



## **The Friends of Croydon Road Recreation Ground**

**Meeting:** AGM, 6<sup>th</sup> December 2023  
**Venue:** Azelia Hall, Beckenham

### **AGM Apologies**

John Backway  
Wendy and Lisa Faulkner  
Brian Blandford  
Sarah Phillips  
Brian Cooke

### **AGM Attendees**

Cllr Christine Harris (Kelsey and Eden Park Ward)  
Anita Zambaldo (idverde Community Manager)  
Chris Phillips  
Terry Guntrip  
Greg Ferris  
Dave Cook  
Brenda Knight  
Desmond Knight

### **1.0 Minutes of the AGM 1.12.2022**

- 1.1 There was an error in the 2022 minutes. Cllr Mike Tickner represents Beckenham Town and Copers Cope ward, not Kelsey and Eden Park Ward.
- 1.2 It was then agreed that the minutes were a correct record of the previous AGM.  
Prop: Terry Guntrip; Sec: Cllr Harris
- 1.3 Matters arising: nil.

### **2.0 Reports from the officers**

#### **2.1 Chairman's report**

The Chairman thanked the officers and committee members for their continuing support to the Friends over the last year.

The Chairman reported on events and progress over the year as follows:

### 2.1.1 Bench action days

The chairman thanked volunteers and idverde for facilitating and participating in two bench action days on 16<sup>th</sup> June and 14<sup>th</sup> September. Weeds were cleared, brasses polished and ironwork and woodwork sanded and redecorated to ten benches. On the 16<sup>th</sup> June Sabine and Johannes Zanker, a married couple who first met on one of the benches joined in the work and on the 24<sup>th</sup> June held a family reunion by the bench. This was a great community activity, and local people are very supportive, and it is hoped to continue the work in 2024.

### 2.1.2 Jubilee Parks Fund

We are really pleased to have been awarded £20,000 from Bromley Council's Platinum Jubilee Fund for new signage. We are currently in negotiation with a supplier we are hoping for four new informative signs at key locations to be in place in time for the bandstand completion. The chairman thanked John Backway for his help in developing the proposals.

### 2.1.3 Park toilets

The Friends are increasingly concerned about the state of the park's toilets, following several recent complaints from the public. The toilets have recently been steam cleaned thanks to a contribution from the Soul Town Festival. Despite their somewhat dilapidated condition idverde are endeavouring to lock the toilets at night and keep them in a usable condition.

### 2.1.4 Paddling pool

The chairman said that the paddling pool had been as popular as ever when open during the summer. However, a feasibility study to repair or replace the pool as earlier suggested by Penny Read had not been received.

The chairman had written to a donor who had made a one-off donation of £200 for the pool refurbishment. Once the work on the bandstand was complete, money could be raised from events towards the paddling pool.

### 2.1.5 The bandstand restoration

The works commenced on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2023.

David Braybrook of Bromley Council has summarised progress with the works as follows:

- *Works are progressing well with the Bandstand, however we have found that some of the early initial work has taken longer than we initially expected due to a) the intricate nature of the Bandstand meant that some of the sand blasting of the metal work took longer than expected and b) the slight unknown nature of parts of the Bandstand meant that certain things only became apparent once works started and certain items could be examined more closely. As a result we needed to work through quite a few variations to the programme.*
- *As a result we have a revised programme of works that are due to complete around March 2023.*

- *The order for the engraved bricks has been placed and will be laid as part of the works in the new year.*
- *The launch event will be planned in the new year, with further information available once it is available.*

*There is going to be a commemorative board or 'plaque' to go alongside the Bandstand to commemorate the installation. The advertising consent for this can be viewed on the Council's Planning Portal (<https://searchapplications.bromley.gov.uk/online-applications/>) by using reference 23/04018/ADV. You may also have seen the notices that are up in the park also notifying the wider park community. Any comments in support of the application from the Friends would be welcome.*

Bromley Council will be planning a launch party in the Spring of 2024, and it was very much hoped that the Mayor of Bromley will be in attendance.

#### 2.1.6 Smaller bandstand/gazebo

A commitment had been made by the organisers of the Soul Town event to contribute towards the refurbishment, but no proposals had been received to date.

#### 2.1.7 Recreational activities

The park is in constant use for recreation from dog walking to football, tennis and bowls and other sports, in keeping with its name and original purpose. The football pavilion remains disused, and it is to be hoped that a football club such as Seymour Villas could take over the care and management of the premises.

The Bowls club are always keen to find new members: contact Greg Ferris on 079 2131 0207. The chairman has joined the Bowls Club which is most welcoming to new members.

#### 2.1.8 Musical and other events

Despite the poor state of the bandstand, several events were successfully held in 2023, including:

7<sup>th</sup> April: Great Beckenham Easter Egg Hunt

1<sup>st</sup> July: Caribbean Food and Drink Festival

2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> September: The Soultown Festival. The Friends had a gazebo with information about our work and a model of the proposed completed bandstand.

4<sup>th</sup> November: Beckenham Fireworks by the Scouts.

#### 2.1.9 Bromley Forum

The Chairman had attended meetings of the Bromley Forum and was campaigning for 3% of profits on events arranged by commercial organisations at the Recreation Ground to be donated to the Friends for community benefit.

## 2.1.10 Conclusion

The Recreation Ground continues to be vital to the surrounding community for recreational and leisure activities. Its central location makes it a hub between the town centre, the Beckenham Beacon and the surrounding residential areas. This had been a successful year with much positive community engagement. It is to be hoped that the repair of the bandstand will be the catalyst for many more events to be held in the Recreation Ground.

## 2.2 Treasurer's Report

2.2.1 The Acting Treasurer presented the attached accounts for the year to 30th September 2023.

2.2.2 The accounts were audited by Terry Guntrip. A vote to approve the accounts was proposed by Cllr Christine Harris and seconded by Desmond Knight and the accounts were unanimously approved.

2.2.3 On behalf of the Acting Treasurer, the chairman explained that the accounts were split 3 ways into the main Friends account with two supplementary accounts for the bandstand and paddling pool projects.

2.2.4 The Treasurer pointed out that the Bandstand Fund still has £240.27, and it was proposed by Cllr Harris and seconded by Dave Cook that this money was retained by the Friends to subsidise the opening ceremony rather than transfer the money to Bromley Council. This proposal was accepted unanimously.

2.2.5 The treasurer suggested that the funds currently held by HSBC are transferred to a new account with the Nationwide who have a branch in Beckenham. This was proposed by Cllr Harris, seconded by Terry Guntrip and the proposal was accepted unanimously.

## 2.3 Membership Secretary

John Backway had submitted the following report in advance of the meeting:

2.3.1 Membership of the Friends of Croydon Road Recreation Ground (FoCRRG) currently stands at 58.

2.3.2 Six new members were recruited during the year, but four members cancelled their membership, making a net increase of two compared to 2021.

2.3.3 Income from membership fees totalled £245 during the year. There was also a one-off donation of £200 for the paddling pool from a generous supporter, making a total of £445.

2.3.4 PayPal remains by far the most popular method of payment for membership, with 89% of members choosing to use a recurring PayPal subscription for FoCRRG membership. The remaining 11% is a mixture of cash and cheque.

2.3.5 Membership recruitment and fundraising took place at the following events:

- 2nd and 3rd September: Soultown Festival
- 16th June: Bench action day #1
- 14th September: Bench action day #2

2.3.6 The FoCRRG noticeboard which was installed in November 2022 is now being used to showcase events in the park, publicise the restoration of the bandstand and encourage more local residents to join FoCRRG.

2.3.7 An updated membership flyer has been displayed in the new noticeboard. Printed copies of the flyer will be made once current stock is exhausted, in anticipation of future events and opportunities to distribute to potential new members.

2.3.8 Currently we are working on new signage for the park, funded by the London Borough of Bromley's Platinum Jubilee Fund. Each of the four new signs will incorporate a map, history and information panel and community noticeboard. The draft artwork was now ready and it was suggested that the main colour for the signage was black.

2.3.9 In 2024 we will also support the completion of the bandstand restoration by participating in reopening events and continuing to publicise the FoCRRG. Once the bandstand has reopened, our focus will then shift from the bandstand to other areas of interest to the membership and local community, such as the toilet and paddling pool refurbishment campaigns.

## 2.4 Webmaster Report

The website has been continually updated with information about the Recreation Ground facilities and with news about events and restoration projects.

Four newsletters were issued last year to 66 subscribers.

## 2.5 Events Coordinator

No report.

### 3.0 Election of officers

A request was made for any offers or nominations from the floor for any of the substantive posts on the committee. None were voiced, so voting proceeded thus:

Post	Nominee	Proposed	Seconded	Vote
Chair	Chris Phillips	Cllr Christine Harris	Terry Guntrip	Unanimous
Acting Treasurer	Sarah Phillips	Chris Phillips	Cllr Christine Harris	Unanimous
Membership secretary	John Backway	Chris Phillips	Cllr Christine Harris	Unanimous
Webmaster	Terry Guntrip	Dave Cook	Desmond Knight	Unanimous
Events co-ordinators	Wendy Faulkner Brian Blandford	Chris Phillips	Terry Guntrip	Unanimous
Committee Members	Cllr Harris Dave Cook Anne Feehally	Chris Phillips	Desmond Knight	Unanimous
Independent examiner	Terry Guntrip	Chris Phillips	Cllr Christine Harris	Unanimous

### 8.0 Any other business

Next committee meeting to be arranged in January.

On 9<sup>th</sup> December 2023 the cubs are planning to plant tulip bulbs around trees in the Recreation Ground

Cllr Harris said there is a strong case for a new coffee shop in the Recreation Ground. She suggested that a flyer should be sent to local residents and schools to advertise events and the good work being done by the Friends, and encourage greater membership.

Dave Cook said he was willing to approach the Bromley Environmental Network as a representative of the Friends, and this was supported by the Chairman.