

Clapham Common Management Advisory Committee (CCMAC)

Minutes of meeting on Thursday 2 May 2024, 1900 - 2100 The Depot, Clapham Common

Attendees:

Adrian Darley (AD) (*Chair*)

Cllr Linda Bray (LB)

Cllr Ben Curtis (BC)

Cllr Alison Inglis-Jones (AIJ)

Member organisations:

Michael Barry (MB) (Clapham Society)

Lambeth Council:

Kevin Crook, Assistant Director Neighbourhoods
(KC)

Lara Mifsud-Bonici (LMB)

Community Representatives:

Charlee Boston

Phil Carey (PC) (*and Secretary*)

Petr Kaiser (PK) (*and Comms
Officer*)

Michael Mooney (MM)

Krishna Siva (KS) (*and Treasurer*)

Andrew Summers

Apologies received from Ed Alnutt, Gareth James, Joanna Reynolds and Kim Wiper

1: Matters arising from last meeting

Mud Club: LB reported that the Council's response to the Member's Enquiry she had submitted had explained why David Beldon was able to charge for access, and KC referred to the provisions of the Greater London Parks and Open Spaces) Act 1967. AS suggested the Clapham Society might be in the best position to summarise how the current position has been reached, as they took legal advice on this some 5 years ago. Lambeth's Decision Report seeking to regularise the situation had not yet been finalised because of staff turnover. The Chair encouraged CCMAC members to visit The Spinney to see how the Club operates.

Action 1: feed in CCMAC position to Decision Report following discussion as Matters Arising at June meeting, having allowed JR time to consider the advice received; MB to enquire if Mark Leffler (Clapham Society) could provide a paragraph on the history of the operation

Schools' use of Common: LMB understood that the site allocation for Eaton House School had now been accepted, but there remained the issue of what payment private schools (including also Parkgate and London Park) should be making for scheduling games use of the Common.

2: Ongoing Clapham Common works update:

Windmill Drive reconfiguration: work had finally started on site on 29 April, set to run for three months. LMB reported some initial setting up problems, including with access to the Bandstand Beds site, and the Chair and others expressed concern about incomplete and poorly signed diversion routing. Action was urgently needed to prevent cyclists damaging the Common by taking short-cuts. LMB will action installation of extra Heras fencing (and also proposed as a longer-term solution more attractive permanent barriers around the butterfly meadow, perhaps funded from PIL revenue). Signing needed to be improved, both directing the diversions cyclists and pedestrians must take, and also explaining what improvements are being made; the Chair took action on both in the days after the meeting.

Kiosk and ice cream sales: the kiosk by the central playground will reopen on 7 May, initially 1000-1700 weekdays only. Lambeth was now seeking someone to operate the ancillary 'ice cream trike' servicing other parts of the Common. LMB reported that the Highways enforcement team are ready to take action against unauthorised trading by ice cream vans, including by the Temperance Fountain.

Action 2A: LMB to provide details of trike job opportunity to PK who will publicise it through his social media channels

Unlicensed Music Events: CCMAC reviewed the state of readiness to counter illegal activity in the coming summer season. LMB reported that a notice had been successfully served on one UME organiser, and CCMAC urged her to ensure this action was well-publicised as a warning to others. There had unfortunately been delay in putting up new signing summing up the bylaw provisions, because of the need to appoint a new signing contractor. CCMAC felt it important that Lambeth Highways ensure all parking restrictions are enforced, and the Pear Tree Café should again remind its suppliers to ensure they always lock the access gate by Mount Pond after each use.

Installations: new benches and bollards are now being installed, although the Windmill Drive works may delay some. Portaloos will again be in place between Long Pond and the Events site from end June to early September. LMB confirmed that her team will shortly be renewing the faded markings, including 'give way' lines, needed for safe operation of the parallel N-S cycleway and footpath.

Relocation of sports pitches: CCMAC members had been alerted just ahead of the meeting to strong concerns from some West Side residents about noise disturbance and damage to the Common now that touch rugby was being played on the dog-free area north of the tennis courts. LMB explained that relocating the sport there was the best available option while the existing ground on the main Common was being restored; she noted there had been a higher than expected level of bookings for the new pitches, at weekends as well as weekday evenings, and she would therefore explore mitigation measures such as restricting usage of airhorns, and action to limit unofficial out-of-hours playing. CCMAC felt it important though to pursue a balanced solution which achieves the primary goal of promoting sport and exercise.

Action 2B: LMB to arrange substantive response to residents' complaints, and Chair/MM to consider value of CCMAC outlining its position in advance of that.

KC also confirmed the appointment of Lambeth's new Head of Parks, Paul Smith, who will take KC's place on CCMAC shortly. Paul brings valuable experience of parks management, including for Enable, in Wandsworth.

3: Parks Investment Levy: parameters for consideration by Masterplan Delivery Working Group

KC reported that expected revenue for 2024/5 was now down to around £86k, as the Lightopia event in December was now unlikely to proceed and Vegandale has been reduced to a single day; this figure assumes some income from regular events not yet confirmed. He provided a detailed breakdown just after the meeting. (The 2025/6 figure could be significantly higher, with the Royal Agricultural Society 'Expo' event still under negotiation.).

80% of the PIL fund will be available for investment in the Common: this means some £50k of headroom this year on which CCMAC should advise, given £8k is already earmarked for work on the landscape, conservation and biodiversity plan, and some further PIL-funded spend is planned on bollards and bins.

Action 3: Chair to convene meeting of Masterplan Delivery Working Group to prepare proposal for approval by CCMAC June meeting

4: Clapham Fair: CCMAC participation

CCMAC agreed it should run a stall at the fair, now confirmed for 7 September. The organiser Marie McCarthy, from Omnibus Theatre, had offered to brief CCMAC in person, but was unable to join this meeting.

Action 4: PC to confirm CCMAC presence and seek further detail by email rather than Marie presenting in person

5: Progress reports from Working Groups

- 1) *Access, Paths & Signage*: discussions with Hanna at Lambeth will resume once plans for 2024/5 PIL are firmed up
- 2) *Bandstand Concerts*: AD's Group has now confirmed 16 concerts, starting on 2 June and taking up all but seven Saturdays and Sundays through to mid-August. Given the scale of appetite from performers, CCMAC was keen to see those seven extra dates filled too, and noted that several acts might be up for a repeat booking without a second fee.

Action 5A: AD to circulate current programme, and liaise with LMB to ensure coordination with Events team; WG to consider how programme could be expanded

- 3) *Bowling Greens & Pavilion*: WG members had taken part in interviews with shortlisted bidders, and supported the decision by Lambeth to negotiate contract details with, for the Pavilion, a performing arts classroom group, and for the Kiosk, a café business with an established operation in Fulham. Both operations could be in place by late summer, and both intend to run year-round.
- 4) *Ecology & Biodiversity*: Group leads had been active with school-based initiatives around Earth Day on 22 April, and are overseeing further planting, including gorse bushes, working with the Friends of Clapham Common and Wild Clapham.
- 5) *Events*: staffing pressures mean Lucy Zaman had not yet responded to MM's request to be updated on Lambeth's planned Events Strategy. In the circumstances, the Working Group should proceed to develop its own strategy; an early priority should be liaising with Ann Kingsbury (chair of Brockwell Park Community Partners) re the precedent set for Brockwell Park.

Action 5B: MM to convene the Group, with Lucy joining in when she can

- 6) *Governance*: PC confirmed he will circulate the new Register of Interests to members to note and propose any further contributions.
- 7) *Masterplan Delivery*: see Item 3 above
- 8) *Sports*: the Group should follow up pitch allocation issues, and future plans for the Redgra site, as and when appropriate.

6: Member Group update

Clapham Society: MB is working up specific proposals for up to five signs explaining the history of the Common, for approval by the Society, which would then submit plans to CCMAC later this summer.

7: Any other business

None

8: Date of next meeting: Thursday 6 June 1900, at The Depot

Minutes drafted by Phil Carey, Secretary