

Minutes of the meeting of the Friends of Downhills Park, Sunday 4 November 2018

Friends: Matt Battersby, Briam Bousangar, Sean Burke, Chris Currie, Sylvia Oland, Clare Parry, Jonathan Ringshall, Barbara Rushton, Jehan Shah, Rod Wells, Brenda Whittle, Stephen Whittle, Jill Webb

The Friends of Downhills Park welcomed Matt Battersby, Sean Burke & Jill Webb and thanked them all for joining the meeting.

1. Minutes & matters arising

Minutes of the meeting held on 9 September 2018 were agreed as a true record.

2. Ray Swain

It was recorded in the minutes of the meeting that Ray Swain had sadly died on 25 September 2018. Shortly before his death Ray had made arrangements with his family to deliver several of his gazebos to the Friends of Downhills Park. He had been thanked for this. Thanks were also noted for Sylvia, Jehan & Chris who had helped with the delivery of the gazebos to the depot.

It was also noted that Ray was aware of the repairs to the War Memorial. A remembrance event will be held at the War Memorial on Sunday 11 November at 3pm. Councillor Blake has made arrangements for the involvement of various people. It will also provide an opportunity to remember Ray. Ray's brother Alan will speak at the event. Stephen also kindly agreed to say a few words about Ray on behalf of the Friends of Downhills Park.

Friends discussed making a donation to the Friends of Bruce Castle Museum in memory of Ray. Briam very kindly agreed that their business would make this donation and note that it was in recognition of all that Ray had done for the Friends of Downhills Park. Friends thanked Briam and colleagues for this kind gesture.

Finally, the idea of having something in the park by which to remember Ray was discussed. It was agreed that Clare would follow up with the council to see if a small plaque could be installed somewhere alongside one of the sections of trees that are going to be planted in the park in early December.

3. Trees

Sylvia noted that she had signed up to the Mayor's initiative, on behalf of the Friends of Downhills Park, to receive a delivery of saplings for planting in the park. It was agreed that a tree planting session would be held on Saturday 1 December at 10am. Meet at the Downhills Park café. Sylvia agreed to liaise with Ed Santry in relation to where we might best plant the trees in the park.

4. Green Flag

Clare informed Friends that the Green Flag had been withdrawn from Downhills Park following a 'mystery shopper' visit to the park. It is understood that this has something to do with the Basketball area but this is still to be confirmed. Clare agreed to follow this up with Simon Farrow and Glynis Kirkwood. Finsbury Park has also lost its Green Flag status. Several parks have been moved to an amber rating but this does not require a removal of the flag.

5. Friends of Parks Forum meeting – 3 November 2018

Clare reported back from the Friends of Parks Forum meeting noting in particular the discussion about the proposed 10 year strategy for Parks that the Council plan to develop with input from Friends groups and other park users. Once dates are agreed for the various workshops these will be circulated in order that people can participate. It was noted that the Parks Forum had requested an early discussion of issues around waste and litter in parks. Although the strategy will not be launched

until 2020 it was made clear at the forum meeting that a strategy for waste & litter is required well in advance of 2020.

6. Litter bins & litter in Downhills Park

Jehan noted that there are more bins without lids than with lids in the park, 70:30, and questioned whether it wouldn't be more sensible to have covered bins. Jill and Matt had both been prompted to attend the meeting in light of the situation re: litter in the park. Matt noted that several local residents have set up a Tidy up Tottenham Facebook page which seeks to report litter that is not collected to Veolia.

It was noted that there had been a significant problem with litter in the majority of Haringey's parks during the summer months. New bins are being trialled in Finsbury Park. Clare agreed to write to Chris Poore to enquire as to whether open top bins could be replaced with covered bins. It was also suggested that we request more bins in the park.

7. Park walk with Glynis Kirkwood & Ed Santry – September 2018

Clare noted that she had met with Glynis Kirkwood & Ed Santry in September to walk through the park and discuss several matters affecting the park. These had covered the problems of park drainage, the state of the football pitch, options to develop the pond area, access paths to the Pocket Living development and the outdoor gym consultation.

8. Finsbury Park Rugby Club

Sean provided an update from the various clubs that use the rugby / football pitch in the park. It was noted that this has been badly damaged by inadequate drainage & the very dry summer leaving big cracks in the pitch. Glynis Kirkwood is commissioning a pitch consultation to address these issues and work has been done to fill in some of the bigger cracks. The rugby club are expecting to be back using the pitch by the end of November. He outlined the position regarding the lease of the building in the park noting that it is intended that this will be taken on by the Downhills Sports Partnership. He noted the need for better lighting in that area of the park, particularly in light of one of the members of the club having been attacked.

It is hoped that the Friends & the sports clubs group can work well together & support one another again going forward.

9. AOB

- **Bulb planting:** scheduled for Saturday 24 November 2018, 10 -12 Meet at the café.
- **Benches:** Jill highlighted the poor state of several benches in the park and requested this be brought to the attention of the council.
- **Open air theatre:** It was agreed that this would be pursued & that a Sunday afternoon in June 2019 might be good to look for a date.
- **Dance group:** Barbara noted that a dance group she belongs to would like to use the park to practice in, this was welcomed.
- **Gate at Downhills Park Road/Keston road entrance:** it was not known what the problem was with the gate & why it was now in need of repair.
- **Electricity to the café:** it was noted that there was a problem with electricity to the café which Neri is following up directly. She is also discussing the issue of lighting in the park & to the café with Council officials.
- **2019 meeting dates :** it was agreed that a similar pattern to 2018 would be followed for meetings in 2019.

Next meeting of the Friends of Downhills Park: to be agreed pending decision on the 2019 meeting dates.