



# Friends of Brook Green

## Friends of Brook Green (FBG) Annual Friends Meeting

### Minutes

**Date:** Monday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2024

**Venue:** virtual meeting via TEAMS starting at 7 pm.

### In attendance:

**FBG Directors:** Jackie Duff (chair), Jacco Brouwer, Charlie Boyd, Adrienne Clarke, Livia Higgins, Irene Rozassa, Charles Sanderson.

**FBG Friends:** Nigel Hensman, Barbara Hensman, Audrey Sander, Anna Gardiner, Richard Farthing (The Hammersmith Society), Ann Brown, Richard Spiegelberg, Isabel Taylor, Frances Ryan, Cllr Stala Antoniades.

### 1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The chair (Jackie) thanked everyone for joining. She explained that the aim was for future AGMs to be in person and added that there would be a face to face meeting of friends, probably late Spring. This would be to consider priorities for the Green. She also highlighted the need for more support and volunteers for FBG especially from younger members of the community.

She thanked everyone who had submitted questions ahead of the meeting and explained, that, although these had been answered directly, they would be also be addressed later in the meeting.

### Apologies for absence:

**FBG Directors:** Nick London; Jason Collins

**Friends:** Rhoda Eitel-Porter; Ray Eitel-Porter; Wouter de Klerk; Cllr Adam Peter Lang

### 2. Approval of the 2022 minutes (meeting held on 10th January 2022)

The minutes were approved as an accurate record. It was agreed that any matters arising were included on the agenda. However, Adrienne highlighted that the issue of the playground not being locked at night remained unresolved, but that this was being followed up by the two Brook Green Councillors.

### 3. Resignations from the Board

There were four resignations: Livia Higgins; Jackie Duff; Nick London; Charlie Boyd.

It was announced that Livia wasn't standing for re-election. She was thanked for her time on the board and for her contribution to FBG.

It was explained that Jackie, Nick and Charlie were all standing for re-election but, as this would be their 10th year on the board, the regulations required that the FBG Board had to agree to each of them standing for a further year. It was noted that this had been agreed unanimously at the Board meeting on 17th January 2024.

#### **4. Elections to the Board**

Jackie Duff, Nick London and Charlie Boyd were all re-elected for a further year.

#### **5. Receipt of the Accounts to 31st March 2022 and Treasurer's report**

Jacco highlighted the following:

- the accounts, prepared by our accountants, Spurling Cannon, had been filed with Companies House and the Charities Commission ahead of the deadlines
- financial resources continued to strengthen over the financial year, reflecting strong tennis revenue which was slightly down on the previous year
- the FBG bank accounts had been moved from HSBC to the Co-op. This was because HSBC changed their policy in respect of charities and didn't allow FBG to bank on line which the Co-op does
- a major contribution had been made by FBG to the council for the recent refurbishment of the playground (this included the funds raised at the quiz in 2023)
- FBG would be paying for the on-going maintenance of the mounds on the playground
- reserves are being built up for the future maintenance and major refurbishment of the tennis courts which last saw a major refurbishment in 2014/15 (see tennis below), LED lights and the pavilion.
- the lifespan of the tennis court playing surfaces is estimated by the LTA at approximately 8 years and the courts were re-built in the 2014/15 financial year. It does seem that because of regular maintenance & upkeep, this lifespan can be extended beyond the LTA guidance period.
- we remain confident that we have sufficient reserves to finance such maintenance and/or refurbishment costs and retain flexibility for ongoing support to the council for maintenance of the playground and for selective charitable donations for local good causes.

#### **6. Working group updates**

##### **6.1 Tennis**

Charlie highlighted the following:

- the courts were in constant use most of the year
- as a result of regular deep cleaning and maintenance, we don't envisage that the courts will need refurbishing for another few years.
- changing the floodlights to LED lighting is being investigated.
- adding floodlights to the children's courts is also being looked into. This would extend the time the courts could be used.
- outreach work with local schools enabled, for example, St Mary's school children to play tennis for free and Addison school children to play at a reduced rate

- FBG was involved with the Queens Club Foundation which funded disadvantaged children to play tennis
- FBG have provided Dunhumby, a local business, with occasional free use of the courts and they have raised £24,000 for Charlie Waller Trust charity through a tennis tournament.

## **6.2 The Playground**

Charles announced that the refurbishment of the playground was now complete. It was noted that there was now equipment for children with disabilities and a disabled access gate. Stefan Czeladzinski (parks officer) and Hugo Ross-Tatam (projects officer) LBHF were thanked for their help bringing this project to a conclusion.

Charles reiterated that FBG would be paying for the maintenance of the mounds on the playground and that funds raised at the quiz had contributed to the refurbishment programme.

## **6.3 The Green**

### **6.3.1 Horticulture**

Irene thanked the volunteers who had helped with planting on the Green, in particular local volunteers and the Good Gymers. She went on to announce that the students at St Paul's Girls' School, who couldn't help in the last two terms because there were not sufficient volunteers to supervise them on Friday afternoons, might be able to help in the future. This will depend if shared supervision is possible. This is more likely from September when Irene will have more flexibility.

Future plans include continuing to improve the quiet garden (the area by the tennis courts) and the mound which runs alongside the courts.

Irene went on to explain that it had been hoped that Brook Green would be selected for the replanting of a garden from the Chelsea Flower Show. However, the bid wasn't successful. It is hoped that this may happen in the future.

### **6.3.2 Trees**

Having informed the meeting that the policy was to thin not pollard trees, Charles expressed his concern that the Council had recently cut back two plane trees (which can live 600 to 700 years). This was because the Council stated they were diseased. Charles noted that FBG have asked the Council, if there are future concerns about any other trees, that a second opinion is sought. Given the importance of the plane trees to the Green, FBG would pay for a second opinion. The next inspection is due in the summer.

Cllr Antoniadis stated that she would support this proposal. It was agreed that Charles would liaise with her as necessary.

## **6.5 Events**

Jackie explained that due to lack of volunteers and the time and resources needed that Brook Green Fair hadn't taken place for a number of years and that it wasn't planned for any time in the future. It was noted that the FBG annual inter-street quiz and raffle, which is also a good community initiative brings in about the same amount of money as the fair did in the past. Jacco added that in 2023 the net takings from the quiz were £6,500.

In the absence of Nick, who is one of the co-organisers of the quiz, Jacco and Jackie reminded everyone that the quiz will take place on Wednesday 13th March in Bute House School. He also reminded the meeting that anyone wanting to take part is invited to put together a group of 10 people representing their street, a block of flats, a local business or community group. The cost this year is £40 a head which includes wine and beer. Food is provided by the table participants. Local restaurants and businesses are currently being contacted about providing raffle prizes.

Anyone wanting to put a table together, or who would like to join a table, should contact Nick on [nicklondon1@aol.com](mailto:nicklondon1@aol.com)

Stala (Cllr Antoniades) said she would like to come along to help on the evening provided there isn't a council meeting.

## 7. Questions raised by friends

**Q1** Has the address of FBG been changed from 20 Brook Green?

**Answer:** Yes, the address is now *Friends of Brook Green, Tennis Courts Pavilion, London W6 7PB* and this is given as the official address on all communications including the newsletter

**Q2** Is more use planned for the FBG notice board on the Pavilion

**Answer:** Adrienne explained that the notice board is used for the newsletter, relevant Council notices and local charity events which involve the Pavilion e.g. the Living Advent Calendar in December. She went to say that that FBG receive a large number of requests to put notices up, and it would be difficult to determine criteria for agreeing to such notices, especially as the notice board is quite small.

It was agreed, following a suggestion from Nigel, that the newsletter on the notice board could be in larger print and that useful information e.g. who to contact in the Council if something on the Green needs to be repaired, should be on the notice board. **Action:** Adrienne

**Q3** What is FBG doing about broken fences and gates that don't close properly?

**Answer:** It was pointed out that the Council is responsible for repairs on the Green, including gates, and that anyone noticing a problem should report it to [parks@lbhf.gov.uk](mailto:parks@lbhf.gov.uk)

**Q4** What is being done about the missing letters on the Pavilion?

**Answer:** All the letters will be replaced with letters that are inset as the current letters are easy to vandalise.

**Q5** Can FBG take up issues and concerns about the new council waste bins, e.g. their size, with the Council?

**Answer:** It was pointed out that there are differing opinions regarding the bins, and that individuals who have concerns should take these up with the Council. It was agreed that information about how to contact the Council should be included in the newsletter. **Action:** Adrienne

## **8. AOB**

### **8.1 Litter picking**

Anna asked if any friends were interested in setting up regular (maybe monthly) litter picking sessions on the Green. This was met with enthusiasm both as a way of keeping the Green clean, but also as a community get together. Cllr Antoniades suggested that she might be able to obtain funding to purchase gloves and litter pickers/grabbers. It was agreed that any H&S issues would be checked out.

**Action:** Anna to liaise with Jackie and Adrienne to include details in the newsletter once everything was in place.

Anna was thanked for a great suggestion.

### **8.2 Clearing out the Pavilion**

Jackie informed the meeting that volunteers were needed to help clear out the stuff in the roof of the Pavilion. This would be sometime later in the Spring. Once a date has been agreed, Adrienne to include details in a newsletter. **Action:** Adrienne

### **8.3 Street lighting**

Irene thanked Cllr Antoniades for dealing with problems with street lights on Brook Green

### **8.5 Street link**

It was noted that the person living in a tent on the Green had been helped and the tent had been removed. Cllr Antoniades reminded everyone about street link, an app that can be used to get help for rough sleepers.

<https://thestreetlink.org.uk/>

### **8.6 Thanks to the Board**

Isabel thanked the Board for the work they do.

There being no further business the meeting closed just before 8 pm.