



Annual General Meeting, The Cambria: 17 January 2023

Attendees

- Lucy Hadfield (Co-Chair)
- Kate Malleson (Co-Chair)
- Sarah Salter (Incoming Treasurer)
- Mandy Millward (Trustee)
- Chris Norris (Trustee)
- Andy Ruck (Trustee)
- Michelle Warbis (Trustee)
- Jemima Ashdown (Committee member)
- Kathy Erasmus (Committee member)
- Charles Murphy (Committee member)
- Claire Vinycomb (Committee member)
- Cllr Jim Dickson (Lambeth Council)
- Kevin Crook (Assistant Director, Lambeth Council)
- Lara Mifsud-Bonici (Senior Parks and Sports Development Officer, Lambeth Council)
- Tom Smith (Parks Development Officer, Lambeth Council)
- and 23 other members

Welcome

Lucy Hadfield, introduced the FoRP Committee members present and welcomed Lambeth colleagues Kevin Crook, Lara Mifsud-Bonici, Tom Smith and ward councillor Jim Dickson. All members and non-members present were welcomed.

Apologies for absence

Julie Simpson, Celine Gilbert and Maddalena Amato.

Minutes of last AGM, 17th January 2022

The meeting approved the minutes.

Retirement and appointment of trustees

- The meeting noted resignations: Julie Simpson and Deepak Sardiwal during the year.
- Jared Cotton, Treasurer, was stepping down at the AGM as he has returned to New Zealand.
- Kate Malleson and Lucy Hadfield have served for 3 years but were happy to stand again, which the meeting approved.
- The meeting ratified Celine Gilbert's appointment as trustee since the last AGM.
- Sarah Salter and Andrew Ruck also appointed as trustees, the former as Treasurer.

Annual Report and Accounts 2021-22

FoRP's accounting year ran from September to August. The annual report explained the purposes, gave an assessment of the year and strategy in the future. The meeting thanked Michelle Warbis who had led on the report.

Lucy Hadfield presented a summary of the report. Highlighted reflections were:

- Our overriding aims and objectives remained the same as previous years
- Increased park use, more volunteers, more events including a petanque competition and dog show, padding pool use, park better tended, Urban Canopy's contribution running park gardening sessions, achieved Gold Award for first time at London in Bloom.
- Want continuity of above, plus capital programme execution – it's been slow. The annual report lists twenty items to achieve in the coming year. Having an active committee is key to this.
- We want to address unused spaces such as the depot and stable block.
- Importance of social media, thanks to Deepak's work to be continued by Jemima.

Financial accounts

Chris Norris presented a summary of the accounts as Jared Cotton had returned to New Zealand. Sarah Salter would be taking over as Treasurer and it was noted how hard it is for all small/local charities to fulfil this role. We had decided to take on an accountant at a good rate to help.

The meeting was directed to the financial activity pages in the report. Significant things were the increase income/donations this year due to the paddling pool restoration project. Thanks were due to Urban Village, Herne Hill

Society, Herne Hill Forum and many small donors for their contributions. We received donations in memory of our late treasurer David Benson and member Sharon Titmarsh. The bench scheme also raised funds.

Grant funding is listed separately e.g. from the Postcode Lottery for the renovated Willow Garden which user groups are now attending.

There was a question about the funding for the capital programme and stable block. It was clarified that this was managed by Lambeth Council with FoRP acting as a critical friend.

The Annual Report and Accounts were approved and will be submitted to the Charity Commission.

The formal business of the AGM was concluded.

Highlighted projects and achievements

Mandy Millward reviewed a number of achievements including:

- Community garden: more volunteers, increased use, regular opening, better planning and physical improvements.
- Willow Garden: new beds and appointment of wellbeing gardener to support groups from SLaM.
- Bench donations.
- Photography competition.

Kathy Erasmus reviewed the bandstand concerts performed every two weeks during the summer. 2021 had been challenging but many bands were keen to perform and she was trying to get a different mix of music for this year.

Sarah Salter reminded everyone that the Summer Fete was due to go ahead on the 17th June and asked for more volunteers to bake cakes.

Karen and Liv from the Park Gardening group reported on the success of the group and the role of Urban Canopy as facilitators. The group has made big improvements to the Labyrinth Garden as well as providing a great opportunity for community connections.

Update from Kevin Crook, Lambeth Council

Kevin presented a summary of the capital programme and praised the work of so many people who helped the park. He highlighted the health benefits of the park with plans for additional activities to support social prescribing by the NHS.

Lambeth recognised the need to put in more resources to continue to improve park standards as 47% of people asked named parks as a key factor in making it a good place to live. This has been reflected in the awards received, e.g. Green Flag, Gold for London in Bloom.

£10 million had been allocated across Lambeth parks with £950,000 going to Ruskin Park. Steering group/project manager from the capital studio team appointed. However, with the project manager leaving, momentum had been lost. The playground project was the key priority with a contractor appointed and work due to start in September/October 2023.

Future works would include path resurfacing, toilet refurbishment, lighting to allow for later opening of sports facilities, and redevelopment of the redgra pitches.

An internal bid has been made for funding to refurbish the stable block. This has been a priority for FoRP over many years.

Lambeth are looking at bringing the disused depot back into the park, including possibly for small scale events.

Comments

- There was some discussion about the redevelopment of the redgra pitches with concerns expressed that the 9-a-side astroturf size favoured by the Football Foundation would reduce space for informal sports and possibly eat into grass areas.
- The stable block has been deteriorating over the years; essential works for weatherproofing needed. Would Lambeth consider 'meanwhile' use – less likely to deteriorate further? Lambeth is looking to secure capital and lease it out – this is the best case. Decision 'soon' (next few weeks). Lambeth is open to offers and has had options in the past for community use which were unsuccessful. FoRP want to see action on this as it is a disgrace.

- A member raised the issue of space for older children also being needed since the loss of the old ramps – her daughter did a petition, young people need a say.
- Nearly 30 new trees were being planted, including thanks to funds from FoRP.
- Volunteers raised the issue of water sources: Labyrinth Garden in the drought hard to water. Supply comes from stable block/depot area and old and new leaks appeared during the summer.
- Lucy asked how local people can be assured their park is getting its fair share? How are the decisions made? Cllr Jim Dickson: Brockwell Park got a lot of support due to Heritage Lottery Fund Ruskin, compared to other Lambeth parks, is doing OK now. Will fight for more funding.

Attendees thanked FoRP for its work in the park and the meeting closed.