

Bromley Friends Forum

Minutes of the Members' Meeting held on 13th March 2019
At Civic Centre, Stockwell Close, Bromley 7pm - 9pm

Attendance:

Forum Committee:

Larry Herbert (LH) - Keston Common, Chair
John Ince (JI) - Hoblingwell Wood, Vice-chair
John Cutting (JC) - Kelsey Park, Treasurer
Keith Rodwell (KR) - Winsford Gardens, Forum Committee
Darren Russell (DR) - Hoblingwell Wood
Richard Gibbons (RG) - Orpington Priory Gardens
Kari Silvester (KS) - Bromley Town Parks & Gardens

Friends Group Representatives:

Barbara Arora (BA) - Chislehurst & Walden Rec
Brian Street (BS) - Darrick & Newstead Woods
David Judd (DJ) - Biggin Hill
Iain Tulloch (IT) - Hollydale
John Bruce (JB) - Jubilee Country Park
Judy John (JJ) - Biodiversity Sub-Committee
Julie Covill (JCo) - Chislehurst & Walden Rec
Jeff Royce (JR) - Bromley Town Parks & Gardens
Mai Bunce (MB) - Chislehurst & Walden Rec
Millie Knights (MK) - Cator Park and Alexandra Rec
Peter Hudson (PH) - Pratts Bottom
Michael Hudson (MH) - Pratts Bottom
Peter Woodward (PW) - Chislehurst Commons
Susan Folkes (SF) - Jubilee Country Park
Tiziana Herbert (TH) - Keston Common
Vivienne Tatam (VT) - Hollydale

Apologies:

Vivien Smith - Scadbury Park, Forum Committee
Sandy Goddard - Whitehall Rec, Forum Committee
Alison Stammers - Chislehurst & Walden Rec
Alan Francis - Willett Rec
Gregor Campbell - Willett Rec
Sue Hayes - Darrick Wood
Peter White - South Hill Wood / Kingswood Glen
Tudor Davies - Keston Common
Mike Titheridge - Tugmutton
Emma Prescott - Havelock Rec

1. Chairman's Welcome

LH opened the meeting and welcomed everyone in attendance. It was agreed member introductions were unnecessary as all in attendance knew each other.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on the 23rd January were accepted with no alterations and would now be published on the Forum website.

Matters Arising:

2. Unauthorised activity in our parks: LH had discussed this with the Council and their response was awaited.

4.2 Grant strategy report closures: LH had raised this with *idverde* management and their response was awaited.

5.1 Bin collections: LH had raised this with *idverde* management and they agreed they will make improvements for next time (now expected to be the Easter holidays).

3. Forum News

3.1. Council / *idverde* update

LH told the meeting that there was very little Council/*idverde* update to report. Since January both parties were working hard through the transition period to ensure the new contract would start on 1st April. In essence this meant making practices work smarter and endeavouring to cut out waste.

DR reported that Community Managers were looking at producing management plans for all sites (including those without Friends Groups) and that the work was now well progressed. Once these were completed they would be circulated to Friends Groups with a consultation period prior to final sign-off.

RG/PW reported that the Council had issued a public Press Release today (13th March) to formally announce the Parks Management contract. In his letter Cllr William Huntington-Thresher thanked the Forum for its work and help in the decision-making process.

3.2. Statistics Data

LH reported the results of the data collection process for the 2018 statistical information. In general terms this showed that there were over 9,500 supporters, over 750 active Friends spending over 48,000 hours of effort. Full details will be published to all Friends Groups and accompany these minutes.

Discussion then continued regarding the new quarterly stats collection process. There was considerable disquiet about the process, the reasons why, what was it needed for, why quarterly as opposed to annually etc. etc. The Groups represented at the meeting considered this an extra unwanted burden and re-iterated that they were volunteers and shouldn't be expected to deliver this information.

Action: LH to discuss matter with Council/*idverde*

3.3. Training update

LH presented to the meeting the schedule of training courses, as agreed with idverde and other parties, for the year. In order to keep the administration relatively simple members would be invited to attend courses around 8 weeks in advance. To ensure numbers were kept in check applicants should advise Forum direct and not the trainer or course leader. Full details will be published to all Friends Groups and accompany these minutes.

3.4. Biodiversity Report

JJ reported to the meeting her work within the biodiversity partnership. The partnership meets every three months to discuss a variety of pertinent topics. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday 13th May 2019. The partnership can be contacted on bromleybiodiversity@gmail.com.

JJ reported on use of the latest set of posters - Toad is now current, Swift has been revised and is due shortly. Posters are available for download from the Forum website Biodiversity page. JJ also reported that Steven Lofting is co-ordinating the biodiversity survey group (butterflies, reptiles, flora, invasive non-native species) and that sightings etc. should be reported to him.

JR raised the problem of neighbourhood walkabouts by the Council and this had resulted in the loss of a pond at Church House Gardens, i.e. the Council had deemed this unsightly and decided to have it filled in with earth rather than try to re-establish its biodiversity capabilities.

Action: Forum to discuss this matter with Council/idverde

3.5. Forum Meetings

LH presented to the meeting an outline schedule of meetings for 2019. The schedule will be revised from time to time as more detailed information becomes known and made available for download from the Forum website.

4. Friends Group Issues

- 4.1. Jubilee Country Park** - AGM to be held 28th March, all welcome.
- 4.2. Darrick & Newstead Woods** - closure of bridleways remains an issue, nobody seems prepared to make a decision.
- 4.3. Hollydale Open Space** - situation on trees remains outstanding, also large amount of green waste has remained uncollected.
- 4.4. Chislehurst Commons** - received a complaint from dog owners being chased by horse riders on the bridle paths. Used Twitter to find the stable responsible and matter now sorted. Have had some fly-tipping issues recently.
- 4.5. Chislehurst & Walden Rec** - Rachel Hart (Lollipop Events Manager) has now set up a not-for-profit organisation and is willing to help Friends Groups manage major events (e.g. she is now handling Chislehurst Rocks directly). She could help other Groups and may be able to give an evening seminar to explain her role and what she can offer.

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- 4.6. Bromley Town Parks - the planning application around Library Gardens has been revised but as yet no final decision has been taken. It is understood one of the blocks has been reduced in height but this goes little way towards an amicable solution.
- 4.7. Pratts Bottom - have been working closely with the local residents association and are planning a British Spring Clean event with their local schools. Very pleased with idverde clean-up work in Fox Wood and are well supported by Carol Long with a number of issues.
- 4.8. Priory Gardens - looking at a combined British Spring Clean event with Warren Road.
- 4.9. Cator Park & Alexandra Rec - hedge trimming is now sorted. Looking at a campaign to get recycle bins installed. Hope to restore/open paddling pool in line with others in the area.
- 4.10. Hoblingwell Wood - planning an April Fool's quiz. Hope to launch walking football on 2nd April and the Hoblingwell Hub on 9th April. Also looking at holding a Community Action Day where the local police look for knives/guns etc. dumped in the woods.
- 4.11. Winsford Gardens - are working with Penny Read to restore the Royston Fields Friends Group. Also looking at a British Spring Clean event.
- 4.12. Keston Common - hope to restore/re-introduce a modern drinking fountain to allow the filling of personal water bottles. Discussions with the Council have started but so far yielded no progress.

5. AOB

- 5.1. BS asked about the position on the proposed depot closures. LH reported that no decisions as yet have been taken and that it is very much up to idverde to express what depot provision they require. It is understood they are keen to retain High Elms and Den Barn.
- 5.2. The meeting requested that the preferred list of contractors (part of the Toolkit on the Forum website) is reviewed and revised as necessary.

Action: Forum
- 5.3. RG expressed concern that neither the Council nor idverde backed the Great British Spring Clean campaign. This year's event is spread over a month from 22nd March to 23rd April and posters/information is available to download from the Keep Britain Tidy website.
- 5.4. KR reported that the London Loop initiative was alive and well and that it now had some wardens and managers who could address any issues/concerns.

6. Date of Next Meeting

The next Forum Members' Meeting will be scheduled for Tuesday 21st May 2019 at the Civic Centre, starting at 7pm.