

**Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> December 2011**  
**The Scout Hut, Evesham Road**

**Attendees:**

Nicky Brown (Chairman), Charlotte Evans (Deputy Chairman), Geraldine King (Park Manager), Sue Banks (Support Officer - Outreach, Sustainability and Biodiversity, West Ham Park), Catherine Tye, Peter Kearsey, Janice Kearsey, Ron Innell, Colm Kerrigan, Jo Barker, Larry Howell, Marlene Sidaway, Ann Easter, Christopher Owen

**Visitor:** Rebecca Swan

**Apologies:**

Joel Farrell, Lindsay Jones, Grace Musonda, Bob Smith

**Introduction:**

Nicky welcomed the group to the meeting and introduced our visitor, Rebecca Swan, a former Friend of West Ham Park and freelance museums educator whose work is closely linked with the National Maritime Museum and the Museum of London in Docklands.

**Minutes of the last meeting**

These were read and agreed as a true record.

**Agree future meeting dates 2012**

Ann Easter pointed out that the first Thursday in the month clashes with local Labour party meetings. Wednesday evenings were suggested but after further discussions the following Thursday meetings were agreed:

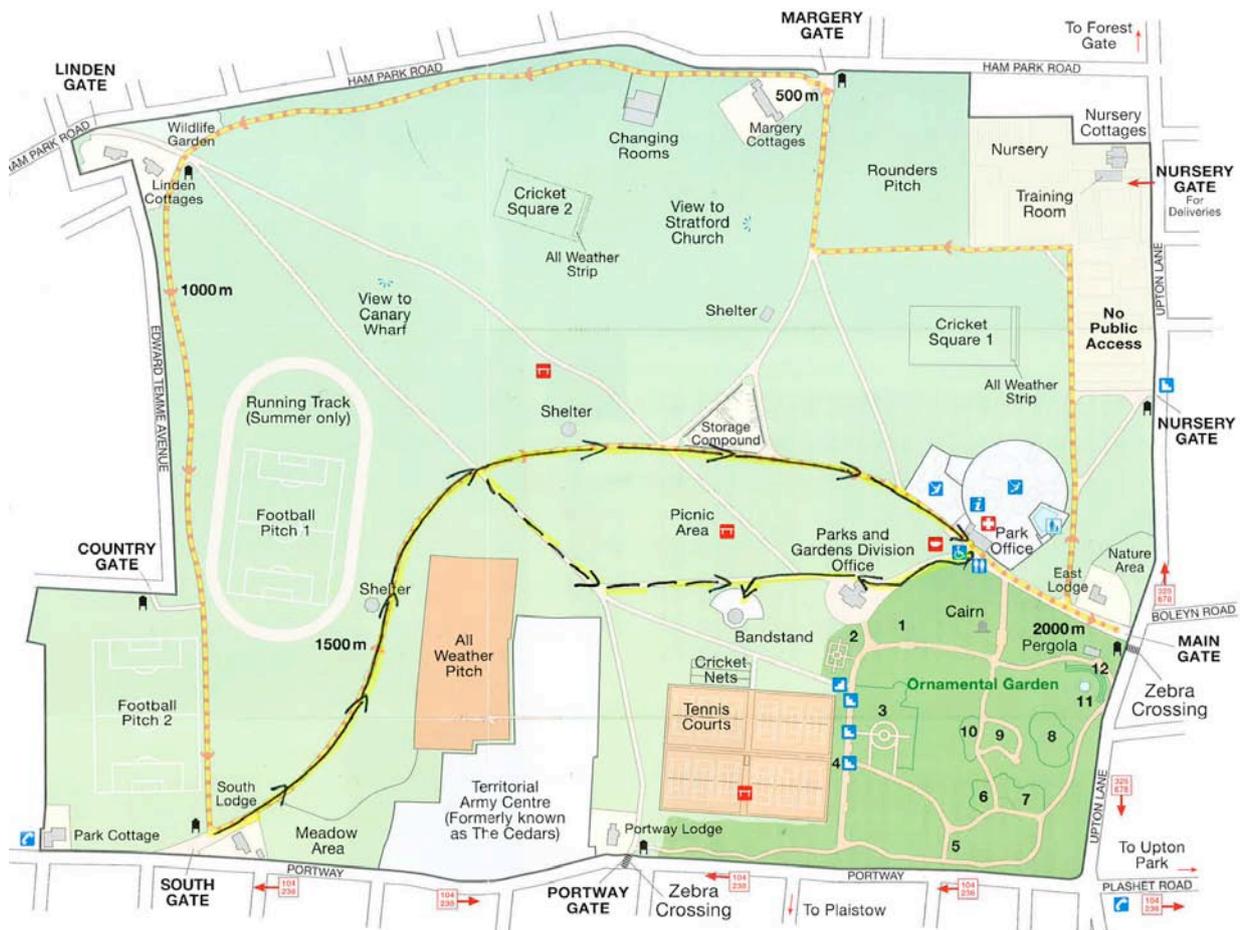
- Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> March
- Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> June AGM
- Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> September (second Thursday in the month)
- Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> December (second Thursday in the month)

**Bird Survey**

The monthly bird surveys carried out by the Friends are sent to the London Natural History Society (LNHS) to add to their records. It was great to see that West Ham Park has had some entries published in the LNHS London Bird Report 2008 available to purchase from the LNHS. Mistle Thrush can be seen in the park in unusually large numbers for an urban area and this had an entry in the London Bird Report. Bob Smith was commended for his recent bird report which was easy to understand and very informative. The January and February surveys need to be arranged, Lyndsay Jones and Geraldine King to advise Bob Smith ASAP.

## Park in the Dark on Friday December 9<sup>th</sup>

Park staff will bring tables and materials to South Gate. Volunteers will arrive by 3.45pm to set up. Jan will help Stella with refreshments. About 20 beavers and 15 cubs will attend. The procession will run from South Gate past the Leaf-yard, around the edge of the Garden and past the office to the Bandstand. Charlotte will lead, with key people strategically placed at the sides with torches; Lee will follow in the buggy in case of emergency. ROUTE BELOW ON NEXT PAGE. Lanterns will be placed out of harm's way on a table at the side of the bandstand. Seasonal music will be played on CD; Charlotte and others may lead some carol-singing. It was felt that a better focus should be found for next year's Park in the Dark.



## Proposed events for 2012

### Green to Gold

Geraldine explained that Green to Gold is a City of London Initiative to encourage local residents to get more regularly involved in outdoor activities and sports. All Friends' events in 2012 will be marketed under the Green to Gold banner. As part of this project, the Park would like to introduce a Tennis League.

### History Day: June 2012

This was the only proposed 2012 event to be discussed. As the Lord Mayor opened the Park in 1854 it was agreed that History Day should be moved from March to coincide approximately with the present Lord Mayor's visit on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> June.

Geraldine will check when the Queen is due to reopen Victoria Park, and the date of our own event will be decided at the next meeting.

Rebecca Swan outlined her ideas for Victorian-style family sports events based on the programme for an event held in 1897 to celebrate Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. These Victorian-style sports could be the basis for a week of sports days for local schools held in the "Leaf Pile" section of the park. Generous prizes were given in 1897; Geraldine suggested Green to Gold T-shirts for 2012. For the Friends' event, the Park has a large collection of archive photos; a chronology of characters and events from the park's history (eg Dr. Fothergill, the Gurney family, Queen Victoria) could be displayed on the playground railings. Newham History Archive holds useful material on the local area. Local schools could be invited to display an exhibition of photographs. The TA and Sea Cadets could be asked to appear in historical uniform. Newham Music Academy could be asked to provide a local children's brass band – which would be cheaper than an adult band, would add to the atmosphere and help to encourage other children to take up music. Other ideas included Maypole dancing, Bollywood dancing, steel band, vintage tractors. Ideas for crafts events included boat-making by the paddling pool, competitions for period costumes or for decorated parasols. To create a longer-term legacy Rebecca volunteered to seek funding to finance an Archive project, which she would be happy to do with local children.

After lengthy discussions, it was agreed that Rebecca would e-mail her ideas to Geraldine for forwarding on to the Friends. Friends will be invited to add their own ideas but, more importantly, to say which aspects they would be willing to research and take responsibility for.

### **Additional "History Day" meeting**

All Friends who are willing to be proactively involved with the History Day are invited to attend a follow-up meeting on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> January at 7pm, venue TBC but probably the Scout Hut.

### **AOB**

The park is currently putting together a Management Plan for the next five years and Geraldine has suggested that it would be very beneficial to consult with the Friends. She will forward a date for the New Year for anyone from the Friends to come and discuss the proposals. The park will provide a working lunch and the session will run for an afternoon. GK to forward dates.

### **Future Meeting Dates**

The next History Day meeting will be Thursday 26 January 2012  
The next Friends' meeting will be Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2012

Thanking everyone for their input and support, Nicky closed the meeting at 20.30