



Friends of West Ham Park

Friends of West Ham Park Meeting

Thursday 13th November 2025

Meeting by Video Conference

Attendees

Alan Cooper (Chair), Dries Indesteege (Deputy Chair), Roger Jones, Ron Innell, Marion Innell, John Rands, Ian MacDonald, Su Leaver and Lyndsay Jones

Lucia Rios-Steele arrived late and was unable to access the meeting

There was no representative from City of London

Apologies

Nicky Brown, Eugene Czauderna, Pearl Saunders, Jules Maurice-Williams

Thanks to Charlotte Cook for hosting the zoom meeting

Introduction

Alan welcomed everyone to the meeting

Minutes of the last meeting

Minutes from the meeting on 18th September 2025 were agreed as a correct record

Treasurer's Report

We have £2864.83 in hand, having received a donation of £500 from George Irwin (funfair) and donations via our GoFundMe page

The grant for the children's book box has not yet been received

Report from Formal Parks Manager

Ricky was unable to attend the meeting

ParkFest 26

Ian reported that the date of the Forest Gate Festival has been changed to 11th July, the Saturday before ParkFest, and suggested that we change our date. It was felt that our arrangements were too far advanced, and that neither event was likely to affect turn out at the other. We have already met with Paul Maskell (CoLC) and agreed the loan of gazebos, PR equipment, chairs etc. We have also had a discussion with Brian, of the Dog-Jammers, about arrangements for the event, including finding a performer to fill in at the front of the Bandstand whilst groups set up

Mini Library

This is a great success! The box currently has room for more donations. Several people have books ready to donate. Dries checks it most days, and will remove any that linger for weeks. The grant for a children's box has been approved but not yet received, although a condition of approval is that the money must be spent by the end of this year. Alan has chased up the payment. Thatcha, of the Learning Team, has asked if the box could be officially opened on World Book Day, 5 March 2026. She also asked to see any book covers we may have with nature pictures. Please take to the office

Planting, fencing and Signing

Ricky was unable to attend the meeting, so this discussion was postponed

Ongoing Activities

Bat Walks

The September walk attracted 139 people, but unfortunately not many bats. There were many people attending their first walk with FWHP, and everyone seemed to have enjoyed the evening

Vegetable Garden

Eugene is currently in hospital. Everyone sent him our best wishes for a speedy recovery. Su reported that Ciaran has been approached by the Clean Air Initiative wanting to use the garden for workshop events. Su met with their representative, and did not feel that the group's aims would work among our existing growing beds. She was also concerned that many of our garden volunteers see this as their safe space. We agreed to follow this up with Ciaran and Ricky, to see if we can find another suitable area for the Clean Air group

Bird Survey

The London Area Recorder finds our numbers are useful, even if the whole area is not surveyed. As Lyndsay no longer lives locally it is more difficult to arrange dates to train new volunteers

Volunteer Hours

Each group is to send their own numbers to Stella in the Park Office

Health Walks

There are usually around 12 people taking part. The Newham mental health support group have stopped attending, no explanation has been offered

Halloween Spooky Walk

Some FWHP members helped the Learning Team with this event, and received many thanks. Approximately 350 people took part, and the event was a great success and much enjoyed in spite of the rain

Upcoming Events

Leaf Pile – 16th November

There are plenty of leaves fallen. Ron will lead on keeping people clear of the lifting tractor, and signalling the charge into the pile!

Food Bank collection – 29th November

On the Bandstand. 1-3pm

Park in the Dark – 5th December

Lucia was not able to access the meeting in person, but messaged to say that Park Primary's choir are all set for the event.

Ron is trying to find a donor of mince pies and hot chocolate, as his contact at Morrisons has left the job

Refurbishing the Orchard Area

Ron explained the clearing work that had been undertaken recently. Some new planting was to be undertaken on Saturdays 6th & 13th December. Volunteers to take part in these activities would be most welcome. The detailed arrangements for this and publicity arrangements needed to be decided by the park

Publicity and Media

Newham Voices

Lyndsay will write about the work going on to care for the orchard area, and signs of spring and the birdwatching event for January and February editions.

Dries will write about the Book Boxes for March.

It was suggested that we ask Pete Henson, (Head Gardener) to write an article (or two), as he is a mine of knowledge about the garden.

Articles need to be with Nicky by 15th of the previous month

Our social media still receives a good amount of attention, and a regular newsletter was not felt necessary.

Nicky has had some blank greeting card printed with some of this year's winning photos, and sales have raised £42 already

Links and Affiliations with other Environmental Groups

The Great Eastern Parks Route have asked for formal agreement to include West Ham Park in the publicity material and App for the route. This would be good publicity for the park.

Roger will liaise with Ciaran to agree this

Newham Local Plan

CoLC have objected on several counts to Newham's classification of the Nursery site as green space in the proposed Local Plan. The Plan is being reviewed by a Planning Inspector with hearings scheduled from December to February. We have been invited to attend the relevant hearings

CoLC Grant Funding Model

An online meeting is being arranged to fully explain this decision to us. (Post-meeting Note – now fixed for 26 November). Any member of the Group can attend but has to register. We are not sure what the arrangements for asking question will be, but agreed that we should appoint one or two of us to be the questioners

Grant Applications

Roger has applied to the Lyle Local Fund, asking for £2,000 for ParkFest. We should hear the result by the end of this year.

We cannot complete the requirements to close the CoLC grant for the mound planting until we are able to monitor pollinator activity in the spring. This means we cannot apply for a grant to redesign and plant South Meadow from the City of London. We might be eligible to apply to Veolia Recycling for a grant instead. The next round of grants open for applications from 8 January. This would require a detailed and costed proposal prepared by the park/City of London. Roger will look into this possibility and liaise with Ricky

Future Meeting Dates in 2025

The next meeting will be 15 January 2026, as the second Thursday is close to the holiday period. All other meetings will be on the second Thursday in every other month at 7.30pm. All meetings by Zoom, apart from the AGM in July.

Thursday 15th January

Thursday 12th March

Thursday 14th May

Thursday 9th July

AOB

The meeting closed at 21.00