

**Trustees Meeting Minutes**

Zoom Meeting

**Monday 20 January 2025****Present:**

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| Dave Morris (Chair)                    | London Friends of Green Spaces Network (LFGN) +<br>Haringey Friends of Parks Forum |
| Paul Ely (Research)                    | Parks Community UK   |
| Sarah Royal                            | Birmingham Open Spaces Forum (BOSF)  |
| Shelly Quinton-Hulme (Treasurer)       | Friends of Trafford's Parks and Green Spaces                                       |
| Michelle Furtado (Network Coordinator) | Green Tides (Adur & Green Spaces Worthing Partnership)                             |
| Nicola Dempsey                         | Sheffield Green Spaces Forum   |
| Nigel Sharp (Secretary)                | NW Parks Friends Forum   |

**Minutes of Previous Meeting (AGM/Trustees 16.11.24; Trustees 16.10.24) and Matters Arising**

Minutes from the previous Trustees meetings were agreed.

The Annual report has been updated and submitted to the Charity Commission. MF confirmed this has been uploaded onto the NFPGS website (Resources).

Following the meeting there is a need to review the membership and group contacts, identify gaps in the network and revise the NFPGS database. NS/ DM to share details and discuss as necessary.

It was agreed that developing NFPGS working groups would provide an opportunity to engage and involve other members in the organisation (see item later) with potential 'associate trustee' role. SQ-H outlined how this can help involve others in activity and discussion, and help succession planning and agreed to share a role description prepared by Friends of Victoria Park, (see Appendix).

SQ-H confirmed ND has been registered as a NFPGS trustee with the Charity Commission.

**NS/ DM/ MF****SQ-H****NFPGS Update****Parks Working Group (PWG)**

DM updated that there had been a launch meeting late 2024 with reps from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and senior reps of key organisations from the sector (including NFPGS). Terms of reference for the group are being finalised with key themes to include: Community Empowerment; Funding; Staff/ Skills, and Planning / Policy.

The next meeting is due 30.1.25 focusing on Community Empowerment – DM to lead. DM noted optimism that the Group (in some ways a re-launch of the previous Parks Action Group) will have more attention to the real needs of practical operational issues with greater input from local authority reps, including the PWG being chaired by Chris

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| <p>Worman, South Derbyshire District Council, a long established Green Flag judge and parks champion.</p> <p>PE reported possible need for academic interest in representation at the Parks Working Group. Dave to raise. [Update: Our Trustee Nicola Dempsey has now been accepted as the second NFPGS rep in the PWG as she is active in her Forum as well as being a noted greenspace researcher/academic.]</p> <p>DM added that the plight of children’s playgrounds had been subject of a Westminster MPs debate 8.1.25, where the relevant Minister as well as the key reps from the LibDems and Conservative Parties all recognized the need to reverse the loss of playgrounds due to LA’s lack of funding. Details at: <a href="https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2025-01-08/debates/2AFCD5FB-339C-4B0A-96EC-9F6A81D8B36B/Playgrounds">https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2025-01-08/debates/2AFCD5FB-339C-4B0A-96EC-9F6A81D8B36B/Playgrounds</a></p>   |                  |
| <p><b>NFPGS initiatives, projects, campaigning</b></p>  |                  |
| <p><b>Research</b></p> <p>PE updated – an inaugural NFPGS Working Group meeting (4.12.24) brought together PE, ND, Tom Bliss (Leeds Parks &amp; Green Spaces Forum) and Chris Blythe (BOSF). This reviewed background/ current activity and started to draft group terms of reference. A further meeting took place on the day of this Trustees meeting including Leeds based academics Anna Barker and Emma Oldroyd. PE shared update notes ahead of the meeting, including a summary of discussion items which included some key relevant research priorities for our movement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) relationships with local authorities</li> <li>(b) the needs of groups and forums</li> </ul> <p>DM added research has not yet been discussed at the PWG but noted the long term gap in sector provision following the closure of CabeSpace. DM has previously circulated a summary of sector research to our parksforumsuk list and agreed to share again. <a href="https://natfedparks.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/NFPGS-Some-research-and-reports-2016-2024.pdf">https://natfedparks.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/NFPGS-Some-research-and-reports-2016-2024.pdf</a></p> <p>Re. research item (a) the 2022 AGM (5.11.22) included a really useful discussion on developing good relations between area forums and park services/ LAs. Our recent AGM also addressed the issue of the support needs of Forums.</p> <p>Another topic is how best to disseminate information to members – perhaps including a dedicated You Tube channel. DM added that the London Friends of Green Spaces Network (LFGN) has held and recorded many important online discussions and seminars and previously stored and shared material this way. We agreed there is scope to consider this as a model and collate support materials.</p> <p><b>NFPGS Working Groups</b></p> <p>Discussion followed about additional working group themes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Campaigning group – DM, SQ-H and ND initially agreed to join this.</li> <li>• Funding Group – SQ-H, PE and NS initially agreed to join this.</li> </ul> <p>With regard to funding, issues include funding options, match funding, capacity to</p> | <p><b>DM</b></p> |

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| <p>prepare/deliver projects. DM noted that NFPGS has previously delivered successful initiatives, notably coordinating 9 regional conferences for the Parks Action Group in 2019, and inheriting and developing the Parks Community UK platform (set up by the Friends of Lordship Rec).</p>   |   |
| <p><b>Future meetings</b></p>  |   |
| <p>It was agreed that the next General meeting will take place 10am-12noon Saturday 22 March with a theme of 'how to create and sustain a strong area forum'. This will particularly be an opportunity to target some new and emerging area groups.</p> <p>Each working group will aim to meet prior to this general session – the research group is due to meet again 3.3.25.</p>   |   |
| <p><b>AOB</b></p>  |   |
| <p>NS attended the APSE Network Meeting for Parks Maintenance (zoom, 14.1.25) to provide an introduction to NFPGS and highlight how community groups can benefit LAs, and how LAs can support, and maximize the potential from effective community empowerment. Following this he was contacted by Humera Sultan (University of Birmingham) re. Phd research support and agreed to share details with SR and PE.</p> <p>PE noted a need to publicise future research surveys to support the working groups' ambitions – DM added that NFPGS contacts include member groups – Area Forums as well as individual groups on the newsletter list, in addition to potential additional contacts who have engaged through the Better Friends tool (approx.. 500 groups now). There will be a need to consider those relevant/ appropriate for future research.</p> | <p><b>NS</b></p> <p><b>PE/DM/MF</b></p> |
| <p><b>Date of Next Meeting</b></p>   |   |
| <p><b>Trustees meeting: 7.30pm, Monday 10 March (by zoom)</b><br/> <i>[for Trustees and any Forum reps interested in helping with NFPGS work]</i><br/> Join Zoom Meeting<br/> <a href="https://us04web.zoom.us/j/9213929960?pwd=Y1QyYi9iK2ZjY2VrdFk3RVh2Qm5Sdz09">https://us04web.zoom.us/j/9213929960?pwd=Y1QyYi9iK2ZjY2VrdFk3RVh2Qm5Sdz09</a><br/> Meeting ID: 921 392 9960 Password: FOVPS</p> <p><b>General meeting 10am, Saturday 22 March (zoom)</b><br/> <i>[for all Area Forum reps]</i><br/> Zoom link as above.</p> <p><b>NOTE:</b><br/> Additional Working Group Meetings to be arranged separately, directly between participant trustees.</p>   | <p><b>All</b></p>                       |



## **Appendix: Associate Trustee Role Description**

### **Vision:**

To support the trustees and staff of Friends of Victoria Park, Stretford, to deliver their vision, mission and aims.

### **Expectations:**

Associate Trustees of the Friends of Victoria Park, Stretford [FOVPS] promote the interests, welfare, and development of the charity. Each Associate Trustee contributes to FOVPS in his or her individual way, and each contribution is critical to the long-term success of the charity. Each Associate Trustee should serve FOVPS and our community by:

- Becoming educated in the history and plans of the Friends of Victoria Park, Stretford and participating actively in FOVPS governance.
- Understanding and supporting the current priorities and activities in which FOVPS engages; and
- Supporting the Friends within the community and with outside groups.

### **Responsibilities:**

FOVPS Associate Trustees are expected to participate in the following avenues of involvement:

- Attend and participate in the Annual General Meeting.
- Prepare for, attend, and participate in at least one specific area of our work.
- Participate in ad-hoc committees as appropriate.
- Provide your profile for the website and update as necessary.
- Identify and nominate potential new Associate Trustees and nominate potential Trustees.
- Advocate for and support the FOVPS to outside groups when necessary.
- Support FOVPS fundraising and/or outreach events or activities.

### **Requirements:**

Associate Trustees serve two-year terms.

Candidates must have enthusiasm for volunteer service, commitment to the Stretford community, and a passion for the vision and mission of FOVPS. FOVPS is committed to diversity and seeks board members who represent the diverse community that the Stretford community provides.

### **Reappointment:**

Reappointment consideration will be based on the entirety of involvement in FOVPS and will be decided by a vote of Trustees.