



Bromley Friends Forum

Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on 13th January 2016
At Civic Centre, Stockwell Close, Bromley 7pm - 9pm

Attendance:

Forum Committee

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

Friends Group Representatives

Peter Woodward (PW) - Chislehurst Commons
Jeff Royce (JR) - Bromley Town Parks & Gardens
Dave Booker (DB) - Hoblingwell Wood
Mike Bignell (MB) - Hoblingwell Wood
Iain Tulloch (IT) - Hollydale
Alison Stammers (AS) - Chislehurst and Walden Rec
Sue Clarke (SC) - Hayes Common
Vivien Smith (VS) - Scadbury Park
Judy John (JJ) - Keston Common

Apologies:

Alan Filby (AF) - Darrick & Newstead Woods
John Ince (JI) - Hoblingwell Wood
Alan Francis (AFr) - Willet Recreation Ground
Barbara Arora (BA) - Chislehurst and Walden Rec
David Judd (DJ) - Biggin Hill
Deborah Palmer (DeP) - Hayes Parks / Pickhurst Recreation Ground

1. Chairman's Welcome

LH opened the meeting and welcomed everyone in attendance.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on the 9th September were discussed. JJ raised a comment re the TLG Strategy and whether the expected action plans had been issued. LH reported that he was not aware of any subsequent documents being issued at this time but understood further strategies were being developed by TLG which would be the subject of the next stakeholder panel meeting.



Matters Arising:

4.1 - LH had talked to KR and he was now an officer of the committee. Action complete.

4.2 - LH had revised the constitution and this was now issued and available for download from the Forum website. Action complete.

5. - LH had reported the matter to TLG and it was understood alternative arrangements have been implemented. It was further understood that items such as a greenhouse could not be covered by insurance. Action complete.

3. Feedback on Partnership Meeting

3.1 Partnership Statement

As reported in the last meeting a Partnership Statement between TLG and Forum has been produced and this was signed-off at the meeting on 3rd December. The issued version is available for download from the Forum website. A brief Working Agreement between the Council and Forum had been drafted and was awaiting Council comment.

3.2 TLG Strategy

The TLG strategy document had been completed and signed-off by the Council. A copy of the document is available for download from the Forum website.

3.3 Awards for All

The 'awards for all' grant application has been on-going now for some time and has been delayed as a consequence of other priorities and the transition over to TLG. However, Forum are still keen to complete the process and the monies would be used to promote and market Forum and to help provide assistance to Friends Groups in running their events. Training opportunities would also be provided. A recent meeting had been held with TLG staff to review the current status of the process and further meetings are planned for the very near future.

3.4 Health & Safety

TLG has produced a document of risk assessments that were discussed at the partnership meeting. It was felt that these in themselves did not match the TLG staff handbook on health and safety and it was hoped that a slimmed down version of the handbook for volunteers could still be produced.

Action LH to chase

3.5 Training Programme

LH and PW had attended a meeting on 8th December with TLG staff to discuss training requirements for 2016 and in support of project 1 from the TLG strategy. To date no further feedback has been received and concern has been raised that timescales on booking training is slipping (i.e. first aid is required by March)

Action LH to chase



3.6 Planned Programme of Works

It was agreed that the old planned programme of works pilot was now at an end and that a new scheme needs to be developed. Consideration for pilot sites would be undertaken in the coming weeks and it was expected that more detail would be available at the next partnership meeting on 17th March.

4. TLG Update

4.1 Structure & Recruitment

Following the last Open Committee Meeting a number of posts have now been filled and details of these were presented in structure form to the meeting. A detailed contact list was also presented. Both of these are available for download from the Forum website.

4.2 Unemployed Personnel

DR gave a brief presentation of how TLG were assisting a number of long-term unemployed people to gain work experience and benefit from being outdoors. At the moment this work was restricted to the 'East Neighbourhood' of the Borough though it was thought it could be extended across the whole of Bromley at some point in the future. The meeting recognised the valuable work this offered and thanked DR for organising this.

5. Biodiversity Partnership

5.1 Local Green Space designation

LH reported that a biodiversity partnership meeting had been held on 11th Jan and that key in the meeting was a presentation of how Bromley intended to implement the National Planning Policy with regard the Local Green Space designation. Bromley had drafted a paper containing eight specific criteria on which an application for Local Green Space designation would be assessed. These draft papers were being presented to the Council Exec and if adopted would be sent out for six week consultation to interested parties. It was agreed that Forum would take an active role in this consultation and would recommend that all Friends Groups applied for this designation as soon as logically possible. JJ asked that Forum keeps her aware of all applications and would help in defining biodiversity traits of individual sites. LH agreed to share more detailed information with members once it became available.

Action LH

6. Website/Toolkit Revisions

6.1 Recent Updates

LH reported that a number updates had been made over recent weeks. In particular some sections of the toolkit have been reviewed and new versions were now available. A number of sections of the toolkit needed a greater TLG slant and these had been passed to Patrick Phillips for input. It is expected these will be completed before the end of the month.



6.2 Feedback/Comments

It was generally agreed that the website provided a good source of material but required further update, especially with regard the toolkit and details on insurance. It was hoped to complete this work shortly. AS asked if notifications could be sent out when significant changes were made as this would benefit those members who were not regular visitors to the site. LH agreed to look at this and make use of Facebook as an information medium.

7. Summer Conference Planning

7.1 Format

The meeting agreed that the format of the Forum conference worked well and that a similar event to the 2015 event was worth repeating. It is expected to be in June perhaps the week commencing 20th or the earlier week starting 13th. The actual date was dependent on keynote speakers availability and as such needed to be organised at the earliest opportunity.

7.2 Speakers / Workshops

A discussion on potential speakers followed. Options around wildlife were considered and DR agreed to look at this further. With regard the theme of the conference it was felt emphasis should be given on how to engage the younger generation with our parks and how more participation with schools can be achieved. Topics for the workshops could include 'Nature for Children', training options at BEECHE, and also the new Local Green Space designation (plus other similar designations). **Action: LH/DR**

8. AOB

- LH reported that there is a Stakeholder Panel meeting scheduled for 16th February and that Forum and other parties would be represented. Any comments members had on TLG performance would be gratefully received and should be sent to LH.
- LH reminded the meeting that there was a Love Parks Conference and Awards ceremony being held in Nottingham on 17th March. If members wished to attend then their applications must be received by 29th Jan.
- JR outlined a problem with masonry around the pond banks in Church House Gardens and wasn't certain who he should be reporting this to. LH suggested he use Fix My Street as a first pass and see what response this garnered. As the Council is the landlord of the site it was generally agreed it was their issue rather than TLG, who do not undertake this type of repair work.

9. Date of Next Meeting

The next Open Committee Meeting is Wednesday 2nd March at the Civic Centre, starting at 7pm.