

Friends of Queen Mary's Park

Minutes of committee meeting held at 27 Pine Ridge
22nd July 2014

Present: Richard Brumwell (chair), Carl Brown, Susan Kenworthy, Robert Houlihan, Sue Halliday, Ray Liffen, David Aylett, Cllr Moira Butt, Marilynne Burbage, Anne Jameson (Secretary/minutes).

Apologies: Steve Axon, Roy Budgett

1. Review of minutes from last meeting 23rd March 14:
PCSO's still visit the park regularly, but not late enough in the evenings to deter the young people who use the park to meet up and usually leave litter, and recently leaving numerous small gas canisters which were lying around on the ground by one of the benches.
RH found these the following morning after hearing a group of people in the area by the bench nearest the Kenny Drive entrance close to the back gardens of the nearby houses.
Committee members were concerned that these metal nitrous oxide canisters may be damaged by the grass-cutting machinery and leave sharp metal shards in the grass.
Consultation with the Parks Dept has revealed that the grounds maintenance teams have been instructed to remove these and dispose of them appropriately. The committee has advised that the Friends group monitor the frequency of these incidences, and contact the PCSOs if concerned that the frequency is increasing, or numbers of people gathering in the evenings is increasing, causing more litter and disturbances near the residential areas.
2. Cllr MB to research about remaining Section 106 monies.
3. Several weeks ago, a film crew arrived early one morning to use the park tarmac area to park their vehicles, causing quite a disturbance to local residents. Apparently, the TV company had been looking for a suitable property in the area to film a programme some weeks earlier, but failed to inform enough of the residents who would be affected, and the Friends Group was not informed either.
4. Discussion about the number of regular dog walkers who are still not clearing up after their dogs despite a clear notice in the notice board stating that it is an offence not to do so. Decided that more signage would not make any difference, but the occasional presence of a dog- warden might.
5. Grass-cutting and general maintenance of the park has been good this year, aided by conscientious park-users who litter-pick regularly.
6. The committee have decided to defer painting the railings of the new barrier near the High school / Drapers centre, and review next year. Damson Way has been renamed 'Monkey Puzzle Way'. LBS has not formerly adopted this access road as it says it is too narrow, so lots of litter has been accumulating along its edges. CB has been in conversation with the council about getting it maintained. Also, the pathway from the corner of the SAM site down between the fields of the Diamond Centre and Bushells smallholdings has been

extremely well cleared and cut back by the gardener from Oaks Park - another request by CB.

7. DA has been supported by SA and RL to help complete the application form to Viridor for funding a 'dog-free zone' within the park. DA asked for more information from the Friends Group about how many people use the park every day, and how widely would the dog-free zone be advertised locally? DA and RL are meeting with Bill Wyatt, Assistant Parks Manager, this week to further the application as 3 quotations of costings are required.
8. RH advised that the condensation problem with the noticeboard is better at the moment because the weather is dry. A suggestion was made that perhaps the inside of the glass front could be wiped with the substance that is used inside helmet visors or goggles to stop the moisture collecting on the inside.
9. SK reported that a pony and trap were seen driving around inside the park one evening. It is not known how it accessed the park or where it came from. Parks Dept has advised that the PCSOs/ Safer Parks team be advised if it reoccurs.
10. SK reported that there had been a fire in the park caused by a disposable BBQ to which the Fire Brigade were called, but they could not gain access because of the locked gates. Parks Dept have given a number of reasons why they do not provide keys to the fire service:
 - The Fire Service uses multiple shifts and multiple vehicles at each station
 - There is no surety about which station will attend
 - When they tried this a number of years ago with both ambulance and Fire Service whenever they turned up to an incident they never had the keys
 - Our entrances have signs with emergency numbers that would enable the Council Security teams to arrange access as required.
 - The Safer Parks teams have keys to all the sites
 - We accept the fact that they have the equipment to gain access should they require it.
 - The alternative would be to go back to using a standard Fire Brigade key to lock the gates, but these can be bought in all hardware stores and we are keen to keep parks secure.
11. SK has offered to leaflet the new properties on the Sovereign Estate about membership of the Residents Association and the Friends Group. SK has agreed to be Membership Secretary.
12. Discussion regarding the collection of annual subs has generated the idea of offering a combined membership to both the RA and FG. A suggestion of charging £10 for a period of 3 years was made. RB will update the website, and possibly include the membership fees and details for paying online.

Date of next meeting - the AGM : Tuesday 28th October 2014

7.30pm at The Diamond Centre, Woodmansterne Rd