

# THE FRIENDS OF CATOR PARK AND ALEXANDRA RECREATION GROUND

## AGM Minutes

Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2020, 7:45pm to 8:45pm - Online Via Zoom

### Present

**Committee-** Millie Knights **MK** (Chair) Debs Lader **DL** (Treasurer) DL, Lou Thompson **LT** (Secretary)

Claudia Rios **CRios**, Chris & O'Shaughnessy **COS**

### Members & Others

Colin Napthine **CT**, Mathew Knights, Ian Jerome **IM**, Jackie Aldridge **JA** , Maureen Kennedy, Kevin Brookes,

Penny Read **PR**-Community Manager, idverde

**Apologizes**, Chris Richardson, Christina Garrity, Helen Parker, Gareth Parker, Siobhan Caswell, Jon Caswell

### **AP =Action Point**

### Welcome & introductions

The meeting began with MK welcoming everyone to the meeting and introductions of who was who on the committee and in the room.

### Minutes of the last AGM meeting 9 October 2019

Minor amendments to attendance& spelling of names. Colin Napthine, Jenny Napthine, Debs Lader, Louise Thompson and Maureen Kennedy in attendance. Steve Lofting not Loftus.

Agreed and passed.

### **Chairpersons Report**

Millie gave a fantastic presentation with slides, that can be found on the website [http://www.friendsofcatorandalexandra.com/pb/wp\\_2ba732f6/wp\\_2ba732f6.html](http://www.friendsofcatorandalexandra.com/pb/wp_2ba732f6/wp_2ba732f6.html) .

Summary of slides.

Slides 1- 4- Pictures and copy of today's agenda.

Slide 5- Why we are here- our role for the Parks.

Slide 6- Since lasts years AGM, we were able to run a number of fundraising activities that greatly enhanced the profile and profits of the parks. Paws in the Park, Carols in the Park. Wine Quiz Night, Then COVID19 happened and the Friend's community activities had to stop for 2020. as soon as was feasible the Friends have been able to maintain small working groups and fundraise on line.

Slide7 – Jan /Feb is a quiet time for the parks and then COVID hit, March/April saw Alexandra RG have a few trees down, that users of the park used to make log wigwams from the wood and idverde left felled trees for bio-diversity and as park features and natural climbing frames.

Slide 8- Cator; the bulbs looked beautiful and the bug hotel was completed before lockdown, it just needs the roof finishing off. Cator drainage problems remains and annual thing. Spring bulbs planted for the past decade inc Nov 2019 gave a lovely display in both parks and were gratefully received and commented on via several local Facebook sites.

Slide 9-The good weather and COVID brought more people to the parks and litter problems ensued, thank you idverde for replacing a bin in Cator with better, bigger bin with lid and emptying the bins regularly. Due to a discarded lit cigarette – the logs / dry grass was smouldering in the Cator orchard area, they were brought under control quickly with minimal damage by an alert park visitor who called the Fire Brigade.

Slide 10- We managed to continue some effective gardening session with the help of volunteers & esp. The Good Gym group. Thank you for their continuing and much needed support in the parks. Formal thanks to Adele Prince for organizing volunteers and support.

Slide 11- LT arranged a trail around Cator to find clues and make a word, we received some really nice feedback on Facebook and from Parents when on site and hope to make a more permanent (wooden signs) feature in the near future. We established two GO Fund Me accounts to raise funds for a new bench installation in each park in May 2020. Donations slowly coming in, we received a lovely letter (shown) from BC Scott about the bench fund whom submitted a significant donation to Cator Pk bench. Paws in the Park has helped raised funds. Utilising Facebook – thanks to MK, we had some success but it was not as easy to use as had been envisaged and will never be able to replace the live event

Slide 12 -Lodge Boarder in the Alex – we continue to clear the weeds and this year extended our work further round completing a deep clearance and planting bulbs and shrubs.

Slide 13- Bench audit in 2019 identified a number of benches needed help. The Friends tackled one of the benches in Alexandra RG over a weekend. Men in Sheds, originally ear-marked to help with some of the refurbishment were unable to assist due to COVID19.

Slide 14- 60 Saplings – Rowan, Silver Birch & Wild Cherry, gifted from the Woodland Trust, with the support of idverde were planted by Debs and Millie on the eve of lockdown. We have to report unexpected loss - 13/30 Cator Pk, 16/30 Alex survived- losses were from vandalism, lockdown restrictions and the extreme dry weather. MK has applied for another 30 trees that committee members have offered to keep at home until better established and then plant in the spaces.

Slide 15 – MK thanked all the volunteers, friends and family who have helped over what has been a very difficult year with COVID19, and gave a special thanks to Jon & Siobhan in particular for the heavy duty digging, collecting of items in both parks & building the bug hotel. Helen, Gareth, Claudia for weeding & watering Alexandra RG. Thank you, Debs, Lou, John & Siobhan, Helen & Gareth for the regular summer watering of the saplings. And also, to Matt Knights and Sarah Bascombe for litter picking so many times over the summer as well as their ongoing volunteer support.

Slide 16 – Thank you to Christina Garrity, whom is stepping down as friends committee member and volunteer after 7 years and MK thanked her for all her help.

Slide 17 –**Membership** -

MK reported we currently have 3 Honorary memberships and 54 fully paid members, down from last year's 69, but 22 cash renewals pending, which we have been unable to collect as no face-to-face activities in the parks during 2020. .

Slide 18- **Committee** at present shown. Committee elected for 3 years- none due for re-elections and all happy to continue on the Committee – Helen Parker is stepping down as Secretary & Louise Thompson was nominated by MK and seconded by DL. Helen was thanked for her work as secretary for the past 2 years.

Slide 19- Treasurer headlines- see below.

Slide 20- Our **Constitution**- No changes proposed.

Slide 21 - **Committee Elections** – Christina Garrity is stepping down and MK thanked her for all her help and will send her a small gift on behalf of the friends.

FOCAAR open to anyone to join. Colin Naphine would like to re-join the committee. Nominated MK, Seconded LT.

Slide 22/23/24 - **Biodiversity & Planting Update**. The Friends funded 400+ bulbs per park this October. Additionally, Lavender, Bluebells & snow drops are planned for the parks. Cator will be planting Sage & Thyme to create a sensory walkway area as you approach the bridge. Rose Bush plants have been donated along with two Yew trees and will be planted shortly. We continue to support increasing natural bio-diversity in the parks and have completed applications for idverde to leave three dedicated grass meadow areas in both parks. We are also creating Log piles as appropriate in each park. To support the contract mowers recognising where these areas, allowing the grass to grow long, and encouraging nettles and natural growth, we will develop some signs for both Parks. A compost bin is in place in Cator park, and plans to build a Bug hotel in Alexandra RG are in place. Hedgehog homes are next on our agenda.

Slide 25/26/27 - **Future Activities**.

Contracts – we wish to establish clarification on the latest idverde parks contracts so that we can ensure we are as effective as possible with our small group activities. Our aim is to increase support /attendance for gardening projects. And strengthen our assets- such as the Website. **Action Point: 1. PR to share the contract schedule with the Friends. 2. Call for more volunteers inc those with IT skills**

Slide 26/27- **Future Project**

LT trail - permanent nature-based trail. Carols in the park 13 Dec Covid19 restrictions dependent. Christmas online Quiz – December 13<sup>th</sup>. Christmas Jumper walk 20<sup>th</sup> Dec. Litter picks & Spring Walk – March 2021, Easter in the Park 3<sup>rd</sup> April, Tree walk & map TBC May 2021. **Action Point LT & MK to take forward all events / dates etc**

Slide 28- **Paddling Pool update**. MK reported the paddling pool is no longer viable and the project proposal put forward in Nov 2019 for a splash play replacement did not progress due to COVID19.

Further update from Penny Read idverde. As we are aware the pool is an ageing asset, needs £1000's of repairs last year to open, repairs took place but unable to open when tested as pipe problems, and no extra funding for this. As we are now 3 years since our last survey, the Friends now need to formally survey members and residents on what they would like to see this area used for – as we should broaden our options. Things we may wish to consider inc the Splash play Area, but also Outdoor gym, Skateboard Park, closed Picnic Area. PR stated that time is critical with this survey, needs to be done this side of Xmas and submitted to idverde. As Jan/Feb time Idverde & council consider project proposals. **Action Point URGENT. MK asked PR for specific timelines and actions to**

**ensure the friends meet requirements. MK to work with PR & idverde fundraising team on next steps.**

### **Treasurers**

DL presented the accounts and Asset Register. Thank you, Colin Napthine, for checking them.

No questions asked on the accounts or assets. We have more money than intended in the account but amounts have been allocated for expenditure & reserves and this includes the monies raised to date for new benches.

Cator Park Container- Lou gave up date. After researching and sourcing a metal shed style container. Penny from idverde has offered us a shipping container supplied by a Bromley based contractor whom she has worked with before. The container will be cut, painted and delivered, and will be a much stronger container and cheaper than the metal shed option. . A site visit needs to be arranged but it is hoped this can be installed ASAP. Friends will have to provide the base paving slabs. MK thanks LT for pursuing this as this has been a project again since 2017 Action **Point LT**.

Heavy duty gazebos for events - current ones broken- the Friends will need to purchase before any future events.

Bench fund: contributions to the benches are as below, as each bench cost approx. £1650 to buy and install via idverde, we will need to continue to fund raise for this.

- Cator - £572 – 30 donors (inc Paws in the Park entries) + £100 form Friends funds
- Alex RG £200 - 11 donors + £100 form Friends funds

Asset Register shown.

A card reader was purchased this year for future event as we go into a contactless era.

Leaflet dispenser for each park to be put up Spring.

### **Future plans**

Replace the lost saplings in both parks if the Woodlands trust awards the Friends a further donation

Penny was asked to establish what areas in both parks are contracted to idverde as the Bowls club grounds receive activity & its unclear. She agreed there was a need for transparently on who does what, and will work with us to establish this. **Action Point PR, LT & MK**

Variations of contracts formalize between idverde and the Friends. **Action Point PR & LT MK**

Penny was asked if a representative from Idverde could attend a Friends meeting quarterly, TBA. **Action Point PR & LT**.

Carols 13<sup>th</sup> Dec- Band & Friends are considering an on-line and broadcast live via Facebook. **Action Point MK**.

Christmas Quiz – 13<sup>th</sup> December 7pm **Action Point MK**

Christmas Jumper walk – 20<sup>th</sup> December 11am **Action Point MK**

Dates to be looked at and put to committee at the next meeting. **Action Point MK/ LT**

- Spring Walk
- Tree Walk
- Gardening in the Parks

#### **AOB & Meetings & Dates plan for 2020/ 21**

**CRios** - commented on the area by the football area in Alex that a wall was subject to graffiti and could some shrubs be planted in the area to deter. Penny advised if we provide a map of area and measure the area and submit a **Project Form** it would be considered. **Action Point CRios**

**CRios** noticed some clearing of an area by the bowling club and wondered who was responsible for this area. Penny was unable to comment on this but will look into. **Action Point PR**

PR went on to mention that over the years who does what in the parks have not been clear, that has resulted in areas being mowed when the friends have asked for it not to be. It is hoped that idverde has a better understanding of areas now. **Action Point LT & PR**

**JA** commented that Alex rec had a been a life saver to residents in the area this year even though they fall as a Lewisham resident and suggested joining the Girton Road and Tansfeld Road Facebook group to send details of park events and may get volunteers. LT has since joined the group and will put details of events and gardening sessions on this page.

**IJ** asked about the area on Kings Hall Rd the old cricket club area. Who owns it? PR confirmed it is council ground and is called Cyphers Gate Open Space, Ian asked if a small sign could be put in place or if the friends could adopt the area? PR to look into. **Action Point PR**

**Colin** asked about the old garage behind the Cyphers Bowling club, Penny confirmed it belong to council used by the bike project years ago, but no longer used. She will make some enquires and see what is happening to the area, as we did previously talk about using the shed or locating the Cator container behind the gates at one stage. **Action Point PR**

MK finished the meeting, reiterated her thanks for support and stay safe and well and keep in touch.

Meeting closed 08.45pm.