



Minutes

General Meeting

Saturday 22 May 2021

11:00, held on Zoom

Present: Management Committee
Robert How (Co-Chair)
Charlotte Brennan (Co-Chair)
Michael Daventry (Treasurer)
Lila Wisbeach (Secretary)

Friends
Lily Labonte (Physical Activity Officer, Haringey Council)
Liz Lawson
Allan
Daisy Daventry

Agenda:

1. Welcome
2. Apologies
3. Annual review
4. Future Projects
5. Charitable status
6. Forthcoming summer activities programme
7. Election of officers
8. AOB and date of next meeting

Actions:

Daisy has agreed to look into funding leads for playground equipment.

Develop relationships with local shop owners in anticipation of a 2022 summer event

Committee to maintain a good relationship with SNT and feedback on WhatsApp Groups

Actions for Lily

- Follow up on Brunswick Park improvement plan and feedback
- Follow up on replacement of missing swings and feedback
- Send a list of grants we can apply for

Arrange a meeting with Lily to discuss:

- Further spending of Fields in Trust grant
- Erection of plaque

Send out invites to the next meeting

Next meeting 27 June 2021 at 2pm

Agenda items for next meeting:

- Further meeting dates
- Gardening/cleaning meet up dates
- Governing documents for charitable registration

- HMRC registration for charitable registration
- Volunteer to write a management plan for Green Flag award
- Voting plan
- How do we increase community participation?
- Funding application

1. Welcome

Robert began with welcoming the committee members and three attendees. Robert reflected we have had three AGMs and apologised for the delay in holding this review.

2. Apologies

Many people sent their apologies by text to Robert.

3. Annual review

Well, what a year it has been. This Covid thing has certainly had a huge impact on everyone and everything. Though there have been tough times especially with those who have suffered as a result of Covid, we are having to find new ways of doing things and new ways of communicating with colleagues and loved ones. A new way of being. We have had to learn to think outside the box to satisfy our emotional and financial needs. It been a real time of change and many people and organisations have found it difficult to adapt. For many, and especially those working from home, it has been a time for us to think more locally. In some cases, because of lockdown, we have been forced to think more locally and to appreciate our neighbours and our surrounding environments such as parks and gardens. And irrespective of the challenges we have found ourselves spending more time in our parks trying to keep fit: mentally and physically.

Here in this part of Tottenham, we are very fortunate in having some lovely parks and people have been celebrating the value of these parks (great and small) more than ever. I suppose that today, in some way, we celebrate Brunswick Park. Though a small park, it is a precious and uplifting green space in a heavy populated and poorer part of London. But until the pandemic this small space was more defined more by antisocial behaviour that has, for many years, soiled its name.

Of course, Brunswick Park is far from perfect but over the past few years we have begun to see real positive changes, such as the renewal of the ball court, planting of trees, etc. This would not have happened if it were not for a small group of people, made up from the Fountain Area Residents Association (FARA) and others who were able to lobby the Council for improvements. FARA in particular was instrumental in successful applications for various improvement awards. Out of this success and hard work was born the idea of Friends of Brunswick Park which was formed in October 2017.

Since then we, as Friends, with Haringey Council, have been slowly helping to transform the park into a better place for humans and nature alike. However, much more work is needed but this is not easy when there aren't the resources at our disposal. When it comes to refurbishment and new innovation, we as Friends, are very much reliant on the funds and grants that the council have available. As times are hard, the changes and improvements that we long for have not yet come to pass.

Over the past year we have been even more aware that we only have very few active Friends who have managed, when permitted, to meet up in the park to carry out cleaning and tidying duties to compliment the work carried out by council employees. This is never really enough to keep on top of rubbish which accumulates over just a few days. Though we had originally intended to have monthly clearing up sessions, these have unfortunately not happened due to lockdowns and other distractions. Sometimes, it feels we need an army to help us. So perhaps we should aim to ensure we have regular clearing up sessions for the coming year and to promote them more effectively.

It is also unfortunate, that over the past year the Friends have not been able to engage and to meet as often as we should have and we would like to apologise that we have been a bit slow in organising Zoom meetings with a wider membership. There has been fair criticism that only Committee Meetings have been organised. This will change in the coming year.

This AGM is the first time that we have used Zoom (thanks to Chris). If we are unable to meet physically over the next year, we will need to look at ways of means to implement effective two-way communication with as many Friends as possible. Hopefully, we will be able to actually meet up at our next meeting, even if it is outside under a gazebo. None the less, we must make full use of Zoom to have more regular membership meetings.

Alas we had to cancel our Summer Party for 2020 and it is likely that we will not have another until the pandemic is behind us. This was a wonderful way to get to know each other as well as have some fun.

Building relationships with existing members is key, however we also need to try and build relationships with those who live around the park, who have not been involved with Friends as yet. We are very aware that some local residents overlooking the park are not involved in its development and some feel excluded. Though we have previously tried to reach out, we haven't been successful. Most people who are actively involved in the Friends over the past year come from Roslyn Road.

Though we have a reasonable membership of around 50 people or more, we need to expand and be more diverse and representational of the community in which we live. We need to reach out and build bridges with other communities. Perhaps this can be done at social events in the park? At our last Party in the Park in 2019, there was a good cross section of peoples from our community and though some may be on our mailing list, very few are actively involved. We continue to think how can we engage more effectively and for this to be one of our goals for the coming year – as well as organising another joint party with FARA!

Though we have not been successful with having regular meetings with our membership we have been developing closer ties with our Partners and Friends in Haringey Council. We would like to thank Alistair Smith (Parks Projects Officer), Lily Labonte (Physical Activity Officer) and Stuart Hopkin (Parks Maintenance). All three have been especially helpful and encouraging. Lily will be talking about planned Summer activities later. Close ties are essential as we will need to work more closely with the Council to bring about the changes we desire for the Park. We mustn't forget that the Park is managed by the council and any major projects or refurbishment must be approved by them. Although, we mustn't be afraid of lobbying them for the things we want. The council have encouraged us to continue to report any issues such as broken swings or equipment etc. They apologised that the swings were still to be replaced even though residents had been reporting for a while. We look forward in strengthening our relationship with the council and hopefully, with their help we will apply for a Green Flag Award in the next couple of years.

Over the past year, the Friends have also been developing close ties with our local Tottenham Green Safer Neighbourhood Police Team. This has been particularly useful with regards addressing antisocial behaviour issues. I would like to thank Sgt Tom Hassan, PCs Jon Hallam, Jason Taylor and Police Community Support Officer Sarah. They, with the Council's Enforcement Team are responsible for enforcing the Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) which covers Brunswick Park. They have been actively engaged in helping to reduce crime and antisocial behaviour in and around the park.

We and other Committee Members have had meetings with the Council and the Police over the past year and we had a very productive site meeting on 28th April when we discussed many of the issues and ideas raised by other members, including improving security, planting of more trees, improving the children's playground and establishing permanent wildflower meadow etc

We were pleased that the police mentioned that CCTV will be installed at the Brunswick road end of the park and that another CCTV position was being considered but not yet confirmed. This was agreed by the Police and Council after much lobbying from the Friends, Roslyn Neighbourhood Watch and other residents. All parties at the site meeting were keen on the idea of a mural being painted at the end of one of the houses adjacent to the park. The police said they would be happy to help us with this and through their colleague (Communities' Officer) would try to contact the owner of the house, which would help to get the ball rolling. A full summary of the site meeting was shared with Friends via our Whatsapp, email and Facebook platforms. We will continue to meet with Police and Council and develop even closer more effective working relationships with them over the coming year and report back to the Friends via email, facebook and whatsapp.

In the past few weeks, a few of us have been preparing the allocated Wildlife meadow and have sown seeds and erected a temporary fence to protect the area from being damaged. Already we have spotted green shoots and hopefully a beautiful wildflower meadow will be established for both humans and other creatures to enjoy for years to come.

Although it seems we have not achieved very much over the year, we have been carrying out the groundwork for future projects which will be incorporated in our forthcoming Park Management Plan: A collaboration between the Friends and the Council. We all have many ideas for the park which may be incorporated in the plan but in order for us to get results we will need to focus on one or two main areas at a time and for us to find the resources for such projects. There will be need for fund raising etc. We may even apply for charitable status. Something that Mike will bring to the table later. There is an abundance of enthusiasm and ideas which is a hopeful sign for the future of our little Park. By increasing our active membership, increasing our resources and working together with Partners we should be able to realise a beautiful and sustainable park for everyone to enjoy and for wildlife to thrive.

Finally, we would like to thank Mike and Lila for their roles as Treasurer and Secretary respectfully. And of course, we would like to thank all Friends who have supported us and contributed towards the positive evolution of our wonderful Park over the past year. Looking forward to working more closely with you all over the coming year. Thank you.

Robert How and Charlotte Brennan
Co-Chairs
Friends of Brunswick Park N15

Treasurer Report:

There has been very little activity due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As such, there is £550 in the bank account, which is the same figure from the previous AGM. The sum is mostly from the summer party held in 2019 as well as a few grants from the Council. We spend £60 for fencing of the wildflower meadow, we are exploring with the Council to collect a reimbursement.

The Council were offering grants for Parks and Spaces, however, this has been suspended due to COVID-19. We plan to apply for these grants when they open up again. We are exploring other funds for grander projects, such as the playground equipment and chicanes.

We have some small amount of money due: we paid for fencing of wildflower meadow £60, we are exploring Council paying for this.

4. Future Projects

The following proposed projects have been prioritised largely based on what community members have brought forward. However, we do not currently have a formal project plan. Liz suggested a voting plan for considering other projects and which to prioritise. An example recommended was a project pole on our website. [We agree in future meetings to consider a voting plan, how we increase community participation and to discuss details regarding funding applications.](#)

(A) Wildlife management plan

We have started with the wildflower meadow strip, which was largely a disused part of the park. We have had some bumps along the way with it being mowed. We are now in correspondence with Park Management / Council regarding a mowing schedule. We have raked the areas, erected temporary fencing and scattered some seeds. We already have some flowers popping up, it should look really nice later in the summer.

For the Green Flag award, we will need support from Council about how we go about writing a management plan. Alistair has sent an example of a management, he suggested we follow this and incorporate any other key projects we want – a bit like a wish list. With a Green Flag comes more status, which may help us when it comes to raising funds. [We may need someone to volunteer to write up the plan, something to discuss when we next meet.](#)

(B) Playground

This was discussed with police, SNT officers, Council and all agree it needs work, but funding is the issue. Lily advised there is a list of parks due for improvement, but Lily isn't sure where Brunswick Park is on this list. [Lily will check and feedback after parks meeting on Monday.](#)

Daisy took the playground to FARA to get an idea of where they previously got funding to see how we can progress with applying for grants. [Daisy has agreed to look into some leads for playground equipment.](#)

Lily had a meeting with the outdoor gym company regarding changing one of the outdoor gym equipment. This may be happening within the next month or so. The usefulness of some of the equipment was raised, in that some not useful and some very useful. Lily did mention this at her meeting with the Great Outdoor Gym meeting. It was asked why equipment is being replaced rather than adding new ones to those existing. This is due to funding (as the equipment requires base plates) and space.

Community members keep reporting the missing swings, which Alistair said he was going to look into replacing. Lily advised the missing swings are in order and should be replaced in the coming weeks.

Robert advised of £500-1500 grants available through Tesco, however there is a wait time of approximately year to receive an outcome following application. Lily advised the £1000 Fall grant is coming up this week. Sport England can be applied for as well as Walls for All for about £5000. [Lily will send a list of grants to the committee members.](#)

(C) Security

Robert continues to speak regularly with SNTs along with local Police regarding safety and security in the park. There have been no major issues in/around the park recently. [We will continue to maintain our good relationship with SNT and will feedback regarding any personal safety issues through Roslyn Watch and FOBP WhatsApp Groups.](#)

5. Charitable status

We proposed starting the process of applying for charitable unincorporate status. This is the lowest level of charitable status and it has two main benefits: (1) it will allow us to claim VAT exemptions on everything we buy; and (2) we can also apply for funding that is only available to charitable organisations.

To start this process, we need to apply to HMCR and we need governing documents that define our purpose is. We declared our purpose: to look after the small N15 space. [We agreed to complete the governing documents in the late summer and then apply to HMRC.](#)

6. Forthcoming summer activities programme

Lily spoke about the People Need Parks programme, which will take place across 19 parks in Haringey. Activities include dance, martial arts, walking football, cycling and much more. These sessions are offered free to all residents in Haringey, with an aim of encouraging people who are less active, over 50s, girls and women, people with disabilities and BAME communities to get involved. Lily advised we have an opportunity to apply for a £1000 grant to run activities in Brunswick Park.

We were successful in getting £5000 for Brunswick Park from the Fields in Trust. This fund is for the sole purpose of running activities within the park and we have £2500 remaining. Examples of usage include planting flower, commissioning a mural, doing consultation to gain new members. Robert shared with Lily a contact for Personal Training in the Park. Lily has made contact. [We agreed to hold a meeting as soon as possible to discuss the further spending of this grant. We also have a wooden Fields in trust plaque we need to erect.](#)

7. Election of officers

Co-chairs: Charlotte Brennan and Robert Howe

Treasurer: Mike Daventry

Co-Secretaries: Lila Wisbeach and Liz Lawson

8. AOB and date of next meeting

List of members is 73, 5 said they don't live in the area and can they be removed. Therefore we have 68 members. Membership is lose, following on different platforms (e.g., mail, WhatsApp, website). We also need to contact local business for support.

A summer park event in Brunswick Park was proposed with the idea of involving different shop owners representing a variety of local cultural businesses. Although this is something we had started in 2019 with True Craft our idea is to expand to other businesses. We felt this year was not suitable due to COVID-19 pandemic. [We agreed we could use this year to develop relationships with local shop/business owners in preparation for an even next year.](#)

[We agreed to look for before and after photos of the park to advertise on our website and social media account to show cast the improvements that have been achieved.](#)

[We agreed to discuss dates for further meetings and gardening/cleaning meet ups at the next meeting on Sunday 27 June 2021 at 2pm.](#)

We wish to formally thank Lily for attending on behalf of Haringey Council as well as Chris for allowing us to use his Zoom account.