

# Friends of Wandsworth Common

## Minutes of 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual General Meeting

<b>Date</b>	Thursday 13 August 2020	<b>Time</b>	18.00	<b>Venue</b>	Zoom
<b>Attendees</b>				<b>Apologies</b>	<b>Did not attend</b>
<b>The Committee:</b> Julia Bott (chair) Richard Fox George Meakin (treasurer) David Coleman (minutes)		Rachel Stevenson Lisa Kanter Charlie Oppenheim Anne Lambert	Ian Mitchell, MD EnableLC (Guest)  32 Members  3 Non-Members	None	N/A
<b>No</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Discussion</b>			
1	<b>Welcome</b>	The Chair welcomed all those who had joined the FoWC's second AGM online and highlighted some points of meeting etiquette for the meeting, unusually (but necessarily) held by Zoom Video Conference.			
2	<b>Guest speaker</b>  (Ian Mitchell)	<p>Ian Mitchell introduced himself – he was the Managing Director of Enable Leisure and Culture, which had been awarded a further five year contract to manage the Common and other Wandsworth open spaces from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020. Some of Enable's key focusses were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A commitment to recycling – they would work with FoWC about suitable bin locations for this.</li> <li>• Biodiversity, re-wilding and carbon reduction.</li> <li>• Management of personal trainers and sports bookings.</li> <li>• Greater engagement with Friends' groups – the key to this was greater communication to better understand local opinions. Enable met regularly with the chairs of the Friends' groups in a Borough-wide Forum, chaired by JB</li> </ul> <p>The coronavirus pandemic had produced significant issues for Enable. On the one hand, an increased significant demand for open spaces (with which it was sometimes difficult to keep up) and, on the other hand, a number of problems: e.g. anti-social behaviour, litter, a reverse of the previous progress on biodiversity and a requirement for new signage. These had been dealt with through changed practices on the basis of evolving Government guidance and increased parks police resources (2 dedicated officers for the Common at weekends).</p> <p>Questions and answers:</p> <p>1 Q. What were the main challenges to biodiversity (Martin Haddon)? A. An increase in desire lines, including trampling of grass not usually trampled on; an increase in den building on the Scope (often encouraged by parents); and anti-social behaviour in the lake (not a major issue, but a disturbance to the biodiversity nonetheless).</p> <p>2 Q. Are Enable responsible for maintenance and repairs – there were some damaged boards on the walkways by the lake and rubbish in the lake (Hannah Stanislaus)? A. These points would be followed up immediately.</p>			

		<p>3 Q. What were the proposals regarding recycling (Rose Harley)? A. Bins in a number of places and an education campaign.</p> <p>4 Q. If Enable's actual budget for the Common was increased by 10/20%, on what would it be spent (Sue Delafons)? A. Wandsworth BC paid Enable for the work they did and it was difficult to comment on that. As a not-for-profit organization, however, Enable put back any surplus into their work for green spaces across the Borough. A key priority would be working with their contractor, idVerde, for better litter collection. Biodiversity improvement was another priority.</p> <p>5 Q. Was the damage to trees by personal trainers, others using them for workouts and children swinging on them being monitored (Sue Griffin)? A lot of trees were also suffering from 'drought'. A. More education around licensing and regulation of personal trainers by the parks police was planned. Anyone using trees would be given a fixed penalty notice. Work was being done to increase work under the contract for watering during this warmer period. The extreme over use of parts of the Common, such as the wildflower meadow, was also an issue and further reseedling of these areas and desire lines was planned.</p> <p>6 Q. Is there an education program planned to explain to people why den building, letting dogs in the lakes etc had an adverse effect on biodiversity (Stephen Midlane)? A. In the short term, a social media campaign was planned. For 2021, work was being carried out on a woodland management plan (specifically for Wandsworth and Tooting Commons), which would include a dog walker engagement program.</p> <p>Thanks were expressed to Ian for speaking at the meeting.</p>
3	<b>Chairs' Report</b> (Julia Bott & Richard Fox)	<p>Key points:</p> <p>1 Following the last AGM, the Committee had considered FoWC's mission statement and how this was being implemented by the work being carried out by the Friends. On the whole, it had been found that most things work working well (and those which hadn't, had now been dropped), but the key issue remained lack of organisers to take all those things forward.</p> <p>2 The second year of the FoWC had seen a gradual growth in membership to c.475 (an increase of 80; 50 since lock down) and 97% had shown their loyalty by renewing their subscriptions. There was further reach through the 350 people on the non-member "notify me" list and through social media (a doubling of Twitter and Instagram follows – now 1,00 each; an increase of (a smaller) number of Facebook followers; and through engagement with other groups (e.g. the recent Love Parks event raising awareness of litter and recycling issues, which had been supported by Plogolution, Beautify Balham, Putney Rotary, Tooting Litter etc).</p> <p>3 Joint work had been done with the Management Advisory Committee for the Common, Enable and Wandsworth BC on the new Management and Maintenance Plan; improved signage for safe social distancing and littering since lock down; on planning issues (e.g. for Jaggard Way and the Bellevue/Trinity Road junction). The FoWC Committee had also worked with the Bolingbrooke Bowls Club and All Star Tennis to reinvigorate interest in bowls and to preserve the last surviving public bowling green in Wandsworth.</p> <p>4 The Walks and Talks programme had continued to attract considerable interest, as had the "virtual" talks since lock down. New nature leaflets had also been created.</p> <p>5 Volunteers continued to support the swan and duck food and litter picking projects. The latter had seen monthly litter picks until lock down and weekly ones since, supported by Enable.</p> <p>6 There were a number of plans for the future, not only in relation to the walks and talks program and the key priority projects (Nature Interpretation Boards, water fountains and Neals Lodge), but also in better outreach to schools, building on the fruitful collaboration with Enable, Wandsworth BC and other organisations, and further work supporting the Bowls Club.</p>
4	<b>Heritage Group</b>	<p>July 2021 will mark the 150th anniversary of the "saving of Wandsworth Common", when the Wandsworth Common Act 1871 transferred the Common from Earl Spencer to the people. A big celebration is planned. Central to organising this is the Heritage Group, a sub-committee</p>

	<b>Report</b>  (Anne Lambert)	<p>of the FoWC. The programme includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A book telling the history of the Common in 150 people, places, objects...</li> <li>• The planting of 150 trees.</li> <li>• Blue and green heritage plaques.</li> <li>• Walks, talks and events.</li> <li>• A big party!</li> </ul> <p>Finding volunteers is key to the success of the celebratory events, as well as funding and sponsorship. Budgets are currently being considered in order to provide up front funding to those projects that need it – especially the book. FoWC has some reserves, which will help with this.</p>
5	<b>Treasurer's Report</b>  (George Meakin)	<p>The Treasurer presented his Report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This showed net receipts of £6,697 (2019: £5,410) (of which £4,059 came from subscriptions and donations and £2,203 came from sales of swan and duck food!) and, after expenses had been deducted, a surplus of £4,631 (2019: £4,095).</li> <li>• Cash at bank at 31<sup>st</sup> March was £8,727 (2019: £4,095). It had to be remembered, however, that this amount would be quickly swallowed up to fund any of the future projects already discussed, without contributions from elsewhere.</li> </ul>
6	<b>Election of Committee Members</b>  (David Coleman)	<p>Gabriela Ducat had put herself forward for election to the Committee. She was a regular user of the Common, who was a web design, digital marketing and social media expert. She had already initiated a couple of local digital projects to help the Earlsfield community where she lived.</p> <p>IT WAS Resolved (unanimously):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not to fill a vacancy in relation to Charlie Oppenheim and Lisa Kanter, who (having retired by rotation and putting themselves up for re-election) were each deemed re-elected to the Committee with effect from the end of the meeting.</li> <li>• To elect Gabriela Ducat as a member of the Committee with effect from the end of the meeting.</li> </ul> <p>Thanks were expressed to Sue Delafons, who had retired from the Committee on 1<sup>st</sup> May having moved away from the area, and David Coleman, who was retiring as secretary with effect from the end of the meeting.</p>
7	<b>Special resolutions</b>  (David Coleman)	<p>Noting that the pandemic had meant that it had not been possible to follow the FoWC Constitution to the letter, IT WAS RESOLVED (unanimously) that the holding of the meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> August (and not by 10<sup>th</sup> August, which was the latest date for holding the meeting under article 33) and any other breaches of the Constitution caused by the holding of the meeting by Zoom and not a face-to-face meeting be ratified.</p>
	<b>Close</b>	<p>The Chair expressed particular thanks to the Committee, the Heritage Group, the volunteers and members of FoWC, the MAC, Enable, the officers at Wandsworth BC and local councillors. She then closed the meeting.</p>

