

Friends of Battersea Park

Registered Charity 802905

friendsofbatterseapark.org



Annual General Meeting

Minutes of meeting of The Annual General Meeting of the Friends of Battersea Park held at 7pm on Tuesday 12th September 2023

All Saints Church, Prince of Wales drive SW11

1. **Welcome:** Chairman's opening remarks Garon Watkins, Chair, welcomed and thanked all for attending, he introduced the panel and Inspector Steve Biggs and Neil Blackley Head of Parks - Enable who'd be taking Q&A later in the meeting.

2. **Apologies for absence:** Valarie Bolam, Joan Braune, Karen Buckle, Julia Camara, Dominic Clarke, Russ Coffey, Sandy Copeland, Michael Corcoran, Linda Corkill, Mary Craig, Fabienne Danjou, Andrew Figgures, Miles Kerstein, Roland Kirkby, Peta May Law, Brian Livingstone, J S Orr, Jean Orr, Mary Paleologo, Helen Statham, Sophie Stafford, Lorraine Trainer and Lucy Watts

In Attendance 43.

3. **AGM Tuesday 12 September 2023** Minutes approved.

Held on 12th September 2023, the minutes had been listed on the Friends of Battersea Park's website prior to the AGM, approved by the Chairman and agreed by all present

4. **Trustees' Report for 2022/23* given by the Chairman**

The Chairman delivered the Trustees' report year ending March 2023. A copy was included in issue 126 of Review and will be sent to the Charity Commission.

The Report and Accounts were also listed on the Friends' website.

5. **Presentation of the Financial Statement**

Adrian Flook, Treasurer, gave the statement of financial activities for the year 2022/2023.

The Treasurer thanked John Marsh (the independent examiner). Additionally, he thanked Sally Orman for her exceptional work in single-handedly securing nearly £5000 in advertising revenue last year, some of which was carried over from the previous year. He acknowledged that this achievement was impressive given the modest size of the group of local businesses who advertise in the Review.

Adrian commented the Friends had a surplus - not as profit as we are a charity - of £1,800 in the last year. This surplus was lower than usual due to increased investments directed towards supporting a local educational charity SWSJ with ongoing education initiatives for both primary and secondary school students.

There had also been two lots of Winter Garden planting in the accounts that the Friends paid for.

Adrian thanked the BBQ sub team for their outstanding effort in organising the summer barbecue which was yet again a tremendous social and financial success.

The bank account has accumulated to over £80,000 which is a substantial sum, but one that we should look to deploy.

The Treasurer added that other ways to spend the funds could be: supporting further educational programs and helping make a contribution towards the required and enhanced garden fencing in the Winter Garden.

A question was asked if the Friends' membership fee for could be increased. Adrian responded that he thought it would scare some potential people away from joining and we ideally want members from some of our less well off areas around the park to join and be involved and increasing the joining fee might put them off. The membership fee is collected by direct debit/paypal and now Stripe but more of our fund raising comes from the events that we hold. Garon concluded that the committee could have a formal review on a regular basis of the fee, given inflation.

Adrian added that it is important that the Committee, as part of their role, are a voice to the Council on behalf of the membership when required to make representation.

Approval of the Annual Report and Accounts was proposed by Hallum Murray, seconded by Raanan Gillon and agreed by all present

6. **Financial Examiner** George Coe was elected as Independent Examiner for the 2023/24 accounts.
7. **Election of new Chairman** Garon advised that the committee is actively engaged in the process of identifying a new chairman. Updates regarding this matter will be communicated through the usual channels once the committee has completed the selection process.
8. **Re-election of Adrian Flook as Treasurer and Juliet Lyon-Smith as Secretary**
 - Adrian Flook proposed by Sally Orman, seconded by Raanan Gillon, agreed by all present.
 - Juliet Lyon Smith proposed by Orlando Bridgeman, seconded by Jenny Wardle, agreed by all present.
9. **Election of Miles Kerstein and Kate Bock as Trustees**
 - Miles Kerstein proposed by Michelle Marriott, seconded by Frances Radcliffe, agreed by all present.
 - Kate Bock proposed by Fenella Barber, seconded by Juliet Lyon-Smith, agreed by all present

The Chairman confirmed the elected committee members and officers were all in place.

10. Any other business

• Retirement of a long standing Trustee

Garon expressed the Committee's sincere gratitude to Michelle Marriott JP on behalf of the Friends and the committee as she steps down due to a move to Surrey. Michelle has dedicated her time to the Friends since 2008 when she joined the committee alongside Sally and Frances. Michelle will be greatly missed,

- A big thank you was extended to Russ Coffey for his dedication and contributions to the website redesign. Garon added that the redesigned site includes an interactive tree walk, representing a new innovation for the Friends. The details on this were provided by Clive Freedman.
- Christine Fremantle recent passing was acknowledged. Hallam Murray said a few words regarding Christine, a notable artist and sculptor from Poland who settled in Battersea in the 1960s. Christine designed the Friends' uplifting logo and made significant contributions to the community, including efforts to save the zoo in 2002. Appreciation was expressed for her contributions, along with those of the Heap family in professionally managing the zoo.

11. Closing remarks The Chairman ended the formal proceedings at approx 7.35pm and invited all to have a drink and 15minute break before the Q&A with Inspector Biggs and Neil Blackley

Meeting closed at 850pm