

The Friends of the Scrubs
Registered Charity No. 1187120

Minutes of the Third Annual General Meeting of
The Friends of the Scrubs (registered charity no. 1187120) held at
Brickfields Hall, Shinfield Street, London W12 0HN

At 6.30 pm on Thursday 4 May 2023

Stephen Waley-Cohen, Chairman (SWC) welcomed all the attendees to the annual general meeting of the Friends. Apologies were received from Jack Perschke, Barbara Crowther, Maggie Tyler and Kate McVay. The trustees each introduced themselves.

The next item on the Agenda was formal approval of the minutes of the last general meeting held on the 10th May 2022 and previously circulated to all Friends. These were unanimously approved. SWC confirmed that the approved Minutes would be formally placed on the website.

The meeting then turned to the Trustees' Annual Report 2022-23 which had been previously circulated. Meetings of the trustees are held throughout the year, always in advance of the Wormwood Scrubs Charitable Trust (WSCT) meetings and at other times as necessary to discuss items of concern and interest to the Friends. Our main purpose is to ensure the Scrubs is maintained for the benefit of the people of the metropolis in accordance with the original Act of Parliament and to hold LBHF and the contractors on the Scrubs, IDVerde, to account. All minutes of our meetings are circulated to all Friends and are put on the website. We also send out the links to the WSCT meetings, held quarterly, usually online. Stephen reminded the meeting that Miriam and he are non-voting representatives of the Friends at those meetings and Friends are encouraged to watch to be aware of what is going on. Both representatives are very active in the meetings.

HS2: as reported we are expecting the wire fencing to be removed imminently and the land handed back. However, this has been delayed by a few weeks as the new grass needs a little more time to get going. Stephanie Gray's memorial bench will be re-instated once the fencing is removed. Stephen reminded the meeting that Stephanie was an original founding member of the Friends.

The Grounds Maintenance contract which began last year is performing better than what was previously in place as set out in the Report. As also reported we are hopeful that LNR status will be forthcoming shortly from Natural England for the meadow area.

The Ecological Masterplan is expected to get underway shortly with a 10 year management and maintenance programme funded by HS2. Osama will cover this in more detail in his talk.

Friends will recall Secret Cinema's proposals for an event on the Scrubs this Summer which have been paused for at least a year. A lot of Friends wrote to Secret Cinema and their Councillors to object.

Friends were reminded of the baseline survey and Scrubs Watch which is ongoing co-ordinated by Kate McVay and is being funded for 10 years. It is important to be aware of what the Scrubs contains and hedgehog cameras have been recording their presence. One of the Friends present said that she has seen a hedgehog on the Scrubs and she identified the area and the approximate date of the sighting.

LCS – improvements by Kensington Dragons of the football facilities are expected to get underway shortly. Discussions with Thames Valley Harriers for improvements to their clubhouse are still ongoing. The Friends are looking at ways to ensure a planned comprehensive approach to modernising the facilities. There was a question as to whether the Lido proposals are still live. Stephen confirmed that the LCS is still being considered along with other sites in West London including Gunnersbury. Any improvements to the Stadium will not preclude the Lido.

Osama confirmed that the LBHF June Cabinet is expected to approve the PSPO. Professional dog walkers will be limited to walking up to 4 dogs. It is hoped that the PSPO will bring about behavioural change by introducing some improvements to facilities for dog walkers on the Scrubs eg compostible bags. One of those present spoke of her fear of walking on the Scrubs with her dog because of out of control dogs being walked by professional dog walkers.

The OPDC have not yet met with the WSCT despite having confirmed dates in the diary on 2 occasions, cancelling each with short notice.

We organised the first ever Scrubs Dog Show on the 31st July 2022 last year. More than 120 people attended and all our local councillors and our local MP were present. It was a fun family day out. We're planning to do it again this year on the 30th July. Volunteers are needed for the day so please do put your names forward.

The event was sponsored by Winkworths local estate agents and they propose to carry on sponsoring the event this year. This contributed to our financial position. Waitrose also made a charitable donation to our funds this year with a cheque presented to our chair. Our financial position remains stable with donations received covering our outgoings. There is no proposal to charge for membership of the Friends, so as not to discourage anyone. The meeting was asked whether there was agreement to the Annual Report being signed, which was agreed unanimously.

The next item on the Agenda was the retirement and election of trustees. Miriam Shea is standing down this year after many years and we would like to thank her for all her unstinting work for the Friends since it was set up. She was one of the first representatives of the Friends (along with David Jeffreys) on the WSCT when it was established about 10 years ago. She has a fund of knowledge about the Scrubs and she will be sorely missed. The other two trustees who are retiring (Sarah Johnson and Carmel McLoughlin) are willing to stand again for election, and we are pleased to have two other Friends (Sarah Abrahamart and Sue Wilson) who have put their names forward. Therefore there is an election to choose trustees for the three places available. Unfortunately for personal reasons Sue was unable to be at the meeting. The election took place by a show of hands of those present and those who had voted by proxy in accordance with the Constitution. Sarah Johnson, Carmel McLoughlin and Sarah Abrahamart were duly elected with clear majorities in each case. Sarah Abrahamart was welcomed as a trustee. Faye Thomas will take over from Miriam as the other representative for the Friends at the WSCT meetings, along with Stephen.

The election was followed by a short talk by Osama El-Amin, Trust Manager of Wormwood Scrubs Charitable Trust on current activities and plans. Osama started work with LBHF 7 months ago having worked with charitable organisations previously. The charitable purposes of the Scrubs is clear – it is the health and recreation of the inhabitants of the Metropolis of London as a whole. He spoke of the challenges around the WSCT not having a separate bank account, etc and all activities having to go through LBHF who are the sole trustee of the Scrubs. He would like to develop a brand and strategy for the WSCT so that it is readily identifiable and has more autonomy. He wants to promote volunteering opportunities on the Scrubs via Hub website, with activities also available on there. There are challenges ahead with maintaining the quality of work under the general maintenance contract and changes in

IDVerde personnel. Important to maintain the level of service promised in it. The Masterplan is now finalised and there are two new contracts going to be procured – one for capital works and one for the 10 year maintenance. His colleague Vicki Abel is dealing with those. He spoke about the Report from LDT who suggested that the Friends should be more diverse. He felt that the WSCT should be more inclusive and he intends to promote that by inviting more diverse people to activities on the Scrubs. For example, he intends to hold workshops once a fortnight at the Old Oak Community Centre for bid-writing on Friday afternoons. He wants to change behaviour of the dog walkers by having more facilities available for them as mentioned above. This should help with the introduction of the PSPO later in the year. He welcomes input and discussion from all users of the Scrubs.

The meeting closed at approximately 7.45pm with a vote of thanks proposed by David Jeffreys to Stephen and all the Trustees for their efforts over the last year. Friends were encouraged to stay and chat over refreshments after the meeting.