

## **Minutes: Inaugural Meeting / Friends of Woolwich Common Group**

Date: 12<sup>th</sup> February 2019, 7pm

Location: Cricket Pavilion, Barrack Field, London SE18

### **Attendees:**

Jeremy Ellis	- Local Resident
Chris Allen	- Local Resident
John Braybrook	- Major, Station Quartermaster, RA Barracks, MoD
John Eldridge	- Major, RA Barracks, MoD
Judith Stephens	- Local Resident
Gary Stephens	- Local Resident
Carolyn Roberts	- Local Resident
Jenny Sherrell	- Local Resident
David Hill	- Local Resident
Kay Pemberton	- Local Resident
David Gardner	- Councillor, Woolwich Common Ward
Anthony Okereke	- Councillor, Woolwich Common Ward
Gaye Rose	- Local Resident
Jessica Anderson	- Local Resident
Wendy Holloway	- Local Resident
Lizzie Fort	- Local Resident
Gareth Tuppenney	- Local Resident
Vikki Coombes	- Local Resident
Alexis Bailey	- Local Resident
Julie Dillon	- Local Resident
Les Clark	- Local Resident
Heike Skidmore	- Local Resident
Howard Skidmore	- Local Resident

### **Discussion:**

#### **Update on MoD/DIO responses from previous discussion points**

Land for hospital car-park is not owned by DIO (Defence Infrastructure Organisation).

Hospital added bins without lids – resulting rubbish blown around

Matthew Pennycook MP recently raised a PMQ to the DIO about the common – resulting in a commitment of 70 man-hours/week extra effort from the DIO to clean up the common.

During inspection of fly-tipping, asbestos found in rubbish on Circular Way, this will be professionally cleaned, and general litter-pickers should keep well clear.

Needles found, especially around Ha-ha Road, but also elsewhere in the Common. General litter-pickers should not tackle these – they need to be cleaned professionally and disposed of in a sharps box. These have been reported, but may take up to a month to be fully actioned.

Confirmation that there is no radioactive material on the Common (as had been rumoured). There is some cordoned off near the Dell.

Boundary of the Common (eg wooden posts) are responsibility to be maintained by Barracks/DIO. Wooden posts deemed to be inadequate (rotting etc), other solutions to be looked at, including ditches.

## **Bins**

Action: David Gardner took map of suggested rubbish bin locations to discuss with council colleagues

Confirmed Lewisham and Greenwich Trust provide the bins along the QE hospital road, and service them.

Action: David Gardner to initiate contact between the Group and Ben Travis (LGT) to allow us to discuss our concerns.

Question raised about dog waste bins. Suggestion these could be on the Common – but two issues raised around this: (1) servicing the bins (2) spoiling the rural nature of the Common. Agreed to be an issue to return to.

## **Signage**

Alexis Bailey raised group awareness of the current “*Woolwich, Don't Litter*” campaign, and whether we could tie in with that in some way.

Action: David Gardner and John Braybrook to discuss with Head of Enforcement from the council about possible signage. Suggestion of Council/Borough logo & name, and wording along lines (“Please do not litter your common, use bins provided”). Requested wording around fining.

## **Litter-picking equipment**

David Gardner confirmed that grants exist up to £2000 for groups such as ours, to be applied for by 1<sup>st</sup> March. This could be used for litter picking equipment for example.

Becoming a borough “Environment Champion” by emailing [street-services@royalgreenwich.gov.uk](mailto:street-services@royalgreenwich.gov.uk) will allow an individual to get free picking equipment from the council.

Action: Carolyn Roberts to ask Friends of Plumstead Common if possible to borrow some equipment.

Suggestion that Friends of Maryon Park may have equipment available, as they usually pick on Saturdays.

Action: Gaye Rose to find out if further equipment is available, possibly via “Keep Britain Tidy month”.

## **Group Litter picking**

Group litter picks to be scheduled for last Sunday of every month.

First to be at **11am, 24<sup>th</sup> February 2019**. To meet at the bus depot by the **West Entrance of QE Hospital**.

John Braybrook volunteered location for the bin bags to be placed to be picked up by Barracks staff: Outside the paddock gates. Bags should be securely knotted.  
Suggestion of future location when council collect: end of Circular Way.

Suggestion of weighing / counting bags – for use in future campaigning.

**Action: Chris Allen – communicate group litter pick across social media**

### **Circular Way**

Circular Way recognised as a hot-spot for fly-tipping and drug dealing/use.

**Action: Carolyn Roberts to start a petition (suggested change.org) to close / restrict access to Circular Way.**

### **Rough Sleepers**

Rough sleepers / tents spotted in several locations in the Common. General consensus that we should not be involved in moving people on, but alerting services who may be able to help or provide shelter. “Thames Reach” is one such organisation who can be contacted.

### **Travellers and Functions**

Last year after the travellers moved on (after 3 days as they had asked for) there was human waste and garden waste.

The fun fair uses the Common 3 times per year, and pays the DIO for this privilege. This money falls into the public purse and not made directly available for the Common.

The lower section of the Common is used as a car-park twice a year – once for visitor parking during the Tall Ships festival, and once during Eid.

### **Anti-social Behaviour**

During the summer motorcycling / racing across the Common – confirmed this is an issue across the borough. Council policy is to request locals try to take photos of them, and report to Councillors.

### **Maintenance / Ecology of Common**

The Group expressed a desire to ultimately be concerned with the nature and ecology of the Common, as it is becoming a monoculture.

Concern raised about recent mowing over shrubs and destruction of plants.  
John Braybrook confirmed that contractors who recently mowed over rubbish got fined for doing so.

### **Group Constitution**

Adapted model constitution to be made specific to the Group. Agreement to remove line concerning “over 16s only”.

**Action: Chris Allen – edit the constitution and distribute, for elected committee to sign.**

## **Election of Committee**

The committee was elected as:

*Co-chairs:* Jeremy Ellis, Carolyn Roberts, Alexis Bailey

*Treasurer:* Gaye Rose

*Secretary:* Chris Allen

**Action: Date and location of next group meeting not discussed. To be decided by committee and communicated on social media.**