



## **Annual General Meeting of the Friends of Bishops Park via Zoom on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> October 2021 at 6.30pm**

### **Welcome by Chairman**

Welcome to the Friends of Bishops Park Zoom AGM 2021. I am Rowena Vaughan and I am the co chair with Melanie Healy. We would like to thank you for attending this meeting. We will be recording the meeting and a copy of the minutes and presentation notes will be available afterwards. A copy is usually sent to the membership. We have emailed out to the membership the nominations for the committee with proposers and seconders and when voting could you just wave your hand or click on the hand icon.

### **Apologies**

Pauline McCormack (LBHF Council), Craig Bracegirdle (Met Police), Tommaso Ponsel (FoBP Treasurer), Isabelle Dubois (FoBP Membership Secretary), Christopher Miers, Bobbie Travis, Melanie Healy (FoBP co-chair), Amanda Lloyd-Harris (local ward councillor)

### **Minutes of previous AGM**

Noted that Amanda Lloyd Harris was present at the 2019 AGM. The 2020 AGM minutes were approved.

### **Chairman's Report**

2021 has been another year of change and uncertainty, which has seen the park both flourish and suffer with even more people using the park than ever. We have received many messages showing appreciation of its many different areas, variety of plant life and amenities.

There are now two groups proudly wearing the new hi-vis jackets: the litter pickers led by Sarah Jane with the support of ID Verde and Red 14. And the extremely successful gardening group coordinated by Melanie on WhatsApp, which continues to meet fortnightly throughout the year under the supervision of Ian, the Park's head gardener. They garden for a couple of hours more or less. The group splits its work predominantly in three areas: the Rose Garden, the triangular bed near Putney Bridge and the Moat

Garden. These were the three areas that were identified to us in the survey and by the Council so thank you to all of you who have turned up come rain or shine. Particular thanks must go to Claire Mee of Claire Mee Garden Designs for her sponsorship of the triangular bed planting. It has looked amazing these past six months and the plants have begun to establish themselves. Claire has said she will purchase a few more plants to go at the back of the bed where there is a notable void. We have also noted that with the cessation of football matches in the past year the beds around the park in general have been less trampled and the plants are looking much healthier. There is a stable core of about ten volunteer gardeners, led by Angela Fane, a new committee member, and/or Melanie Healy. We would also like to thank members and others who have donated plants to our park, including, but not limited to, Lucy Blythe, Susan Holder and Jackie Tyrie. If you are interested in joining this hard working group do drop us an email with your contact details to [chair.bishparkfriends@gmail.com](mailto:chair.bishparkfriends@gmail.com) and we will join you in on the WhatsApp.

Other committee work undertaken has included the beginnings of the Moat Garden fundraising/revival led by Alex Laird. We have had the benefit of seeing many more wildflowers there this year and the welcome involvement of some of the local schoolchildren. We are working hard in conjunction with the Council to establish a permanent water supply in that area so we can continue the work.

We are also planning more events. We are looking into organizing a skateboarding display, a members' drinks party; other potential plans include helping the events team at the Council organize a village fair in the events circle and perhaps some more plant sales.

We have maintained lines of communication with Fulham Football Club who expect their work to finish in 2022. FFC have put in an application to build a new pier into the river for new ferry access, which as yet has not been agreed by the Council. The committee is looking at this last with concern.

We are discussing new projects with new sponsors and discounts with local businesses for our membership. We are looking to build on local relationships through community events, making ourselves available to meet and greet new park stakeholders e.g. the new Tea House, and sponsorship opportunities to grow the Friends' community and to encourage more people to be involved in what happens to and in the park. We aim to keep you up to date via our quarterly newsletters, Facebook and Instagram posts and also via our website, answering your comments and suggestions. Please do keep them coming.

## **Council**

Short report from Pauline McCormack, the Park's project officer at LBHF Council:

'2021 saw the installation of the outdoor gym in the park. This has reduced the amount of damage to the Park's infrastructure (trees and Coade stones) being used by personal trainers.

The CEDEC path in the Moat Garden has been a success, reducing the potholes, draining freely and is proving to be easy to maintain. The Council has sought to encourage community works with probationary services and corporate volunteers and the schedule of work that is slowly being worked through includes upkeep and maintenance of some of the railings and benches.

Trees have been ordered to celebrate the 'Treebilee' - the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, including a new willow for the island in the pond to replace the one that fell last autumn.

The tarmac on the river walk path is due to be replaced with CEDEC and the installation of lighting and CCTV possibly in March 2022. There is a delay on the works to the railings due to further reports on riverside protection from rising waters. The Council is in consultation about possibly raising the river wall by one metre to prevent flooding in the future. More information is being sought.'

## **Police**

Thank you to Craig Bracegirdle for supplying us with the information for this report.

The new policing system in place since April, the LET or Local Enforcement Team would like people to email in details of anything they see to:

[let.hf@lbhf.gov.uk](mailto:let.hf@lbhf.gov.uk)

The information that they collate from members of the public will be used to build up data of where, when and what is happening and then hopefully they will be able to police more effectively. Overall this is a low crime area although there have been a few robberies this year. Last week a member of the public was accosted and robbed in the public loos. There have also been a number of bicycles stolen from the park and surrounding area. The police have noticed a rise in drug related crime and incidences and electric scooters in the park is an issue. Use of them within the park is illegal and the police

will be running a campaign to stop it. The committee would like to thank the Park's Police for all their hard work.

### **Social Media Platforms**

We hope that the quarterly newsletter has been of interest. Thank you to Jane Swithinbank for her wonderful pictures and informative articles

The website, Instagram and Facebook pages are continually updated and are reaching more park users all the time. Our Instagram posts in particular are proving very popular.

### **The Future**

We hope that next year the Moat Garden fundraising and work will commence, the gardening group will be able to resume normal operations and we shall make plans accordingly including setting a date for a Christmas social - drinks and shopping at the Palace Gardener possibly sometime in early December - and a Summer drinks party.

Melanie and I would like to thank the Park officers and all the volunteers who help us. None of this would happen without your goodwill and help. Thank you all for attending tonight. A copy of the presentation and minutes will be put on the website in due course. If you would like an emailed copy please let us know.

For the future we are looking to put in an application as part of the Queen's Green canopy, or 'Treebilee'. To celebrate her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee everyone in the UK is being invited to plant trees from October 2021, when the tree-planting season begins, through to the end of the Jubilee year in 2022. The aim is to create a green legacy bringing benefits for people, wildlife and climate now and for the future.

Alex Laird will talk in more detail about plans for the Moat Garden; without her drive and enthusiasm for this project nothing would have happened. Thank you to her and Susannah Hall of Permablitz for their knowledge and enthusiasm and we hope that in future years the flowering and greening of this slightly forgotten area will be appreciated.

For 2022 we are hoping that Covid becomes less of a dominant factor in our lives and that we can get together again, meeting the members, making new connections and encouraging everyone to join and be part of protecting and maintaining the park, allowing us to enjoy our special piece of parkland.

Melanie and I would like to thank the committee members who are the unsung heroes in all the work we do and have managed to achieve after the past difficult 18 months.

Finally, I would like to reiterate part of the Friends' Mission Statement. ***“We exist to secure for public benefit the preservation, protection and improvement of Bishop’s Park as a place of historic and ecological interest and beauty, to promote the conservation of the natural plant, animal and bird life of the Park, to encourage appropriate leisure and recreational pursuits and to educate the public in the history, natural history and other aspects of the Park”.***

## **Membership Report (Rowena Vaughan for Isabelle Dubois)**

The membership is growing and currently totals 118. Covid hasn't helped but given that there is limited visibility the fact that the membership has remained steady is good. We are hoping to have a better presence in the park this coming year and the Friends of Bishops Park will have a stand at the climate change event on the 30<sup>th</sup> October where the litter pickers and gardening group will be out with tabards on and leaflets to see if we can drum up some new members.

# Treasurer's Report (Rowena Vaughan for Tommaso Ponsele)

## THE FRIENDS OF BISHOPS PARK

### Receipts & payment account for the year ended 31st December 2020.

	2020	Sept-30 '20	2019
<b>Receipts for the year</b>			
Subscriptions & Donations	£685	£415	£1,223
Specified donations & other income (Note 1)	£46	£270	£4,619
Net income from AGM (Note 2)		£250	-£250
Book sales		£200	£481
	<b>£731</b>	<b>£1,135</b>	<b>£6,073</b>
<b>Payments for the year</b>			
Printing, post, stationery, web		£423	£372
Summer social		£0	-£71
Dues & subs paid		£0	£0
AGM room hire & other charges		£0	£0
Rose garden (Note 3)	£459	£3,341	
Donations made		£0	£1,054
	<b>£459</b>	<b>£3,764</b>	<b>£1,355</b>
<b>Surplus of receipts over payments</b>	<b>£272</b>	<b>-£2,629</b>	<b>£4,718</b>

### Balance sheet at 31 December 2020

<b>Accumulated funds</b>			
At 1 January	£6,760	£9,388	£4,671
Surplus of receipts over payments	£272	-£2,629	£4,718
	<b>£7,032</b>	<b>£6,760</b>	<b>£9,388</b>
<b>Represented by</b>			
<b>Cash &amp; investments</b>			
Bank account	£7,032	£6,760	£9,388
Deposit account	£0	£0	£0
Sums owed by third parties	£0	£0	£0
	<b>£7,032</b>	<b>£6,760</b>	<b>£9,388</b>

### Notes

- 1 £200 from Waitrose for Moat garden/roes, £70 from Daniel PF for Rose Garden
- 2 The AGM was virtual in 2020 due to Covid-19. £250 refunded deposit from 2019 AGM
- 3 £4,619 received from Spacehive in 2019 + £70 in 2020, so £1,348 remains for roses etc

Accounts prepared by Isobel Hill-Smith, Honorary Treasurer October 2020

Accounts completed by Tommaso Ponsele, Treasurer from October 2020

The accounts are healthy, there is a further £1,348 in hand to spend on the Rose Garden and there are some plans to spend that money on new planters - we are currently in negotiations with Pauline over that. As of Monday 4<sup>th</sup> October there is a total of £7,081 with the receipt of recent subscriptions.

## **Election of Officers and Committee (Christopher Hancock)**

Carried unanimously

Melanie Healy (Co Chair) proposed by Sarah Jane Johnson, seconded by Victor Ho

Rowena Vaughan (Co Chair) proposed by Victor Ho, seconded by Roger Weston

Roger Weston (Deputy Chair) proposed by Victor Ho, seconded by Rowena Vaughan

Sarah Jane Johnson (Secretary) proposed by Melanie Healy, seconded by Rowena Vaughan

Tommaso Ponsele (Treasurer), proposed by Sarah Jane Johnson, seconded by Roger Weston

Catriona Rooney, (new member of the Committee, Membership Secretary), proposed by Melanie Healy, seconded by Rowena Vaughan

### **Officers without portfolio:**

Victor Ho, proposed by Rowena Vaughan, seconded by Roger Weston

Alex Laird, proposed by Sarah Jane Johnson, seconded by Melanie Healy

Angela Fane (new member of the committee) proposed by Melanie Healy, seconded by Sarah Jane Johnson

### **Vote of Thanks to Departing Committee Members (Rowena Vaughan)**

A quick vote of thanks to say goodbye to Isabelle Dubois our membership secretary and committee member. Isabelle was instrumental in making us all aware of the advantages an active social presence would make on our various social media platforms. As a result of her timely prompting the committee do what they can, when they can, with increased energy. Victor is now actively posting updates and photographs on Facebook, Rowena has ensured the park has an Instagram following and its numbers continue to increase. Sarah Jane posts on Nextdoor and everywhere else we can think of. Thank you Isabelle for all your hard work in that respect. Isabelle also took on the role of Membership Secretary for which we have been very grateful. The coffers are looking relatively healthy as a result of the vital work reminding members to pay their subs. A heartfelt thank you Isabelle,

from all of us on the committee and I am only sorry that you were not able to be here in person. We hope to see you at the shopping event and drinks in December.

### **Litter picking Group (Sarah Jane Johnson)**

Started just over a year ago after the first lockdown, the group is growing with over 20 people now active on the WhatsApp and an average of 6 people turning up each week so absolutely no obligation for everybody to attend every week. We meet regularly on Sunday afternoons, weather permitting. Everyone is welcome, there is a range of ages and people from all walks of life - those who feel like it stay on afterwards for refreshments at the Tea House. If you are interested in joining us please email [secretary.friendsofbishopspark@gmail.com](mailto:secretary.friendsofbishopspark@gmail.com)

### **The Moat Garden (Alex Laird)**

The Moat Garden is definitely fulfilling the mission of the Friends of Bishops Park. The plan to improve the Moat Garden is a result of 170 survey responses with expert input from Susannah Hall at Permablitz. Our aim is to increase the beauty and diversity of plant and wildlife and the educational spaces through permaculture design and keep the wild elements and walking areas. This is not a wholesale redesign of the Park; it is just an improvement in the areas that people would like and to make it more beautiful. So we welcome and need volunteers in propagating plants and tending them after they are planted. The first planting was done by a group of us including Catriona, Sarah Jane and Melanie and some children. People were given pots, compost and seeds to bring on at home and then these were planted on the left hand side bed as you enter the Moat Garden from Bishops Avenue in a space that had been cleared by ID Verde. The second planting on 28 June with Fulham Prep was a great success and then the Moat School joined in in early July. The idea was to get people involved. The second planting has not been such a success as we really needed to clear the roots of alkanet and other perennials from one of the other beds we used - this is a pilot project and we learn on the go.

#### **Next steps:**

The Woodland Trust has given us 105 edible plants to include hawthorn, and we will be seeking volunteers to plant some of them in late November.

Meanwhile Susannah is going to put together a design plan and costings so we can prepare a funding application and everyone is welcome to join the walk around with her in the Moat Garden in October.



As Rowena mentioned earlier we are exploring options with Pauline for a water supply in the Moat Garden.

We plan to develop educational materials both online and also information boards which perhaps the schools may design with some professionals that inform us about the animals, the plants and the history of the site.

We also want to do some session plans for the schools to use the Moat Garden as an outdoor classroom, possibly have raised beds for vegetable growing and also cover for the seating area so that could be used more frequently for education and storytelling.

If there is anybody who would like to help in any way with this very tangible project of improving the Moat Garden please email Alex [alsl@btinternet.com](mailto:alsl@btinternet.com)

## **Fulham Football Club (Roger Weston)**

Construction of a new riverside stand continues and completion is scheduled for September 2022. We understand that delays are not expected at this stage. Planning permission required that the new stand not be used until the whole development had been completed. However the club has now asked for up to 4000 seats of the new stand to be brought into use before completion, and access will not be through the park but through the ground itself and along Stevenage Road. There is a planning application for the club to reclad the end elevations of the listed Johnny Haynes stand, the Stevenage Road stand. This was approved before but the club didn't do it and they are now applying so let's hope they do so because if they delay much longer the structure of the stand might be threatened.

Within the new stand there are to be some cycle racks (good idea). This requires an application for planning permission because they have had to move them as they have played around with the internal layout of the new stand, which is now going to have a health club and a hotel.

## Questions

*Christopher Hancock asked when the expected date for the long planned footpath along the park onto the west side of the football club to open.*

RW: Completion of the whole project - August/September next year.

*Ailsa Beaton asked via email for an update on the money being made available as a result of the agreement between FFC and LBHF, in particular how much and when there are plans to spend it.*

RV: We were promised transparency at the beginning of the project and to date we have received no information at all about it. Councillor Amanda Lloyd Harris has been emailing the Council about where the monies are being spent and has not received any details either so she is putting in a Freedom of Information request.

*Philip Carr asked if there has been any progress on changing the Council's decision about the Sunday markets.*

RV: RMS have applied to have a Sunday market there again but we have had no information. However there are competing interests as the skateboard area is heavily used at the weekends and the Sunday market does impinge on this space.

***There have been numerous questions over the summer about the water fountain in the sandpit area.***

The Council was unable to open it firstly because the pump had seized after 18 months of no use and parts were slow to come. When they did get it going at the end of August they noticed that a protocol to prevent legionnaires disease was not in place so they had to close it the next day. It should be up and running for next year.

Thank you all for attending. If there is anything we have failed to cover please email us and let us know. We are always happy to answer your questions and if we can't then we can contact the Council to see if they can help.

**If you are not members of the Friends please consider signing up.**  
**[membershipforbishospark@gmail.com](mailto:membershipforbishospark@gmail.com)**

**<https://www.friendsofbishopspark.com>**

**Email: [Chair.bishopsparkfriends@gmail.com](mailto:Chair.bishopsparkfriends@gmail.com)**