

Bromley Friends Forum

Minutes of the Members' Meeting held on 18th September 2019
At Civic Centre, Stockwell Close, Bromley 7pm - 9pm

Attendance:

Forum Committee:

Refer to secretary for details

Friends Group Representatives:

Refer to secretary for details

Apologies:

Refer to secretary for details

1. Chairman's Welcome

LH opened the meeting and welcomed everyone in attendance. Members introduced themselves and their Friends Group association.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on the 17th July were accepted with no alterations. PW expressed his gratitude to Forum for organising PDS/idverde attendance at the last meeting. It is hoped this can be repeated at a future Forum meeting.

The minutes would be revised with full names removed prior to publication on the Forum website.

Matters Arising:

2 Preferred contractor list: No additional information provided to date. Action dropped.

2 Street Cleaning Grant: LH understood that the £57k grant ear-marked for Bromley had not yet been claimed as LBB were yet to decide what their plans were. Response awaited from LBB **Action: LBB**

2 Animal Control Policy: This came under the responsibility of the Council under environmental health, Nick Skeet was the contact at LBB. JR to follow up. **Action: JR**

2 Forum Grant Form: LH explained the form was only downloadable from the Forum website and not interactive as had been thought. As such the process was working correctly. Action complete.

6.3 Contact Poster: This item was added to the agenda, as requested. Action complete.

3. Forum News

3.1. *idverde* update

LH distributed a revised *idverde* staff chart, which now included names. He reiterated that this document should be treated as confidential to Friends members and should not be published in any form.

LH confirmed *idverde* had requested quarterly stats for the period April to June and that approximately 30% of Groups had responded. Clearly, this was not ideal but the intention is to continue with this process and monitor the outcome. LBB had published a letter explaining that *idverde* are not measured in any form against these figures and that they are used to monitor the success (or otherwise) of the Friends movement.

3.2. Contacts Poster

LH presented to the meeting three variants of a Contacts Poster to the meeting. Discussion followed and various changes were suggested. In particular a date needs to be added and some example issue topics should be included. It was suggested a QR code should be added, if possible. LH agreed to produce a revised copy. **Action: LH**

3.3. Training update

LH reported that a number of very successful training courses had taken place recently and these included topics on Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS), Butterfly Identification and Emergency First Aid. A Pond Maintenance Course is scheduled for 29th October and a First Aid Course for 23rd November. A Fundraising Course is planned, but no date as yet agreed.

LH introduced a revised Training Needs Questionnaire for 2020. Members would be asked to complete this within the next couple of weeks and findings will then be discussed with course providers to deliver a schedule for the next calendar year.

3.4. Biodiversity Report

JJ reported to the meeting a quick overview of biodiversity matters that need to be considered in the next few weeks. She referred to the results of recent surveys and asked members to continue to collect information of sightings of different species across the borough. More detailed information accompanies these minutes.

The partnership meets every three months to discuss a variety of pertinent topics. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday 27th January 2020. The partnership can be contacted on bromleybiodiversity@gmail.com.

3.5. AGM Planning

LH informed members that the next meeting would be our AGM and will be held on Wednesday 20th November. It would start at 6.30pm and formal business would run to around 8pm after which drinks and nibbles would be available. It was hoped to have a keynote speaker at the AGM, though this was still subject to availability.

LH announced that JI would be standing down from the Committee and his role as deputy chair. He would continue as chair of Hoblingwell Wood. Nominations to join the Committee were welcomed.

4. Friends Group Issues

4.1. Forum: LH stated that the Committee had agreed to canvas Groups for more detailed information about their issues/experiences so that these could be reported in more detail at the various management meetings. An outline questionnaire was circulated for comment which would be published in due course to all Friends Groups. **Action: LH**

4.2. Hoblingwell Wood: JI reported that considerable effort was being spent on improving the sporting activities. In particular a Sports Manager is being appointed to run the Sports Club and offer a variety of different sports.

The Wood continues to suffer from motorbike and quad bike issues and this is becoming a serious problem.

Slow worms and lizards have been observed following the introduction of refuges.

4.3. Pratts Bottom: PH reported that some thirty years ago a local footpath was installed by the Council using sleepers. Since that time the footpath has fallen into disrepair and become a muddy mess. Indeed accidents have happened. The meeting suggested PH log the issue on FixMyStreet until remedial action is taken.

PH had asked authorities about spreading ashes on Commons but had received no answer.

4.4. Scadbury Park: VS reported that they were fund raising to able them to reline their pond.

The Moated Manor (part of the Scheduled Ancient Monument) is now being looked after and had an open weekend Sept 14th/15th.

Scadbury continues to use FixMyStreet to resolve and report issues.

4.5. Chislehurst & Walden Rec: BA reported that the Friends have an active gardening club and this was working well. They had now installed a shed, the cost of which had been supported by a Forum grant.

As Hoblingwell, Chislehurst suffers from a quad bike and motorbike problem.

4.6. Chislehurst Commons: PW reported that there will be an event on 16th November to be held in the Old Chapel of the Chislehurst Society. This will cover works undertaken by the Friends and will offer guided walks during the day.

PW reported travellers had arrived on site in August but with assistance from LBB had been moved on within 24 hours.

4.7. Kelsey Park: AS reported that volunteer numbers were reducing. They may have some 600 members but only some 5% were active.

Kelsey has a carved bench that had been vandalised some two years ago. It has proved difficult to date to find a repairer but efforts were continuing.

AC reported that Kelsey asked for CCTV to be installed at their information centre, but this had been refused. The meeting suggested that they install a wildlife trapping camera as an alternative option.

4.8. Hollydale Open Space: VT reported that Hollydale had been asked to support a geo-caching opportunity and asked the meeting for their views. Members confirmed that many parks hosted geo-caching but it was important that users followed the process correctly and that off-track locations must be prohibited.

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4.9. Jubilee Country Park: JRa reported that Roe Deer had been observed in the park.

4.10. Willett Rec: AF wished to thank JJ for her support.

4.11. Priory Gardens: RG reported that the Priory would be open on 21st September and that guided tours would be available.

4.12. Keston Common: LH reported that they were still pursuing the desire of restoring its water fountain but progress to date with LBB/idverde personnel was non-existent.

5. AOB

5.1. AF reported that the Council had closed all public toilets and followed a policy of community toilets. Willett had taken the decision to maintain their own toilet (at considerable cost and effort) and AF felt the Council were now taking them for granted and offered no support. Members suggested AF take the matter up with his Ward Councillors.

6. Date of Next Meeting

The next Forum Meeting will be our AGM and is scheduled for Wednesday 20th November 2019 at the Civic Centre, starting at 6.30pm.