

Annual General Meeting of the Friends of Clapham Common – DRAFT minutes

Date: 8th November 2023

Venue: Studio Voltaire, 1a Nelsons Row, London, SW4 7JR

Trustees and Members present: Shirley Kermer (SK, Chair), Mike Kermer (MK, Treasurer), Gareth James (GJ), Margot de Dominicis (MD) Samantha Walker (SW), Emma de Cassan (EdC). Harriet Hall (HH).

Members and observers present: There were 29 voting members present (including 7 trustees). This constitutes a quorum. A further 4 observers attended, representing the Clapham Society or Open Spaces Society. The register of attendees is set out in Appendix 1 to these minutes.

The meeting started at 19.05

	Item	Matters Discussed
1	The Year in Review	<p>SK welcomed the members to the first AGM of the Friends since our incorporation as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. She asked each trustee present to introduce themselves and went on to present the many activities that the Friends have undertaken in the past year, highlighting the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The poor state of the events site following its restoration in 2021• The engagement of Butterfly Conservation and their cooperation in creating our first wildflower meadows in March 2022, which are now supporting a wide variety of flower and insect species• The creation of a series of scrub islands to support insect and bird life on the Common• Extensive tree planting, with a new emphasis on groves to better support maintenance and watering• Introducing our proposal to create a wetland in the depression next to Eagle Pond. An exciting and ambitious project, led by Gareth James and Wild Clapham, who has engaged Joel Ashton (well-known wildlife personality and garden designer) to finalise and implement in Spring 2024. Fundraising is underway.• Numerous Community events:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ family, fun events, such as Easter Egg Hunt and Pumpkin Patch (with particular thanks to EdC) and fund-raising events such as Christmas Carol concert○ Engagement of Duke of Edinburgh students to volunteer○ Regular litter picks and support for local food banks○ Organising memorial benches and trees• Acknowledging the creation of the Wetplay area by Lambeth <p>In conclusion a very busy but highly successful year.</p>
2	Campaign to prevent large-scale music events	<p>SW provided an update on our campaign to prevent large scale music events on Clapham Common. The focus is a planned 3-day music event to be organised by Festival Republic over the August 2024 bank holiday. The Friends succeeded in securing over 500 objections and thereby a</p>

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		<p>public inquiry. This was duly held over a 10-day period in June, presided over by an Inspector on behalf of the Secretary of State for the Environment and the Friends were represented by Douglas Edwards KC and his junior, Mark O'Brien O'Reilly. The Inspector published his decision on 5th October, granting consent for the temporary works to allow the planned event to ahead. This is a disappointing decision but SW highlighted some positive outcomes from the public inquiry itself:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lambeth Council and their officers were subjected to a degree of public scrutiny that they have rarely experienced • The Inspector agreed with the Friends on all but two of the points made about the areas to be included in Open Space and thereby ruled that the size of the event site should be reduced. • The Inspector agreed with the Friends that there was insufficient evidence to demonstrate that these events are beneficial to local businesses. <p>Having consulted our legal advisors, SW announced to members that the Friends have issued a pre-action letter to the Secretary of State for the Environment setting out grounds for a potential judicial review. This action is a preliminary stage to applying for a judicial review but does not commit the Friends to do so. We have until 5th January 2024 to make that decision.</p>
3	Financial Review	<p>MK introduced the financial review by explaining that the focus would be on the results for the year ended 31st March 2022 (21/22) because that year represented a step change in activities and this was also the latest results that had been subject to an independent examination, which is now a requirement, given our size. The results for the year ended 31st March 2023 (22/23) are in the process of being finalised and will be published in January 2024: MK presented key information for this year as part of his review. Highlights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 21/22 represented a step change in activities and financial consequences • 21/22 saw the establishment of separate, designated funds to support the Wild Clapham and Legal campaigns • 22/23 continues the trend with large scale donations and expenditure • As we go into 23/24, there are adequate reserves to support our current commitments and the Charity is well placed to continue to meet its objects. <p>MK reminded members that finalised accounts for 21/22 are available on the Friend's website and that those for 22/23 will be made available in January 2024.</p> <p>There were no questions other than from one member who asked what had triggered the step change in 21/22. MK replied that this was a combination of creating a highly professional and multi skilled trustee board and a determination to be more active and visible on the Common. This was echoed by another member who complemented the Chair on her leadership</p>

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4.	Election of Trustees	<p>MdD introduced the subject of trustee elections by outlining the change to the Charity's legal status as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation and its supporting constitution as regards trustees.</p> <p>In summary, the 8 trustees who were in post at the time the CIO was registered (26th July 2022) were nominated to act as trustees for the CIO and up to 4 of these can be appointed by the trustee board. The remaining 4 are due for election by the members at the first AGM following registration as a CIO.</p> <p>MdD then announced the names of each of the 4 trustees eligible for re-election and confirmed that each had confirmed their willingness to stand. The members were asked to vote in favour by a show of hands.</p> <p>Harriet Hall – was duly re-elected by a show of hands Emma de Cassan – was duly re-elected by a show of hands Samantha Walker – was duly re-elected by a show of hands Michiel Kermer - was duly re-elected by a show of hands.</p> <p>The re-elected trustees will serve a 3-year term commencing on 8th November 2023.</p>
5	AOB	<p>Wetplay. A member asked to what extent local people had been consulted on the creation of the Wetplay area and whether, in fact, it was a worthwhile project.</p> <p>GJ and numerous members responded, all to the effect that local consultation had taken place, that the site was proving extremely popular with families and this was a well-received project. GJ highlighted that further work was being done to improve the landscaping around the site and to shield the structures housing the equipment with climbing plants and hedges.</p>
6.	Close	<p>SK closed the meeting by extending thanks to her fellow trustees, donors, volunteers and members for their support and looked forward to another exciting year ahead.</p>
		<p>The meeting ended at 20.10</p>

Register of attendees at the AGM on 8th November 2023

First Name	Last Name	FCC Member	Vote		Observer	Role
			Count	Note		
Michael	Kermer	Yes	1			Trustee
Shirley	Kermer	Yes	1			Trustee
Sally	Lang	Yes	1			
Angus	Forrest	Yes	1			
Louise	Allen-Jones	Yes	1			
Emma	de Cassan	Yes	1			Trustee
Susan	Hayday	Yes	1			
Andrew	Fingret	No	0		1	
Liz	Garratt	Family	0	One vote per family		
John	Garratt	Family	1			
Evelyne	Brown	Yes	1			
Sandra	Dalmeijer	Yes	1			
Stuart	Edwards	Yes	1			
Adrian	Darley	Yes	1			
Linda	Bray	Yes	1			Lambeth Councillor
Carolyn	Cripps	Yes	1			
Michael	Cripps	Yes	1			
Ginny	Sackur	Yes	1			
Mark	Leffler		0		1	Clapham Society
Michael	Barry		0		1	Clapham Society
Alison	Macnair	Yes	1		0	Clapham Society
Alison	Inglis Jones nee Williams	Yes	1			Lambeth Councillor
Samantha	Walker	Yes	1			Trustee
Harriet	Hall	Yes	1			Trustee
Margot	de Dominicis	Family	1			Trustee
Marco	Sepe	Family	0	One vote per family		
Gareth	James	Yes	1			Trustee
Imogen	Milward	Yes	1			
Marianne	Gleeson	Yes	1			
John	Langlely	Yes	1			
Susan	Callaghan	Family	0	One vote per family		
Christopher	Callaghan	Family	1			
Jane	Foster	Yes	1			
Felciity	Lawrence	Yes	1			
Paul	Stephenson	Yes	1			
Jeremy	Clyne	No	0		1	Open Spaces Society
Voting Members			29		4	observers
Membership (No. of subscribers)			518			
Quorum at 5%			26			
Quorum has been met						