

Millfields Users Group General Meeting 13th July 2013

Members Present

Gill Harris
Anna O'Brien
Mike Murnane
Hamilton Hawksley
Colin Croggan
Wendy Reid
Will Smith
Hanna Melin
Pinny Grylls
Harry Hewat
Emma Jack
Bhavesh Hindocha

Apologies

Barry Buitekant, Carrie Rutherford, Bruce Irving, Silvera Williams, Katy Andrews, Ian Rathbone, Claire Kelly

Emma Jack Chaired the meeting and took minutes

Wendy Reid asked for an outline of User Group committee Jobs.

EJ outlined as follows – Carrie and Emma share Chairs position and secretary between them. Claire is the treasurer, Gill leads on Bio-diversity, Harry leads on overview of Park projects. Pinny leads on play.

Mike Murnane and Wendy Reid commented that the minutes have been generally slow to be posted and they asked if in future they could be published in a more timely fashion. Emma agreed that they have not always been very speedy and promised to try and do better on this front.

Projects in the Park

Emma updated users on meetings held with Silvera (new park project officer) in which the user group were requesting information regarding in particular the play proposals, the future for the kiosk, the future for the paddling pool. Emma reported that so far Silvera has been vague about what will be done and when and that currently he is saying that there are health and safety issues in the park that need addressing before any other work. The committee has requested a detailed list and costs of this work. Emma also reported that we raised with him the importance of play updating on the Northside and creation on the South side

and we shared with him our frustration at the length of time these plans are taking to get started. We have been trying to realize these plans for the last 5 years.

ACTION – committee to continue to keep in regular contact with Silvera and to share with the group the proposed health and safety improvements asap. Pinny also offered to mobilize parents in the area to make known to the Parks Dept the level of desire for improved play in the area.

Bio-diversity

Gill updated us on biodiversity issues in the park and shared her knowledge of the management of wildflower meadows generally and how this is and isn't applied in Hackney. She expressed her concern at the current management and detailed to us the current RHS guidelines.

ACTION

Gill to write a letter to Michael Dixon querying the current wildflower meadow management. Gill will also attend the Bio-diversity Forum on the Users Group behalf and report back items of interest.

Tree Circle Cinema

Emma Jack updated the group on plans to hold another Tree Circle Cinema event in early September. Users were generally enthusiastic about the event and felt that there were no issues arising from last years event. Emma reported that the event application had been made in the name of the User Group and Loud Minority Productions (Bhavesh Hindocha's company) and that we are awaiting a response from the council.

AOB

Mike Murnane asked for an update on repairs to the Orchard Path. Harry updated on this and outlined to memebers what had happened so far – The committee has asked for the path to be repaired. Sam Parry has responded saying that a temporary repair has been made but that there is currently some issues surround who should pay for the repair since it was a waste vehicle that damaged the park. The committee remain committed to the repair of this path at the earliest opportunity and we will continue to pressure the council about this since the path is fairly unusable in it's current state.

Users wanted to know the outcome of the mobile catering tender. Emma updated users that no one had put in a tender for Millfields therefore there would be no mobile catering over the summer. Many present expressed surprise and sadness that there would be no summer catering in the park. Emma let users know that the feeling was the advert for the tender was put out very late and in a limited manner and this may be why no one put in a bid.

Hamilton Hawksley raised the issue of the National Grid road and their continuing failure to return the 'road' to its former minor dimensions despite their promise to do this. Hamilton reported that he regularly asks NG for an update as a way of keeping pressure up on them. The committee will also write regularly requesting a timeline.

Anna O'Brien updated us on the Family Fun Day due to be held on North Millfields in July.

Several users commented on the poor quality of the noticeboards and what a bad impression they give of the park. Users would like to know what can be done and how much it would cost to make the noticeboards more attractive and user friendly.

Bins were raised as an on going issue. Users feel that there are not enough and not of the right kind. They are also concerned that they are not emptied often enough. Gill offered to write to the council regarding this with a view to getting more bins (particularly on North Millfields as pointed out by Wendy Reid) and of the right kind. On south Millfields there is speculation that rubbish from the boats is being left beside bins and being regularly raided by foxes. Users would like to know what rubbish collection provision is provided for the boat people.