



Forum Partnership Meeting No. 28

Thursday 12th January 2023, 10am – Video Conferencing

Larry Herbert (LH)
Richard Gibbons (RG)
Vivien Smith (VS)
Walter Leonard (WL)

Hannah Jackson (HJ)
James Hilsden (JH)
Hugh Chapman (HC)
Cllr Aisha Cuthbert (AC)

Martyn Bradley (MB)
Andy Hodgson (AH)
Sue Holland (SH)
Steven Lofting (SL)
Amy Rogers (AR)
Jess Dalton (JD) (Minutes)

AGENDA

1. Welcome & introductions
2. Apologies for absence
3. Minutes of last meeting / Action tracker
4. Council update
5. *idverde* update
6. Forum update
7. Any other business
8. Date of next meeting

1. Welcome & Introductions

LH welcomed all participants and began introductions.

2. Apologies for Absence

Friends Forum: Keith Rodwell (KR), Tony Allen (TA), Barbara Arora (BA), Kari Silvester (KS)

***idverde*:** None

LBB: None

3. Previous Minutes & Matters Arising (Action Tracker Update)

The minutes were accepted as a true reflection of the previous meeting.

The action tracker was reviewed, amended and updated including new due dates for actions outstanding, this can be found attached to the minutes. A summary of changes to the action tracker is as follows:

Action 18: Tool provision for Friends Groups - JH supplied the tools document to LH. LH raised queries with JH. JH to arrange a meeting with LH, date to be confirmed.

Action 24: Park signage updates - HJ held a meeting in Nov 2022. HJ to circulate notes and the next steps.

VS raised that a full audit was conducted some time ago and therefore some data should be in existence for this.

HJ confirmed that the quality of the data from that audit is not necessarily sufficient to inform this project.

RG asked HJ for clarification on what is included signage audit.

HJ stated LBB would like this audit to be as comprehensive as possible and include walking routes and notice boards. Initial implementation will focus on the replacement/renewal of entrance signage.

The discussion continued to consider new enforcement signage and what should/shouldn't be included within the audit. HJ confirmed only signage that is large and mounted will be included, not way marking discs.

AH showed a spreadsheet that he is working on which presents signage across the parks. RG advised he has recorded some 30 signs so far in Priory Gardens.

VS thanked AH as this is a good format but clear instructions will need to be presented to ensure the quality of information gathered is consistent across the whole borough.

HC advised AH, from his experience of similar projects it may be useful to include categorised drop-down lists to keep the information consistent.

AH advised more groundwork needs to be done for the data to be as accurate as possible.

VS added to HC's comment, stating drop downs would be a good idea.

Action 25: Water fountains - JH confirmed all fountains have been identified but work is ongoing to identify water connections etc. JH asked if Friends with any info on this to please share. JH to send the existing list to LH.

Action 27: LBB organisation charts - Chart sent across – action closed.

Action 29: Fundraising processes - Process presented at the AGM meeting, and all uploaded online – action closed.

Action 30: Website information - Action remains open – JH to put KR in touch with Jackie Baxter, HJ has asked David Braybrook to be included in discussions.

Action 37: Communications processes- HJ – David Braybrook to take on drafting the process and this should be completed in the next quarter.

4. Council Update

JH gave an update on behalf of LBB which included:

- JH thanked John Cutting and Sandy Goddard for their service on the Forum.
- Nicola Musto and Debbie Howard have been in post as parks monitoring officers for nearly a year now.
- LBB has been reviewing and refreshing databases, ensuring that the assets are all logged and accessible.
- Pavilions in parks - leases are being reviewed. Property Facilities are supporting this in parks such as Petts Wood and Hoblingwell Rec.
- £250,000 was funded for potholes/fencing repairs, alongside Property Facilities. Work is focusing on cemeteries this winter.

HJ added:

- There has been progress on the Jubilee Projects, with a good response on funding towards it, and so far there have been seven applications that have been put through and two more awaiting approval. They will be making more decisions on the next steps by the end of the financial year.
- HJ agreed to ask David Braybrook to send spend data per ward to LH.
- Bowie Bandstand project at Croydon Rd Rec is progressing.
- LBB currently looking into plans to celebrate the coronation.
- Funding to bridge repairs, particularly Kelsey Park which David Braybrook has been working on. These are expected to be tendered in the late spring.
- HJ gave an update on the Open Space Strategy with key areas for 2023 focusing on audit, review of parks governance and fundraising.

LH asked JH about the £2,000 funding that still hasn't been paid. JH advised going to chase again.

LH asked HJ why the Friends Forum does not have any involvement with Countryside Consultative Panel. HJ advised she will review the terms of reference for the CCP and get back to LH.

HC Gave an update on behalf of the tree team:

- In process of letting a new contract, for more trees to be planted.
- Officers are currently undertaking cyclical tree inspections in the East Wards
- Due to winter ground conditions remedial works which can be held until the summer will be postponed to avoid damage to grass etc.

RG raised a query with HC that trees with hessian straps have failed in his area, will they be re-instated and what is the best way for this to be reported? HC advised RG that they are looking to re-launch the Tree Friends Programme, in the meantime report any enquiries on FMS. RG mentioned raising on FMS may cause duplications, but HC advised they can link the job to assets, to see if one has already been raised duplications are not an issue of concern.

5. idverde Update

AR gave an update on fundraising including:

- Showed presentation of current fundraising projects which included
 - Bowie bandstand project - planning & listed building consent secured for restoration work funded by Heritage of London Trust.
 - Play project at Cudham Rec – replacing with new play equipment.
 - Amber Baby Memorial Project in Chislehurst Rec – sponsored by Amber Charity, ideas to have a centre sculpture piece in place. In process of applying for grants.
 - Improvements of the play area at Queensmead Rec.
 - Coney Hall MUGA
- AR announced her impending departure from idverde to join the National Trust
- AH and JH thanked AR for her 20 years of service in Bromley and all her achievements.

SH gave an update on behalf of the countryside and education team including:

- Three new rangers joining the team making a full team providing a breadth of skills.
- Freya Prince is the new RSPB officer, and the partnership with idverde continues with Steven Lofting moving over to idverde.
- 2022 species surveys to support their habitat work completed.
- Idverde led volunteer work sessions totalled 9368hrs.
- Countryside team are all on track with strategies set & targets for Biodiversity.
- Both idverde and LBB staff attended RSPB run biodiversity in amenity spaces course.
- New events including the Christmas market.
- Working with LBB on upcoming nature-friendly verge trial.
- Working with Forum to prepare the five training courses for 2023. Leading a work party will become a mandatory annual course from now on.

AH showed a presentation of projects delivered late last year (appended) and then gave an update:

- Upcoming changes – since Amy’s resignation we have taken the time to take stock of our structures and we are planning to make some changes; I am not in a position today to give a full update as there are a couple of colleagues I need to consult with but I am hopeful that a slightly revised structure will be agreed later this week and I will circulate it to the Friends Forum.
- A very brief update on Ground Maintenance, we are currently working through our winter pruning schedule, path edging and mopping up the last bit of leafing. Our engineers are busy working on servicing our grass-cutting machinery in readiness for the upcoming season.
- Events and Activities, as you saw on the slide, we have a new Events and Activities Manager, Lily. As the days start to grow longer and we look forward to Spring could I ask that groups put in their event applications as soon as they can to help us with planning our workload. We have already had some applications; Chislehurst Recreation Ground looks to have an exciting summer ahead with several events planned as well as Chislehurst Rocks.

- The team are truly energised as we enter 2023, the excitement of contributing to the delivery of Bromley's far-reaching vision of the Open Space Strategy, the opportunities that the Platinum Jubilee Fund will bring to enhance our sites, and the beginning of the naturalised verge trials, amongst many other projects, means that this year will certainly be challenging but also incredibly exciting.

Action: following AR's departure AH is to share the revised idverde organisation chart with LH in the coming weeks following the completion of staff consultations.

LH asked how many Friends Groups are responding to the quarterly data request and what this data is used for?

AR informed LH response rate is circa 30% the data helps to inform fundraising applications and comparison to other London boroughs and that they are seeking to make returns easier to complete in an online format.

Action: LH to encourage Friends Groups to return their data.

RG raised the upcoming verge trial, when will communications start on this? HJ outlined the current communications plan.

LH asked about idverde website updates. AH stated he has a design quote ready to go which currently awaiting approval once approved this will be an 8-12 week build and will improve functionality going forward and make editing easier.

LH asked about the Friends Group issues at Hoblingwell. AH to discuss this with Angela Wood and revert to LH.

6. Friends Forum Update

LH gave an update on the Friends projects, advised has been quiet since the AGM in November 2022 owing to the Christmas period.

Sandy Goddard and John Cutting have stood down from the committee. The new treasurer is Tony Allen and Walter Leonard is a new committee member.

7. AOB

RG raised the Great British Spring Clean event, asking LBB to action more anti-litter and fly-tip campaigning.

AH and JH to discuss the Great British Spring Clean event.

JH mentioned current work with the Lawn Tennis Association and Smashing Cricket to improve sports access in the borough.

Next Meeting Date

The next meeting date has been arranged for: 30/03/2023 at 10am (Online).

[Meeting ended]