

Friends of Coronation Gardens Committee meeting

2nd May 2019, 10am to noon at Susannah House

Present: Charles (Chair), Susannah, Wendy Cater, Jo, Lesley, Nada (notes).

Invited guests: Colin Cooper and Ed Stannard (South West London Environment Network – swlen.org.uk)

Colin and Ed explained their role at South West London Environment Network. The charity started in Richmond and now works across southwest London. They work to improve biodiversity, air quality and energy efficiencies (include fuel poverty). They also have supported over 130 different Friends groups to start up and develop.

For more information on SWLEN: website (<https://swlen.org.uk/>), Instagram (swlen.org.uk) or Twitter (@richenvironment).

1. Update

- A funding application for £1000 to run three activities in 2019 has been submitted to Wandsworth Grant Fund. We will know if we have been successful by 25th June 2019.
- Charles, Dan and Nada have opened a bank account in the Friends name with Barclays.
- We have a data protection notice on our website. If we are successful in our funding, we will need to produce further key documents such as an equal opportunities policy, safeguarding policy and health & safety procedures. SWLEN may be able to help us with these.
- Committee members are encouraged to take responsibility for different aspects of our work (see actions below).

2. Constitution

- We agreed that we need to have a formal, legally binding constitution to cover any issues in the future. We also need to plain English summary to encourage people to join. We might need to look at including a confidentiality clause.
Action: Charles will work with Colin from SWLEN to produce a final version by 31st May 2019. Nada will write a plain English summary.
- **Membership and communications**
We agreed that we will have a formal membership programme. Membership will be £5 annually per member. People will be able to pay online. There will also be a donation facility online. People will also be able to only sign up to keep in touch with no fee.
Action: Susannah to set this up once we have bank account details.

- We agreed to have a minimum of four committee meetings a year and one public AGM. Because we are just starting up, we will have committee meetings in June and July and decide if we need more.
- Communication in between committee meetings will be by email. The focoronationgardens@gmail.co.uk email address should be used for external communications. The Whatsapp group is useful for short, time-critical communications.
- Nada will try to produce an email newsletter every month to go to the wider contact group (about 35 at present). We should also use the Gardens (need to establish use of the notice board with Enable).
- **Funding**
Running the website costs approximately £100, so we will need to encourage membership. We also agreed that there is much scope for working in partnership with local businesses for example by sponsoring newsletter or giving donations in kind.
Action: Lesley to co-ordinate with others from the public meeting and Susannah.
- **Collecting views from users of the Gardens**
We agreed that it is very important to get views from the wider community. There are various ways of doing this – including online ‘Survey Monkey’ questionnaires, paper questionnaires, counting users and use over a time period.
Action: Jo has contact with Wimbledon Common and can learn from what they have done.

We also need to raise the profile of the Friends group – eg with local schools (eg having a presence at school fairs), and businesses.

Action: Lesley to take the lead with schools.

The first survey will aim to give us information on:

- How people are using the gardens.
- What they want to improve
- Thoughts about safety (eg locking the gardens).
- Support for our ‘vision’ eg safe, attractive and inviting.
- Base-line to evidence what impact we are having.

3. Maintenance and concerns

Susannah has organised a walk-through of the Gardens with staff from Enable on Wednesday 22nd May at 1 o’clock.

Action: Susannah, Lesley, Jo and Wendy will take part.

The list of important items to be looked at include:

- Maintenance of the paths (possibility of using different eco materials)
- Edging of lawns.
- Maintenance of trees
- Pavilion

- Paving around fountain.
- Removal of dead trees.
- Painting railings and fencing.

We also need to talk to them about:

- Notice board
- Place to distribute leaflets
- Bins – cigarette bins
- Out of date signage.

We will ask them for a written response with a time table for doing the work.

We will tackle issues such as lighting, antisocial behaviour and locking the gates when we have carried out more research of users' views.

4. Ideas for improvement

Susannah distributed photo mock-ups of her ideas for improvements. All were enthusiastically received. They are designed to be easy for Enable and its contractors to maintain and include:

- Rose arches.
- Features such as sundial or sculpture.
- Paving.
- More flower beds.
- Underplanting of rose beds.
- Wild flower beds
- Dog-free area with hedges.
- Bed maintained and designed by local schools.
- Veg boxes.
- Garden 'hut'.

Colin suggested aspiring to Green Flag status (<http://www.greenflagaward.org.uk/>)

5. 2019 Love Parks Wandsworth

We agreed that it would be nice to do something to be part of this initiative. We agreed on an informal picnic on Saturday 6th July.

Action: Charles will contact Enable.

6. Making the most of our history

- There was agreement to look into 'listing' the Gardens in the future. We could invite Helen from Friends of South Park gardens to a future public meeting to discuss this.
- We would like to find out more about the history of the Gardens and find out more about the Southfields Festival. Colin suggested looking at:
 - <http://londongardensonline.org.uk/gardens-online-record.php?ID=WND009>

- <https://www.parksandgardens.org/places/coronation-gardens-wandsworth>

7. Publicity / website

Susannah reminded committee members to send her a paragraph of text about themselves to go on the website.

Susannah runs our Instagram and Facebook accounts.

Action: Nada volunteered to set up a Twitter account.

Action: Jo volunteered to promote via 'Next Door'.

8. Next meeting

Wednesday 5th June, 7-9pm in the Gardeners Arms

9. AOB

- **Action: Wendy offered to look into her old contact at Parks Police.**
- We will keep in touch with local councillor Kim Caddy who is very supportive.
- We could investigate interest in litter picking.

For inclusion in the May Friends newsletter

- That the committee has met, and we are developing constitution, bank account etc.
- Introduction to our 'vision' – ie for a safe, attractive and inviting Gardens.
- Call out for people with links to local businesses.
- Call out for people with Twitter or social media experience.
- Ask for ideas about litter picking days
- Picnic in the gardens as part of Love Parks Wandsworth.