**Agenda and Notes of Meeting held on 30th March 2011**



Patron: Simon Hughes M.P.

Chairperson: Gary Glover

Vice-Chairperson: Amanda Squires

Secretary: Pat Kingwell

Treasurer: Marjorie Hill

Assistant Treasurer: Ron Henocq

Membership: Corinne Turner

**General Meeting**

**30th March 2011 6.00pm at Parkside Tenants and Residents Association Hall New Place Square, Southwark Park Road**

**Agenda**

1. **Apologies**
2. **Notes of meeting of 26th January 2011 and Matters Arising**
3. **UK Power Networks Cable Tunnelling Works Proposals**
4. **King’s Stairs Gardens Update**
5. **Project Updates - to receive progress reports on:**
* **Bowling Club works**
* **Caryatids relocation**
* **Former nursery clearance works**
* **Sports Centre**
1. **Park Manager’s Report - Rosie Thornton**
2. **Park Standard’s Officer Report - Nina Chantry**
3. **Bermondsey and Rotherhithe Festival 2011**
4. **Art Gallery Update**
5. **Planning Updates – to receive latest on:**
* **Conversion of former working men’s club on western boundary into flats**
1. **Membership - Corinne Turner**
2. **Finances - Marjorie Hill**
3. **Any Other Business**
4. **Dates of Future Meetings**

**Pat Kingwell – Secretary 14th March 2011**



Patron: Simon Hughes M.P.

Chairperson: Gary Glover

Vice-Chairperson: Amanda Squires

Membership Secretary: Corinne Turner

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Treasurer: Marjorie Hill

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**Notes of Friends of Southwark Park General Meeting**

**held on 30th March 2011 at**

 **Parkside Tenants and Residents Association Hall**

**In attendance:**

Harry Bailey; Nina Chantry (London Borough of Southwark); Alison Clayburn; Dave Fisher; Gary Glover; Ron Henocq; Marjorie Hill; Pat Kingwell; Sharon Lomas (London Borough of Southwark); Lynne Olding (Quadron); Dave Pickup (Quadron); Jim Saunders; Tracy Scales; Colin Smith; Corinne Turner; Susan Vaughan; Andy Webster; Christine Wildhaber (London Borough of Southwark); George Witsey.

UK Power Networks: Bill Francis; John Nagle; Nicholas Ralph; Simon Stroud

**1. Apologies**

Cllr. Anood Al-Samerai; Philip Burkett; Ann Clayton; Kathy Hennessy; Jerry Hewitt; Gary Magold; Mairi Mills; Cllr. Lisa Rajan; Sue Sexton; Louise Sheridan; Donna Spedding; Amanda Squires; Rosie Thornton (London Borough Southwark)

**2. Notes of meeting of 26th January and Matters Arising**

The notes were agreed and the following matters arose:

EDF Monies/Tennis Courts – Rebecca Towers, Head of Southwark Parks, has received the EDF money and after discussion between Rosie Thornton and Gary Glover, some of the funds have been allocated to upgrading the tennis courts. £20,000 is being spent on tarmacing the courts, relining, new nets and posts and repairing the damaged fencing. Work has commenced on site and is expected to complete within two weeks, well in time for the Easter holidays.

**3. UK Power Networks Cable Tunnelling Works Proposals**

3.1 Before the representatives from UK Power Networks gave some background to their deep tunnelling project, they commented on the number of people who had attended their exhibition last week. In their experience the 31 people who had come along was a good response, and they had gained valuable feedback.

3.2 They confirmed that they have been in discussion with Southwark Council Parks service since May 2010, and had been engaged in a feasibility study for 18 months prior to that. They maintained that the current proposals, involving Southwark Park, are the only realistic option, given their need to adhere to health and safety regulations and the direction of the tunnel. They submitted a planning application last week.

3.3 UKPN confirmed that the operation will not involve taking down the China Hall gates, but will lead to the removal of the mounded area alongside the sports centre and Hawkstone Road. The works could last up to two years and will entail a section of the park being taken out of public access, to be used as a work compound. At the end of the project, this compound will be restored to a good condition. UKPN will have to locate ventilation grills there, and have vehicle access to the tunnel, as and when needed. They thought this would be no more than four times a year for routine inspection purposes.

UKPN said they want to deliver the project as quickly as possible in order to avoid inconvenience, and their intention is to work closely with the local authority to avoid undue problems.

3.4 A discussion followed, and a number of questions were raised, including:

3.4.1 Traffic

Jim Saunders asked about the direction lorries would leave the site, and it was confirmed it would be onto Hawkstone Road and then to Lower Road. Jim, and others, considered traffic congestion would prove to be a major problem.

Marjorie Hill asked if any thought had been given to an alternative route.

Dave Fisher asked if there would be a pedestrian management system in place, and UKPN said there would be.

3.4.2 Noise

Alison Clayburn asked about noise levels, especially during the summer months, when people like to sit out on The Oval. UKPN answered that a survey would be carried out prior to the works, in order to ascertain the ambient levels in the park they would be monitored on. Alison, and others, made the point that the site is near a noisy road, but noise from the works would travel into the quieter centre of the park and beyond. UKPN stated that there would be minimal noise from tunnelling itself as there would be no piling, and that the main noise generation will come from two cranes; compressors; and removal of spoil from the shaft. It was also accepted that additional noise will be generated through up to 20 lorry movements a day, and the use of up to 20 cars by staff.

Sharon Lomas asked about noise levels at night, and UKPN referred again to working within agreed levels. They confirmed work would be 24 hours a day, but soil removal only during the day. Sharon asked about vibrations, and UKPN considered they would be imperceptible.

3.4.3 Boundaries

Pat Kingwell asked UKPN to explain how the work compound would look to park users and it was confirmed that 2m+ hoardings would be erected, but higher ones could be considered if it helped reduce any noise. UKPN also confirmed that a 10m grouter would be seen from above the hoardings, and also the upper floors of the two storey staff accommodation.

3.4.4 Archaeological Issues

Dave Fisher asked about finds, and UKPN confirmed a Museum of London Archaeological Survey (MOLAS) would be carried out, as would an ecological survey.

3.4.5 Alternative Sites

Alison Clayburn asked why other sites had not been chosen. Mention was made of a small Tesco car park, but UKPN hold the view that their current proposal is the best option.

Andy Webster commented that the whole scheme felt like a fait accompli, and he asked why there appears to have been little consideration given to the historic and Listed status of the park the works would undo some of the important preservation achieved over recent years.

3.4.6 Post Project and Planning Gain

Gary Glover reiterated the Friend’s opposition to the proposals, but also asked what benefits UKPN might be able to offer the park. He reminded the meeting of the c£40,000 given by EDF for carriageway works, and suggested that as UKPN’s proposals are more far-reaching, a larger sum of money would be appropriate through a Section 106 agreement. The Council and The Friends have a long list of improvements that need to be carried out in Southwark Park. UKPN could not commit themselves to a figure at this stage, and said they would be working through the Parks department and Neil Martindale in the Council’s Estates team.

Pat Kingwell said that the cost of lost public leisure opportunities should be taken into account by the Council in its negotiations with UKPN. He reminded the meeting that the area in question is part of the sports centre redevelopment plan, and was to be the location of 3 Multi Use Games Areas, designed to be open access to young people, and largely free of charge. These important MUGAs will be lost through the need to retain future access for UKPN on the site once the works have concluded. The MUGA s are important elements in securing money from other funders. UKPN said it is not their intention to stymie any leisure development in the park and would be happy to consider ways in which their future access needs could fit in.

Lynne Olding commented that the clearing of the mound might be advantageous.

**Action:**

**Arrange a meeting between Friends, Parks and Council’s Estates team to consider the issue of S106 - GG.**

**Further discussion required by Friends before giving Southwark Council our formal position on the proposals – All**

**4. King’s Stairs Gardens Update**

4.1 Gary Glover reported that Thames Water has acquiredthe Chambers Wharf site, which may be a possible alternative to Kings Stairs Gardens. Corinne Turner and Alison Clayburn said that there could also be some opposition to that site as it is very near to schools.

4.2 A very successful Nature Day was held on Sunday 27th March.

 **5. Project Updates - to receive progress reports on:**

**Bowling Club works**

5.1 Via e-mail Rosie Thornton informed us that Baylis Landscapes have completed the Bowling Club works - the topdressing, 2 rolls, 2 cuts and the patching up from the bird damage, as well as starting up the irrigation system again. Handover is arranged with Quadron / Parks for next week.

5.2 Jim Saunders said that the quality of work carried out was not good enough, and he raised concerns about the liaison between the Cleaner, Greener Safer team and the bowling club. Despite requests to be more involved in the project, the club’s knowledge of what is required has not been tapped into.

5.3 Harry Bailey said he was concerned about the poor quality of the green and had spoken with Cllr. Anood Al-Samerai about it. She is supportive. He also said there are four key ingredients for success at the club – sprinkler system; a roller; a lawnmower; and a green keeper – but he was not yet confident on any of them. Dave Pickup said that the roller was being looked into; the mower had been bought; and soon there should be two green keepers.

5.4 Colin Smith raised yet again the omission of the contractual requirement for a London Marathon plaque to be placed near the new synthetic facility. This is still outstanding.

5.5 Jim Saunders asked about contacts with local schools, as the club are keen to get young people involved.

**Action:**

**Contact Cleaner, Greener Safer Team about improving communication with the bowling club – PK**

**Arrange for London Marathon plaque to be put up - CW**

**Contact local primary schools about bowling opportunities - PK**

**Caryatids relocation**

5.6 Andrea Allen sent an e-mail summarising the position:

* The interpretation board has been designed and signed off for manufacture. Many thanks to Gary M for the photos and text
* The trial pits have been dug and the council arborist is satisfied that there the pits to be dug for the foundations for the statues will not damage significant roots
* A company specialising in screw piling has been to site, investigated soil conditions and is designing the foundation piles and concrete cappings (underground works)
* The Portland stone plinths have been ordered and a quote for the overground works (installation of the plinths and bringing the statues to site) has been obtained from local company DBR (David Ball Restoration)
* A planting plan has been signed off by parks and a quote is being obtained from a landscaping company for complementary planting
* The works will now take place in April/early May and an opening event/celebration will be arranged for May.

5.7 It was agreed to fund the costs of a band for the event, subject to licensing arrangements being sorted out with Southwark Council.

5.8 A vote of thanks was given to Gary Magold for all he has done to further this project.

**Action:**

**Contact Southwark Events Team over licence - GG**

**Former nursery clearance works**

5.9 Christine Wildhaber gave some background to the project, and reported that the site is almost cleared now. In the course of the clearance works there has been some boundary issues, and earlier that day she and Cllr Hargrove had met with local residents to hear their concerns, which seem to be about some damage to boundary walls/fences during the works; their short and long-term security, and also the lack of clarity at the moment over the Council’s eventual plans for the site.

5.10 Christine gave some information about the project budget – to date £52,000 has been spent on clearance. In her view the potential cost of treating all of the site boundaries would require another £40-50,000, which exceeds the present money available. A potential source for the additional money could be the Rotherhithe Community Council. In an e-mail Rosie Thornton said that she has already contributed £2700 out of the Southwark Park Repair & Maintenance budget to repair the boundary wall, plus £3000 early in the year to the provisional clearance works.

5.11 Tracy Scales and George Witsey, as residents of Gomm Road, gave their viewpoint. The removal of material, foliage etc has opened up viewing of the site, and left their gardens in what they consider to be a vulnerable condition. They are not convinced either of the robustness of the entrance gate onto the site to stop intruders. They were not convinced that they should have to wait for a total boundary solution for the site, and would like to see a solution to their present security concerns quickly.

5.12 The meeting agreed to write to the Council to seek a resolution to the problem, confirming that the concerns of Gomm Road residents must be taken seriously and be seen as a priority at this stage of the project.

5.13 On the longer-term use of the site Christine explained that there was something of a Catch 22 situation. Until the site is cleared potential partners are unlikely to be very firm about their intentions. Nevertheless, several organisations have expressed interest in using the area for a ‘green’ purpose, including Groundwork London; Growing Southwark; Trust for Urban Ecology; London Wildlife Trust; and The Bermondsey and Rotherhithe Allotment Society. Now that the site is virtually clear, the Council will begin the process of securing a partner.

5.14 Several members asked how this would be done, and it was agreed that the Friends would like to be involved in the decision-making process.

**Action:**

**Discuss with Cleaner, Greener, Safer Team how to use remaining project budget to meet Gomm Road residents concerns – CW**

**Friends to write to Council urging resolution to current problem – PK**

**Arrange for Friends to be involved in the selection process for future site users - CW**

**Sports Centre**

5.10 Jay Yeats, Southwark Council’s Head of Leisure and Wellbeing, sent an e-mail in which he confirmed that the Council has made no decision yet on capital allocations, and the earliest it is likely to do so is June/July 2011.

**6. Park Manager’s Report**

6.1 Rosie Thornton sent an update by e-mail which covered several items on the agenda – see above and below – and also reported on:

Outdoor Gym - this has been installed and formally handed over. It already is being well used and is an excellent addition to the park.

Dilston Grove and Gallery – Rosie has ordered 3 new finger posts detailing the gallery and Dilston Grove. They are currently being manufactured and will be installed shortly.

Damage to sign at the front gate - this has been delayed due to the insurers disputing the quote due to the ‘clock’ on the gate. (They didn’t believe there was one!) This has now been settled and the sign will be manufactured and installed.

Jabez West water fountain - this has been repaired several times this year as it keeps clogging up preventing it functioning properly. I have reported it for repair and it should be working in the next day or two.

Staffing and restructure - Rebecca Towers sent details of the new structure and any queries should be directed through her. Rosie will be remaining in her current position until the end of June. Neither her current nor her original posts are on the new structure so she will be applying for a new position with the service. Also as part of the restructure we will be sadly losing Emma Longman Community Outreach Officer, who has been covering for Agnese since her departure. Emma’s last day was the 31st March.

Gary Glover said that in the staff restructure Southwark Park would have two members of staff.

**7. Park Standard’s Officer Report**

7.1 Nina Chantry gave a brief report, indicating that the bedding in the park looks good, and that was down to the skill and dedication of Lynne Olding. Lynne was thanked for her contribution.

7.2 Harry Bailey asked if some flowers could be planted around the bowling green.

7.3 Gary Glover asked if we could improve the small bed near the proposed Caryatid site.

**Action:**

**Investigate flowers around bowling green – NC/LO**

**Investigate improving bed – NC/LO**

**8. Bermondsey and Rotherhithe Festival 2011**

8.1 Gary Glover confirmed there would be an event, and like last year, using the bandstand end of the park. A budget of c£88,000 has been provided and a date in late July is likely.

8.2 Corinne Turner asked if we could have the Recumbent cycles for children at this year’s event. Gary said there would be a stakeholder meeting soon, and we can raise it there. Christine Wildhaber said she would look into possibilities.

**Action:**

**Inform group of date of next Event stakeholder meeting - GG**

**Investigate Recumbents – CW**

**9. Art Gallery Update**

9.1 Ron gave the good news that Bermondsey Artists Groups Arts Council grant had been increased by 5% for the coming year.

9.2 Ron said the gallery was now using the boathouse as a storage facility which is proving very useful.

9.3 Ron offered a slot in the Gallery in late July/early August for another Southwark Park exhibition.

**Action:**

**Discuss possibility of a summer exhibition at next meeting - All**

**10. Planning Updates**

Conversion of former working men’s club on western boundary into flats

10.1 According to Southwark Council’s website this scheme has been refused permission. Agreed to keep an eye out for any re-submission.

**11. Membership**

11.1 There was nothing specific to report, other than to remind everybody that membership is free.

**12. Finances**

12.1 Marjorie Hill said that the most recent statement shows a balance of £3621.36.

12.2 Pat Kingwell informed the meeting that the final tranche of “Our Park” grant amounted to £700, but would only be paid by the Heritage Lottery Fund once a copy of the book was placed on a website and freely accessible to the wider public.

**13. Any Other Business**

Website – setting up a Friends of Southwark Park website was briefly but remains unresolved.

Water Feature in Children’s Playground and Fountain in Front of Gallery – Marjorie reported neither is working and require attention.

The Lake – Marjorie said it is in very poor condition, and appears to have nobody taking responsibility. Of particular worry is netting in which the ducks are becoming entangled.

Franklin Close illegal access to park– at an earlier meeting Rosie reported that the issue of illegal access though private gates is being looked at across the board for all parks. Can we have an update on progress?

**14. Dates of Future Meetings**

Annual General Meeting **–** this is currently scheduled for Tuesday 26th April 2011, but due to various personal commitments, and many other pressing issues, it was suggested it be re-scheduled to later in the year. It was agreed to reschedule the AGM to September, which would mean that a full year had passed since the last AGM.

The next General meeting is therefore 25th May 2011.

Pat Kingwell

Secretary

31st March 2011