

Lordship Rec Friends AGM 2024 October 13th 2024

Present: Dave Morris (Chaired), Claudia, Sara Hall (took minutes), Joan Curtis, Collette, Caroline Jepson, Ruth Green, Ximena, Liz, Sally Haywill, Lena, Mike Downs, Katharine, Cathy, Alyson, Pamela, Chuku. **Apologies:** Daniel B

Intro and Welcome

- Friends of Lordship Rec website (lordshiprec.org.uk) has a Video collection of more than 30 videos dating back to 1938! See the 'Gallery' page.
- We premiered two new videos: Nathan's short video about our 2024 Flower and Produce Festival and Catherine Philips 6-minute video "Spring Came" about her involvement with the litter picking volunteers.
- Many of the videos about the Rec can also be viewed on the Lordship Rec YouTube channel www.youtube.com/@lordshiprec
- It was noted that we are one of 7,000 local UK Friends of Parks groups!

Annual Report June 2023 – Sept 2024

Attendees were given an opportunity to review the printed Annual Report (see at end). Dave went through it. It was agreed to be an accurate summary of the year's main events & issues.

Members can refer to the report for info and details about:

- Special events over the past 18 months
- Regular Working groups and volunteering sessions
- People involved in the Friends
- Finances
- Promotion and community activities
- Other User groups in the Rec
- Lordship Rec users Forum and Partnership with the Council
- Haringey, London and beyond
- Detailed Financial Accounts for 2023 -2024
- Core things essential to be working well.
- Summary of Roles of elected Officers and other representatives.
- How to represent all sections of our community

Reports from Friends' Working groups (includes some repetition of info in Annual Report)

The Orchard

This year we have a beautifully produced, 8 page, A5 report booklet.

It contains detailed information about the Orchard features and activities including:

- *What and where is the Orchard
- *Map of the Orchard
- *BioBlitz event
- *Workshops and Wassail events
- *Biodiversity

Issues raised about the orchard which are not in the orchard report:

- New tree planting in the main field is doing okay despite the wind.
- More extreme weather is affecting the ground. Soggy boggy areas in winter are now more pronounced. Dry summers cause the clay soil to dry up making the ground very hard. This is causing more fissures / crevasses to appear.
- Tree planting 25yrs ago has had a beneficial effect on the previously waterlogged Spinney and Bike Track areas
- Funding is needed for continuing support from outside experts for coppicing and pruning.

The Lake

- The Pond Squad was established in March 2024. Initially they met once a week.
- Many “interesting” objects have been found & carefully removed from the lake.
- The disintegrating floating islands have been removed.
- The Dipping platform has been replaced
- A new interpretation board has been designed by us and installed.
- Waders have been repaired
- New bids for funding to improve the big, central island are under way.
- Paths around the pond need to be kept clear of vegetation for accessibility.
- The group has established a WhatsApp group. New volunteers are warmly invited.
- In future sessions are likely to take place approx once a month.

River Channel Working Group

- FLR are working in partnership with the Haringey Water Squad .
- Haringey Water Squad are now an official, constituted body with insurance and a bank account.
- Funding from the council has dried up.
- Haringey Water Squad have applied for funding from Thames 21.
- A regular, consistent Bird Survey has taken place. We now have a whole year's worth of detailed data about bird life in the channel.
- The group are working on understanding the whole river ecosystem , including bird life.

- There has been a vast improvement in the river flow and quality over the last two years thanks to all the volunteers.
- Communications with Thames Water have improved.
- A meeting with the Council and contractors to try and get an effective Management plan implemented has taken place,

Woodlands Working Group

- Meets on the 2nd Saturday every month.
- A range of tasks have been carried out with support from TCV including: dead hedges work, beetle log piles installed, work to prevent compaction, damaged path boards replaced and more.
- Alex McNally is developing a Woodland Volunteer Tool Kit about community engagement and management of woodland. The group also helped to test and launch a new London Woodland Assessment tool.
- The tree canopy level is nearly all on one level as all planted in the mid-1980s. This is problematic. Hopefully the toolkit can help.
- Refer to Annual General report for more details of work and events.

Litter-picking Working Group

- Meets every other Wednesday morning.
- Facing increased litter issues caused by rough sleeping in the park. Need to liaise with the council for strategies to help and support with this.
- Due to council cuts, there is now only one Lordship Rec groundsperson doing what used to be done by a team of 4 or 5 people. So the bins are frequently full and overflowing and contents are raided and scattered by foxes.
- Ximena suggested meeting with the council , specifically to discuss improving the bin provision. Would larger bins with heavy lids help?

Birding Group

- A new Birding group is developing. It aims to track, record and publicise birds observed in the park. Not yet ready to launch.

Friends of Harmony Gardens

- Tuesday and Friday sessions continue for workers and volunteers.
- Close relationship with Kew Gardens established.
- Several corporate volunteer groups have attended. They have been useful but, generally, they are not paying the Friends for the opportunity given to them. (Usual going rate paid for this by companies is £70 per person)
- Mike plans to try to get corporate volunteer payment by a different route.

- Obstructions to the compost dump area have been cleared. Area is improved.
- Shaded seating area is now accessible.
- Hemlock has been a problem
- Muga was broken into leaving Harmony Gardens less secure.
- Coffee Grounds and cardboard boxes from the Hub Café are now being passed on to Harmony gardens for useful purposes.
- Last year the gardens were only closed on 4 days due to cold weather.

Friends Financial Report

- The Financial report published within the Annual Review document was formerly accepted by the meeting.
- A vote of Thanks was given to Caroline for her work as Treasurer.
- A letter of thanks has been sent to the Tottenham Grammar School Foundation for their continuing support, with an open invitation to visit and be shown around.
- The meeting agreed to re-allocate some unused historic funds from projects that no longer need the funds, into the, as yet, un-allocated reserves pot.
- Funds from Haringey Council (to Friends groups) are now limited to a maximum £1,000 per park per year.
- Simon Farrow, Head of Parks, has been asked by us to re-apply to the Heritage Lottery for substantial top-up funding for the Rec. A project officer is now tasked with drafting a proposal to discuss with us.
- Joan suggested partnering with other organisations involved in the very successful Flower and Produce Festival for future funding applications for the event.
- The meeting acknowledged that Government underfunding of Local Authorities is continuing to cause council staff and resources to be reduced, including for the Rec. Repairs requiring labour and resources are needing increased attention. How are we to approach the problem of things deteriorating?
- It was noted that we will benefit from continuing to work with other Friends of Parks groups, in Haringey, London and across the UK.
- It was noted that a key officer is now back in post and so we should re-establish regular Lordship rec Users Forum coordination meetings with Council officers. Dave to do.

IT WAS AGREED TO ADOPT THE ABOVE REPORTS. BIG THANKS TO ALL INVOLVED!

Election of Officers

Treasurer. Caroline Jepson was voted in unanimously.

Secretary. Joan Curtis was voted in unanimously

Chair. Dave Morris was voted in unanimously

Minute Secretary. Sara Hall was voted in unanimously.

Future elections for taking on responsibilities:

- Sally suggested establishing new processes involving deputies in order to allow current officers to retire gracefully one day. Dave referred people to read a circulated document which addresses that issue.
- Alyson confirmed that our monthly meetings can be used to allocate new responsibilities to more people. We noted that each working group has a coordinator.

AOB

- A vote of Thanks was given to all the people involved in organising and taking part in working groups, and in supporting the Friends in any way.
- It was suggested that perhaps the Council could have a role in organising, recruiting, training and insuring additional volunteers. TCV have such a team.
- We noted the excellent volunteer work being done on an ad hoc basis to improve and maintain the Hub garden planters and hedges
- The importance of regular meetings of the Lordship Rec Users Forum with Council officers was raised and agreed.
- New book – “On West Green” by Robert Rosenthal (former Secretary of the Friends of Downhills Pk). It’s a novel, based in Tottenham. Amongst other things “ It explores the important role that urban parks and open spaces provide in anchoring us to nature, ‘place’ and each other.” Alyson will alert local libraries to the book.
- Glowing reports: Park Run have expressed their love of running in Lordship Rec and other users have claimed Lordship Rec to be “the nicest Park ever”

How can we better represent all who use the Rec and all sections of our community?

This important question and challenge for us all was explored in some detail in a document distributed with this year’s Annual Report.

Friends of Lordship Rec: Annual Report June 2023-Sep 2024

Approved at AGM, 13.10.2024

Yet another amazing year for the Friends and our lovely park! The Friends were set up in 2001, and in the last 23 years the formerly run-down and neglected park has been utterly transformed into the great site it now is. This has been due to continuous community organisation, action and empowerment - and good collaboration with Haringey Council's Parks Service. We now have a park that the people of Tottenham can be proud of. Long may that continue! But to ensure that does continue - nothing stays still - we all need to keep organising, volunteering, publicising, speaking up and strengthening our activities, our partnerships and our influence. This is more important than ever as over the last year Council resources to parks generally, and to Lordship Rec in particular, have declined alarmingly in terms of staffing, maintenance, repairs and improvements.

1. The Friends' special events over the last 18 months

- ***Bioblitz and Wassail:*** the orchard working group organised an inspiring educational Bioblitz in the park June 2023 involving experts, the public and many local primary schoolchildren. Photos of this were later turned into an exhibition in the Hub. 200 local people attended the annual 'Wassail' in January in the orchard field.
- ***Tottenham Flower and Produce Festival:*** As usual in September 2023 and 2024 we organised in the park and Hub this annual event / competition / celebration of food growing and local crafts. This year we called it a 'Festival' - monthly open planning meetings resulted in more groups involved, and more activities (including a bike ride, a Right to Food march, Cloud appreciation sessions, climate/green zone etc). Over 1,000 attended.

2. The Friends' regular working groups (WG) and volunteering sessions

The Friends have some very active working groups, holding regular volunteering sessions – around 12 sessions per month - helping to maintain and manage various areas of the park. See below, at the end. More people are invited to get involved! [see our online or paper sign up form].

- ***Orchard field WG:*** Manage the trees in the field, encourage families to maintain trees they have planted, and organise training events to spread skills (eg coppicing and pruning) and appreciation for fruit-growing.
- ***Woodland WG:*** Regularly maintain the woodchip path, the trees, sightlines and the tiny stream/ponds. Supported by Conservation Volunteers (TCV). This year held 2 sessions in partnership with CIVIC, a local Shia Ismaili faith group. Helped test a new London Woodland Assessment Tool, and hosted its public launch here! Again we have been awarded a Green Flag in national recognition for our efforts.
- ***River channel WG:*** Monthly volunteer clean-ups in the river with Haringey Water Squad – a photo of our session got into Historic England's 2023 annual report! Met with the Council and contractors to try to get an effective Management Plan implemented.
- ***Lordship Litterpickers:*** twice every month volunteers scour areas of the park to find and remove litter.
- ***Lake:*** New dipping platform (built by TCV) and Interpretation Board (designed by Joan) installed. New 'Pond Squad' volunteer group going well. Have a whatsapp group. Applications for funding to improve the island unsuccessful so far.

- **Lordship Birders:** Some local birdwatchers discussing forming a group.

3. People involved in the Friends

All those who want to see the park improved, and a wide range of community activities, are encouraged to join.

- **Membership:** Around 1,400 park users are on our email membership list.

- **Volunteers:** Around 60-70 people are involved in our various activities and sessions.

Each Working Group has its own email list and/or whatsapp group

- **Officers and reps:** there are 7-8 of us who have positions of responsibility/coordination ensuring everything goes smoothly (we hope!). See the document setting out these roles - we are seeking to maybe expand these roles and also invite others to assist. Our reps have a **Friends Whatsapp Group** to help coordinate things.

- **Chair:** In March 2024 we hosted a 70th birthday event for our Chair since 2001 - well done Dave!

A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL OUR VOLUNTEERS, MEMBERS AND SUPPORTERS!!!

Overall we are trying hard to encourage new people, and a more diverse range of people, to get involved (especially younger adults, and more people from ethnic minority backgrounds).

4. Our Finances

We have limited funds, £967 unallocated reserves in March 2024. (See our Financial Report from our treasurer). Substantial activities require us to apply for grants. Many of our bids, especially for any substantial ongoing support for our work or for park improvements, are unsuccessful due to the large number of groups applying. Occasionally we do crowdfunding, but this takes a lot of publicising - we raised enough for a water bottle filler outside the Hub, and are currently waiting for the Council to install it.

5. Promoting the park and community activities

- **Email list:** we use our membership list - 1,400 people - for sending regular updates and notifications.

- **Noticeboards:** We manage these and try to ensure they are informative and up to date

- **Facebook:** 2,300 park users are on this, and this results in quite a range of park info, publicity for events, interesting photos of the Rec etc

- **Hub info table:** lots of info about the Friends, the park and the Hub, and community events there.

- www.lordshiprec.org.uk Our website is regularly updated. For some months this year we put up a detailed Calendar of our own events, but we need someone to help update this. We've added some inspiring new films to our Video Gallery in the last 18mths (about Blocorama/Steel Pan, Broadwater Farm Terrace Allotment, our Litterpicking group, and the Food and Produce Festival).

6. Other User Groups in the Rec

Whilst we are the organisation for all the individuals who care about the park, there are also around 20 other specialist groups organising a wide range of activities - eg groups

organising football, cycling activities, regular walks and fitness sessions, specialist events and so on. We support all these. In particular we have supported and publicised:

- **The Hub Co-operative:** They run the park's fantastic community centre and café in the middle of the park – and the many public events it holds eg at easter, halloween and xmas. Its our base, and many of our members also volunteer there.
- **The Friends of Harmony Gardens:** Twice-weekly sessions continue + plan sessions on first Saturday each month. Working with corporate volunteers + Kew Gardens 'Grow Wild' project to restore the children's garden. FoHG have revamped the raised beds, and held an apple-juicing session with the Broadwater Centre café.
- **Parkrun:** launched 2 years ago with Friends support, and now attended by over 150 people every Saturday
- **Junior Parkrun:** launched last year with Friends support, and attracting 30-50 every Sunday
- **Shell Performing Arts Collective:** 500 at Open Shell 2024 'wheels' event with music and food. Great Blockorama too.
- **Trove Market:** stalls & activities on the first Saturday of each month (spring to autumn).
- **Green Group for Central Tottenham:** Active during 2023. Supported our festival. Currently dormant.
- **Broadwater Farm Community Centre:** now run by the Council. Joan (FLR) has attended Users meetings.

7. Lordship Rec Users Forum (LRUF) and partnership with the Council

We have an important role encouraging groups in the park to link up and work together, and helped organise a well-attended Networking meeting. Groups agreed to try to promote our Lordship Village! We work with the Council's parks staff around maintenance, management and any proposed improvements to the Rec - recent issues include lighting, benches, hedges, leaks... A new Chess Table has been installed next to the outdoor gym. We are expecting the park to be upgraded to a borough-wide Site of Importance for Nature Conservation.

8. Haringey, London and beyond.....

We liaise with 65 local Friends groups throughout Haringey via the Haringey Friends of Parks Forum. The well-organised Forum helped develop the Council's 15-year Haringey Green Spaces Strategy launched last year. We've strong links with the London Friends of Spaces Network (1,000 groups). Our Chair (Dave) chairs the National Federation of Parks and Green Spaces, the voice of the movement of 7,000 local Friends groups. We publicised and attended a 50,000-strong national Restore Nature Now' march in June.

Friends regular volunteer sessions generally include:

- **Orchard Group** Thursday mornings, and 1st Saturday of the month
 - **Woodland Group** 2nd Saturday of the month
 - **Moselle Brook Group** 3rd Saturday of the month
- **Lordship Litterpickers** 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month
 - **Pond Squad** Some Mondays
 - **Friends of Harmony Gardens** Every Tues and Friday
- **And Friends' Open Meetings at the Hub** 1st Sunday of the month