had not been making applications lately. Groups should be encouraged to apply for small grants where there is an obvious Audience Development aspect.

Appointment of Officers. The meeting unanimously agreed to elect the following as officers of the Friends of Lordship Rec.

Dave Morris – Chair Joan Curtis – Secretary Caroline Jepson – Treasurer

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