



Friends of West Ham Park

Friends of West Ham Park Meeting

Thursday 17th September 2026

Meeting by Video Conference

Attendees

Alan Cooper (Chair), Dries Indesteege (Deputy Chair), Ricky O'Garro (Senior Park), Roger Jones, Ron Innell, Marion Innell, Nicky Brown, Uta Saatz, Eugene Czauderna, Lucia Rios-Steele, John Rands, Ian MacDonald and Lyndsay Jones

Apologies

Pearl Sanders, Helen Mossop, Pat Mossop, Su Leaver, Charlotte Cook

The Friends of Chandos Gardens were invited, but were unable to attend this time

Introduction

Alan welcomed everyone to the meeting

Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes from the meeting and AGM on 9th July 2026 were agreed to be correct

Treasurer's Report

The current balance is £2007.26 We have received £500 donations from ParkFest through GoFundMe

Report from Senior Ranger

A new Gardener has now been appointed, to replace Lee who is now with one of the Ranger teams

Ricky has had a number of people enquire about the damaged and clearly distressed trees, suffering from the unusually hot dry summer. He has explained that the mature trees cannot be effectively watered because their roots are too deep. A number of trees have had to be felled or much reduced in size, and more may have to be removed. This is a city-wide problem and the Hampstead Heath tree team, who do all the work in City open spaces, are overstretched. They will continue to do all the survey work, and will appoint contractors to do the work on our park. This should mean that the work is carried out more promptly. Grant funding to replace lost trees is being sought from the CoLC Carbon Sequestration fund. Species and hybrids more able to cope with the dry conditions will be chosen

There have been problems with anti-social behaviour linked to drug use and dealing. This led to a temporary closure of Linden Gate, where staff had been threatened. Newham Borough increased security patrols, and the situation has calmed down. (Possibly moved somewhere else other than resolved)

CoLC are concerned about insufficient levels of recycling. We all know that residents of the area are not careful with their recycling at home. Most park bins include dog waste, which makes all the contents un-recyclable. There used to be separate bins, but park users still mixed waste in all bins. It should be possible to recycle more waste from the office and working areas. Staff will do their best

The Funfair went well, after the sink hole at South Gate was quickly repaired to allow access

The park hosted the departure of 900 riders on the London to Southend bike ride. It was an early start for staff, but all went off smoothly

Park Cottage, on Portway, is now being prepared for letting. The income will come to West Ham Park

The London in Bloom awards are to be announced tomorrow. (Post meeting note: Gold Award retained - congratulations to all staff and volunteers)

Bench repairs are still outstanding. This could affect the Green Flag status if repairs are not authorised and completed

Cycling is becoming an increasing problem, particularly the number of electric bikes and scooters being used for deliveries. Bill LoSasso (CoLC Director of Open Spaces North) is looking into cycling policy, which may result in a ban

ParkFest 26

The event had been a success. Around 700 people attended. A review meeting will be held on Monday, where we shall ask for an extension to the music license until 7pm, to make the schedule a bit more relaxed and easier for the sound engineer. We would repeat the event with no other major changes. Roger stressed that this is subject to obtaining grant funds. He is applying for anything for which our event is eligible, but unless we are successful ParkFest 27 will not happen. The decision will be made in January

Friends Activities

20th Anniversary

We feel this is worth celebrating! Also a chance to recognise all the people who have helped us to continue with our support for the park

Many have moved away and are unlikely to attend, but we want them to know they are not forgotten. Nicky has designed an electronic invitation

Alan will arrange to hire a room at The Red House on Upton Lane. The chosen date is 24th September

Grant Applications

Roger and Lucia are developing (with support from the Learning Team) an application to City Bridge Trust for developments within the school's wildlife garden and Forest Schools areas

It is suggested that we form a sub-group to try and find funding for the redevelopment of South Meadow

Ongoing Activities

Little Library

All going well at the moment

Orchard Maintenance

Next working group will be 31st October from 10.00 to 3.30, everyone welcome

Vegetable Garden

The hot dry summer has made for challenging conditions, but volunteers are enjoying the project

Bird Survey

Dries and Uta have offered to join the monthly survey group. Lyndsay will give them an introductory survey walk

Volunteer Hours

Each group is to send their own numbers to Stella in the Park Office. A record of hours donated is important for grant applications

Health Walks

Continuing as normal

Litter picking is continuing, Uta does a collection every week

SINC status

Newham Local Plan is now finalised, so there may be some progress. Roger will contact the appropriate department

Upcoming Events

Bat Walk Friday 25th September

Spooky Trail Friday 30th October 13.30 - 15.30. Volunteers please contact Thatcha. This event is organised by the Learning Team

Newham's Biggest Leaf Pile Sunday 15th November . Provisional date. Early leaf fall may cause this to be amended

Park in the Dark Friday 4th December

Publicity and Media

We have articles for the October and November editions. Charlotte suggests writing something Christmas-y for December

Social Media activity is at the usual level

We have sold a few of the cards featuring our winning photo competition pictures

Links and Affiliations with other Environmental Groups

Nothing new to report

Future Meeting Dates in 2024

Second Thursday in every other month

Next meeting Thursday 12th November

Thursday 14th January 2027

Thursday 11th March

Thursday 13th May

AOB

Nicky raised the issue of the campaign for traffic calming on The Portway after several recent accidents. Newham Borough are to publish proposals for public comment in mid-October

The meeting closed at 20.45