



*Bromley Friends Forum  
Members' Meeting 11<sup>th</sup> January 2017 – Minutes*

---

## **Bromley Friends Forum**

Minutes of the Members' Meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2017  
At Civic Centre, Stockwell Close, Bromley 7pm - 9pm

### **Attendance:**

#### **Forum Committee:**

Larry Herbert (LH) - Keston Common, Chair  
John Cutting (JC) - Kelsey Park  
Darren Russell (DR) - Hoblingwell Wood  
Kari Silvester (KS) - Bromley Town Parks & Gardens / Forum  
Keith Rodwell - Winsford Gardens

#### **Friends Group Representatives:**

David Judd (DJ) - Biggin Hill  
Jeff Royce (JR) - Bromley Town Parks & Gardens  
John Bruce (JB) - Jubilee Country Park  
Alan Wilmot (AW) - Kelsey Park  
Alan Francis (AFr) - Willett Rec  
Gregor Campbell (GC) - Willett Rec  
Peter Woodward (PW) - Chislehurst Commons  
Allan Tabraham (AT) - Hayes Common  
Richard Gibbons (RG) - Orpington Priory Gardens  
Susan Folkes (SF) - Jubilee Country Park  
Valerie Bryant (VB) - Richmal Crompton Fields  
Teresa Stirk (TS) - Richmal Crompton Fields  
Iain Tulloch (IT) - Hollydale  
Vivienne Tatam (VT) - Hollydale

#### **Guest:**

Pherenice Worsley-Buck (PWB) - *idverde*

#### **Apologies:**

John Ince - Hoblingwell Wood, Vice-chair  
Barbara Arora - Chislehurst and Walden Rec  
Emma Prescott - Havelock Rec  
Tony Banfield - Bromley Town Parks & Gardens  
Members of Scadbury Park



## Bromley Friends Forum Members' Meeting 11<sup>th</sup> January 2017 – Minutes

---

### 1. Chairman's Welcome

LH opened the meeting and welcomed everyone in attendance. Special welcome to our guest, Pherenice Worsey-Buck from *idverde*.

### 2. Volunteer Development Plan

PWB presented an update on the work of the task force involved with the Volunteer Development Plan. The task force comprised members from Forum, Community Links and *idverde*.

The objectives of the plan were along the following lines:

- a) To review current volunteer roles within Bromley Parks & Green Spaces
- b) To review the number of green spaces with and without a Friend Group
- c) To identify barriers to volunteering
- d) To make recommendations how new volunteering opportunities can be developed to attract, support and develop volunteers
- e) To translate these recommendations into a series of actions to i) attract ii) support and iii) develop and empower volunteers for successful succession
- f) Provide a series of case studies to promote volunteering for Friends Groups and the Friends Forum in Bromley.

Questionnaires and community meetings would be organised with the theme of how we can:

- a) Attract new volunteers
- b) Help Friends Groups to manage/coordinate volunteers
- c) Help *idverde* to manage/co-ordinate volunteers
- d) Promote volunteering more effectively
- e) Help Friends Groups to devise management plans/work programmes so they know what to do
- f) Provide more training and support for volunteers (based on needs analysis).
- g) Work better with other volunteer groups
- h) Efficient recording of volunteer statistics
- i) Ensure better recognition of volunteers and the value they bring
- j) Ensure better local prioritisation
- k) Increase understanding of FGs/*idverde*/LBB relationships and roles.

Meetings have been scheduled as follows:

High Elms	Tuesday 31 <sup>st</sup> Jan	10am-12am
Hoblingwell	Thursday 2 <sup>nd</sup> Feb	10am-12am
Beckenham	Monday 6 <sup>th</sup> Feb	10am-12am
Civic Centre	Thursday 16 <sup>th</sup> Feb	7pm-9pm

Invitations and arrangements for these meetings are yet to be confirmed. Forum would assist in publication.

The meeting thanked PWB for her time and effort in this worthwhile enterprise and looked forward to its success.



*Bromley Friends Forum*  
*Members' Meeting 11<sup>th</sup> January 2017 – Minutes*

---

### 3. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on the 16th May were accepted with no alterations. JR proposed and DJ seconded. The minutes would now be published on the Forum website.

#### **Matters Arising:**

2. - **London Loop/Green Chain Walk:** No progress to report. Action continues.  
**Action: LH to raise with idverde**

3.6 - **Training Questionnaire:** This had been issued and returns processed. Agenda item 7 for further discussion.

5. - **Annual Stats Return:** This had been issued, data processed and monetary gifts issued. Agenda item 6 for further discussion.

5. - **Annual Stats Payments:** This had been raised at the stakeholder meeting and following discussion it was understood that £100 gifts would not be made in future years.

7. - **Committee Roles:** These had been issued ahead of the Forum AGM, though there were no takers at present to join the current committee.

8.1 - **Supply Stores:** This matter had been raised at the recent stakeholder panel meeting and assurances given that the stores would continue to service Friends Groups and indeed would be re-stocked, as necessary,

8.2 - **Ward Security:** A formal complaint has been made regarding the performance of Ward Security and feedback is awaited. Action continues.

**Action: LH to report back to Forum**

8.4 - **Partnership Meeting Minutes:** This has been discussed with idverde and they are happy for these to be circulated via email to members. They will not however be published on the Forum website before they are formally adopted.

### 4. Forum Update

#### 4.1 Feedback from Stakeholder Panel Meeting (6<sup>th</sup> Dec 2016)

LH reported back from the recent stakeholder panel meeting. Unfortunately no minutes had yet been produced so feedback was limited to Forum comments rather than the wider participation.

One of the first issues raised was that of the payment for annual statistics and whether the data collected was used and of value. It was agreed that the data collection process was valued and was needed to support staffing levels and planning activities for the coming year. idverde argued that as they had organised and paid for Friends Group insurance policies as well as supplied the Volunteer Handbook free of charge so they were reticent to pay any further funds.

Another issue was that of raising funds for new assets (e.g. playground equipment) and ensuring not only the capital cost but also the on-going lifetime maintenance costs. This had arisen from the Friends of Whitehall Rec, who had raised funds to buy new playground equipment but did not have sufficient funds for the maintenance and as a consequence had been told the purchase could not go ahead. It was re-stated that there is currently a maintenance budget that covers all known assets in the borough, if these assets need



replacement and/or repair then there is in effect no change to the maintenance cost and so the purchase/change can proceed. If, however, something new is added to the asset pool then maintenance costs are increased and under these circumstances the purchase can only proceed if 'life of the asset' maintenance costs are also provided. In respect of Whitehall its was recognised that the fundraising process had started some time ago before the above policy and hence would be allowed to proceed.

The situation of basic tools and PPE provision for Friends volunteers was discussed and it was re-iterated that the policy that existed prior to the transition from Council to *idverde* had not changed and that *idverde* were expected to provide all volunteers with the basics. Friends Groups are reminded to discuss their requirements with their Community Manager prior to making any personal purchases. This policy also applied to the provision of photocopying at libraries though it was noted this was for small volume requirements. Any larger photocopying should again be discussed with Community Managers, who may be able to provide an in-house service.

Other topics discussed were the reprinting of walk leaflets, as stocks have become depleted, Ward Security and the installation of memorial benches in sensitive locations. A formal complaint has been raised with Ward Security and the outcome is awaited. The policy on benches would be reviewed and every effort made to ensure Friends Groups were consulted on the siting of these items prior to installation occurred in a timely manner.

#### **4.2 Feedback from Partnership Meeting (12<sup>th</sup> Dec 2016)**

LH reported back from the recent partnership meeting. Minutes were now available and would be circulated to all groups in due course.

One of the items arising from the meeting was concern over the conduct of Forum's recent AGM and in particular how financial matters were handled. *idverde* requested that Forum appoints an independent auditor/inspector (whose position should be membership endorsed at the relevant AGM). They also requested the Forum create a policy document to show how Groups could apply to Forum for part-funding as it was believed this was not widely understood.

**Action: LH to organise with committee**

*idverde* also commented on the timetable of meetings and whether the AGM and conference could be combined. Following discussion in this members' meeting it was agreed that the AGM would remain separate from the Conference. It was also agreed that the Conference would no longer have a formal general meeting but just a quick summary of past events.

LH presented to *idverde* the results of the recent annual statistics gathering and also the results of the training needs questionnaire. These are covered in more detail below.

#### **4.3 *idverde* Action Plan**

LH referred to the new Bromley Parks website and that at the bottom of the 'about' page was a link to the latest *idverde* action plan. LH distributed a copy to attendees and some discussion followed. It was noted that aspects seemed confusing where different colours were being used to signify different levels of progress on individual items and that some seemed to be some way behind schedule.



## 5. Annual Statistics (2016 & 2017)

LH distributed a copy of the 2016 annual statistics results. It was noted that not all Groups had responded to the request but some 60% had and in the main this represented all the most active groups. The total hours recorded was in the region of 41,000 hours, which was in line with expectations whilst the total funds raised was only £141k and this seemed somewhat down on previous years especially in the light that Chislehurst Commons had raised £111k on their own.

Following discussion with *idverde* it was agreed a cut down one-page questionnaire would be produced for the 2017 collection process and that this would be issued early in the year to give Group members ample time to start gathering the information. It was also agreed with *idverde* that no monetary gift would be paid this year. LH distributed a draft copy of the one-page questionnaire and this met with approval from attendees.

**Action: Forum to formalise and issue 2017 questionnaire**

## 6. Training Needs 2017

JC presented the results of the recent training needs analysis. Response to date had been quite light but it was recognised that the standard programme of training courses should be repeated once again during 2017; i.e. first aid, leading a work-session, use of tools; etc.

There were a number of requests for IT related courses and it may transpire that individual Groups could pursue these directly to meet their specific needs. Forum would investigate the provision of social media courses and endeavour to offer this later in the year.

## 7. Forum Conference Planning

LH asked attendees for their views on Forum's upcoming Conference, scheduled for Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> May. It was agreed that the format of previous conferences worked well but this year rather than including a general meeting perhaps two keynote speakers could be invited.

DR put forward the option of inviting DC Sarah Bailey who is the borough's wildlife officer, and could talk about wildlife crime.

**Action: DR to check her availability**

Other options were to have a speaker from the London wide scene to give us an update on the progress towards making park provision a statutory requirement. PW suggested Forum should contact Tony Leach (chief exec, Parks for London), who might be able to suggest a suitable candidate to offer as speaker.

**Action: LH to follow-up**

The provision of workshops was also agreed as a valuable aspect to the conference and consideration for three topics planned. It was felt that no more than one of these should be lead by *idverde*.

**Action: Forum to propose suitable workshop topics and seek leaders**



*Bromley Friends Forum*  
*Members' Meeting 11<sup>th</sup> January 2017 – Minutes*

---

**8. AOB**

- 8.1** JR reported that Friends of Bromley Town Parks had had a meeting with *idverde* following their comments at the Forum AGM and that these had been fruitful.
- 8.2** AW reported a build up of silt from the small lake into the larger lake at Kelsey Park. It is not clear as to the extent of the dredging work required and as such is hard to quantify the cost which in turn makes it difficult to seek external funding. They have started a fund raising exercise and seek additional support, where possible. AW will attend the next fund-raising course/meeting scheduled for 23<sup>rd</sup> January and hopes new ideas of a way forward will emerge.
- 8.3** GC reported that he had discussed issues with his Community Manager but found little support. When he raised the same with the 'Fix My Street' system he received a welcome outcome. LH confirmed that FMS was the right course of action to take as a) it retained a record and a statistic and b) was monitored by the Council and as such had a better chance of succeeding, especially if it needed to be repeated more than once.
- 8.4** AFR stated that he did not know where some of the Parks and Green Spaces were in the borough and it would be nice if a map could be made available at these meetings. LH said he would produce such a map and bring it along to future meetings.  
**Action: LH to produce map**
- 8.5** AFR also reported that he had become aware of actions taken by both LBB and *idverde* without consultation with their Friends Group. AF offered to prepare a paper for Forum to present to the next stakeholder panel meeting.  
**Action: AFR to produce paper**
- 8.6** PW commented that he found the 'round-table' discussion of Friends problems enlightening and asked if such a session could be added to the agenda for the next meeting.  
**Action: LH to add to next agenda**
- 8.7** DR presented the BEECHE events guide to the meeting. It is available for download from the *idverde* website (and post meeting has been added to the Forum page on the Forum website). Physical copies can be obtained from visiting the BEECHE site at High Elms.
- 8.8** DR informed the meeting of the Great British Spring Clean event over the weekend of 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> March. Groups wanting to have their own event should start making plans. Post meeting a link on the Events page of the Forum website has now been added where further details are available.

**9. Date of Next Meeting**

The next Forum Members' Meeting is Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2017, at the Civic Centre.