

Clapham Common Management Advisory Committee (CCMAC)

Minutes of meeting on Thursday 6 July 2023, 1900 - 2050 The Depot SW4

Attendees:

Simon Millson (SM) (Chair)

Cllr Linda Bray (LB)

Cllr Ben Curtis

Cllr Alison Inglis-Jones (AIJ)

Gareth James (GJ) (Friends of Clapham Common
FCC)

Jeremy Keates (Clapham BID)

Andrew Summers (AS) (Clapham Society)

Community Representatives

Phil Carey (PC) (and Secretary)

Adrian Darley (AD) (and Treasurer)

Michael Mooney (MM)

Lambeth Council

Ian Ross (IR); Lara Mifsud-Bonici (LMB)

Apologies: Joanna Reynolds (JR); Krishna Siva

The Chair announced that Nikki Marsh had with regret decided to stand down from CCMAC; he thanked her for the dedication she had shown in her time as a Community Representative, and for her continued willingness to support our work.

He also applauded the contribution to CCMAC of Ian Ross; this is his last meeting as he is moving on from Lambeth to a new role outside London.

1: Matters arising from last meeting

The minutes of the 1 June meeting were approved, and on matters arising not picked up elsewhere:

- Enchanted Group has confirmed it will now stage its 5-8 October Oktoberfest on the fairground site, the location requested by CCMAC.
- Recruitment of Lambeth's Enforcement Team is now complete, and will be based at Clapham Common. On liaison re enforcement policies with Wandsworth Common MAC, a first meeting is now lined up for 4 September.

Action 1A: Chair to invite John Gandhi as Principal of the Team to attend 7 September meeting

- Four members had inspected the padel tennis courts at Rocks Lane, Chiswick, on 28 June, to inform CCMAC views on whether this would be a suitable use of part of the former bowling green site. They were advised that in order to be viable a padel tennis facility needs to be significantly larger (Rocks Lane has ten courts) than

envisaged for Clapham, given the substantial up-front investment and ongoing running costs. CCMAC concluded that this is not realistic for our site. Alternative possibilities of a BMX facility, or erecting gazebo-type structures, must also be ruled out; but a children's sports area, alongside the already planned sensory garden, remains an option. The Chair and IR agreed that Lambeth must now expedite through its agent Sanderson Weatherall a fresh attempt to secure an operator to meet its objectives (which must include some revenue generation).

Action 1B: LMB to share revised competition documentation, and CCMAC to determine whether it needs to set a time limit for completion of the tender process

2: Ongoing Clapham Common works update:

IR and LMB reported that the waterplay facility remains on track for opening on 24 July, and the refurbishment of the Westside changing rooms is now under way, due to complete on 16 August. Ordering of the next set of benches will get under way this month, and the collapsing pathway alongside Mount Pond and by the central playground had been set as priorities for repair by Lambeth's agent Ringway. Planters are to temporarily be installed to prevent illegal parking at the northern end of Westside, and Parking Services will work with the new Enforcement Team to develop a longer-term solution.

The continuation of limited mowing following 'no mow May' was attracting much positive feedback, as well as some complaints. It would help to explain better the Council's ecologically-led policy and the fact that around two-thirds of the Common would continue to be mown.

Action 2A: GJ to liaise with LMB and arrange explanatory statement on CCMAC website

CCMAC raised four further issues:

- Members had on numerous occasions had to step in to re-lock the gate from Windmill Drive; the existing padlock code had become too widely known, and delivery drivers were failing on their responsibility to secure it. IR has issued a new code to essential users only, and will monitor any further negligence by suppliers. SM had also advised Lambeth on where additional bollards were needed to prevent unauthorised vehicle access.

Action 2B: CCMAC members where practicable to continue relocking gate when left open

- Once the summer pressures on litter collection had eased, Lambeth should ensure that currently neglected peripheral areas of the Common were included in regular rounds.
- As Lambeth recognised the main toilet block is prone to blockages, the Council should retain the temporary toilets as a back-up facility for the rest of this summer. Signing to both sites has been improved.

- After several years of stalemate on the disputed ownership of the boat house by Long Pond, it was worth a fresh initiative to engage the current boat club leadership in seeking a joint strategy with CCMAC on shared usage to better serve Common users.

Action 2C: AIJ to pursue her offer to start dialogue with the boat club

3: Feedback on Planning Inspectorate inquiry into events on the Common

Some witnesses from CCMAC and member organisations found the process of giving evidence, now completed, challenging and exhausting, in particular when cross-examined. GJ perceived an imbalance of resource between the promoter and objectors. The Inspector is due to finish writing his report by early October.

4: Parks Investment Levy (PIL)

The Chair reminded CCMAC that the PIL is set at 25% of Lambeth's income from hire fees for events on the Common; 20% of this is directed to other Lambeth parks, but it falls to CCMAC to specify how the balance should be invested in improvements to Clapham Common. Pre-pandemic some £150k had been available from Festival Republic receipts (and, depending on the outcome of the Public Inquiry, it could be higher again from 2024); there remains around £40k currently available, after further committed spend on bollards and a drinking fountain. Lead options include: giving proper effect to the recently designated Local Nature Reserve; funding a new season of winter weekend litter picking; and screening the new waterplay site. Lambeth had already committed to plant more trees on the Common, and GJ will be meeting with the Tree team to identify locations.

Action 4A: CCMAC to consider options, on basis of proposal from Chair (now provided) and determine by September meeting

5: Unlicensed music events

CCMAC members are increasingly concerned about the frequency and scale of unauthorised gatherings on recent summer weekends, with amplified music and illegal sale of alcohol. Local residents suffer from noise and some anti-social behaviour, and vehicles driven on to the Common are causing damage. The new Enforcement Team should make this abuse of the Common an early priority, working with the police. It was noted that the reconfiguration of Windmill Drive this autumn should make vehicle incursion onto the Common much more difficult.

Action 5A: for Enforcement Team; and AIG and BC to follow up their offer to raise the need for action in their 1 August Neighbourhood Planning meeting with the Met.

6: Working Group progress reports

There was insufficient time to consider full reports on progress from all Groups, but CCMAC noted:

- *Governance*: the outcome of a brief legal review of the draft statement on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, and draft policies on Harassment / Bullying, and on Conflict of Interest, was still awaited

Action 6A: with advice since received, PC to present final draft to CCMAC for approval in correspondence

- SM explained that the new *Local Nature Reserve WG* had begun to map out what it wants to see from the newly designated areas ahead of a meeting with Dr Iain Boulton after the summer.
- *Access, Paths and Signage* had not reported for some months

Action 6B: Secretary to liaise with JR about a report to the September meeting

7: Member Group updates

Friends of Clapham Common: GJ reported that there had been progress in costing the wetland project, and preparations made for obtaining Secretary of State consent for erecting the viewing deck and boardwalk. There was some concern that installation work planned for the autumn might clash with implementation of the Windmill Drive reconfiguration.

8: Promoting awareness of CCMAC

CCMAC has some publicity material, but its being unavailable to support the CCMAC presence at the Old Town Fair on 24 June meant our profile was lower than anticipated. The existing banner should be tracked down, and additional material displayed at key points on the Common such as by the Spinney and the basketball court. CCMAC welcomed MM's offer to work up an appropriate poster.

Action 8A: MM, with Claire McMenemy, to design

9: AOB

- Concern was raised about the filming company parked on the fairground site preventing the public from walking through the site. LMB confirmed this was not in their power. She would also explore whether the Parks' share of income from this parking could be raised from 10% to 25%, in line with the PIL.
- CCMAC should step up its efforts in filling vacancies as Community Representatives so as to become more representative of the diversity of local communities. In addition to JR securing a formal proposal to join CCMAC from the Chair of a local Tenants & Residents Association who has already expressed an interest, it would help to explain the opportunities on CCMAC through Housing Association Engagement Officers.

Action 9A: JR to liaise with the TRA, and Chair to pursue wider engagement

11: Date of next meeting: Thursday 7 September, 1930, The Depot.

Minutes drafted by Phil Carey, Secretary