

# Constitution

## Friends of Nursery Row Park

Adopted on the 18<sup>th</sup> day of February 2008

### Name

The name of the group is 'Friends of Nursery Row Park', called the 'Friends' in this constitution.

### Aims

- To protect and enhance Nursery Row Park, Walworth SE17, a 1.76ha (2007) open space within the Elephant and Castle Opportunity area.
- To help ensure that the Elephant Regeneration programme respects and protects the interests of the existing and future users of this large area of open space.

### Objectives

- To improve the ongoing care of the park and make changes which will be of benefit to the residents visiting the park and to the flora and fauna living in it. The latest renovation was left unfinished by Southwark Council for reasons which are believed to be because it was incompatible with the Stead St early housing site plans, part of the E&C regeneration program.
- To improve the level of protection the site is given. Currently the park is given the lowest level of protection ("Local Park", "Other Open Space" Southwark Plan site OS76), and is not classified as a "site of importance for nature conservation" (neither local, Borough nor Metropolitan importance). We will aim for inclusion of Nursery Row Park within the list of "Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation" in recognition of its habitats and historic core area of mature trees which originally formed the Walworth Recreation Ground (inaugurated in the 1890s).
- To work in partnership with Southwark London Borough Council or other interested parties, to help manage and generally look after the Park in a manner that will enhance its value to the community. In particular, to assist and support the activities of the Parks service and the Community Wardens in protecting and caring for the planting and facilities of the park, and ensuring the safety and security of those using the park both for recreation and as a green pedestrian link connecting local streets.
- To raise awareness and the profile of the park, making special efforts to encourage existing residents and the new inhabitants of the Stead St early housing site to make use of and take an interest in the park, and to record its long history.
- To formulate action plans to include a variety of projects, as the group sees fit.

## **Membership**

The 'Friends' group is open to membership by any member of the public willing to abide by the constitution of the group; this may or may not be on payment of an annual subscription charge. Membership subscription charges shall be determined at the Annual General Meeting. No current annual subscription charge is payable.

## **Officers**

The group shall elect a committee consisting of not less than 3 members, elected to serve for 1 year. From amongst the Committee a chairperson, secretary and treasurer will be elected.

Other members may be appointed to hold/undertake particular responsibilities within the group e.g. fund-raising/events co-ordination/nature conservation.

## **Meetings**

An Annual General Meeting shall be held each year during February or March at a convenient local place as determined by the Committee.

The chairperson may convene a Special General Meeting at any time on 30 days written Notice.

A Quorum of an Annual or Special General Meeting shall be 10 members or one tenth of the membership, whichever is the greater.

Minutes of Ordinary, Special and General meetings shall be taken by the Secretary and approved at the next meeting.

## **Finances**

- Any money raised shall be used to further the aims of the 'Friends' and for no other purpose
- A bank account may be opened in the name of the 'Friends' at a location to be determined
- The group shall decide the signatories to any account set up in the name of the group (three out of three signatories to sign any cheque).
- A simple written note of the 'Friends' financial position will from time to time be produced and available at meetings of the committee.
- No member shall derive any financial benefit from the 'Friends', except for payment of reasonable expenses.
- No money will be paid out in the name of the 'Friends' without a receipt being presented.

## **Annual General Meeting**

An Annual General Meeting of the group shall be held every year. All members shall be notified not less than 10 days before the meeting and an agenda will be circulated. The business of the AGM will be:

- To receive the Chairman's report of the previous years activities.
- To receive the Treasurer's report and accounts.
- To elect Committee Members for the following year.
- To conduct any other business that the Committee may see fit to include.

### **Committee Powers:**

To further the objectives the Committee may exercise the following powers:

- To set up a bank account in the name of the 'Friends'.
- To raise funds and receive contributions, donations and otherwise, provided that the group shall not undertake any permanent trading activity.
- To levy subscriptions/membership fees if necessary.
- To produce leaflets/posters to publicise the groups activities.
- To hold meetings and events in the park.
- To pay necessary expenses involved in the running of the 'Friends'.

### **Election of Committee:**

Election of the Committee is to take place at the Annual General Meeting, as follows:

- Names for the committee will be put forward either by process of nominating and seconding, or by people volunteering to stand. A vote (if necessary) will be taken by a show of hands, or in the case of sensitive issues, by a ballot (conducted there & then).
- The Annual General Meeting will elect a group of members to form a committee: the Annual General Meeting will not elect people to specific posts.
- All voting to be on the basis of "one person - one vote".
- The person who chairs the elections part of the agenda should not be the existing chairperson.

### **Size and Composition of the Committee**

The Committee shall consist of 3 -10 members of the 'Friends' elected at the Annual General Meeting. This group of members of the 'Friends' shall choose officers from amongst themselves, as follows:

- A Chairperson, a Secretary and a Treasurer will be elected either by process of nominating and seconding, or by people volunteering to stand. A vote (if necessary) will be taken by a show of hands, or in the case of sensitive issues, by a ballot (conducted there & then).
- Other officer roles (e.g. Events Manager, etc.) can be created as the Committee wishes. All officer roles can be jointly held if the Committee judges this to be sensible.
- The Committee shall have the power to co-opt to the Committee members, (at any stage), who will then be entitled to full committee status for the duration of their co-option, provided that the total voting membership of the Committee shall not exceed 10 persons.
- The Committee shall have the power to co-opt non-members to the Committee, (at any stage), who have a positive contribution to make to the aims of the Friends. It is envisaged in this Constitution that such non-members might reasonably include the Councillors for the East Walworth Ward of the London Borough of Southwark, the Member of Parliament for Old Southwark and Bermondsey, the Member of the Greater London Assembly for Lambeth and Southwark, the representative of the Browning Tenants and Residents Association [etc.]

## **Committee Meetings**

The Committee should meet regularly: a minimum of 1 meeting in a year, with the dates decided by the Chairperson after full consultation with committee members. The year to run from the date of the last Annual General Meeting,

## **Convening Committee Meetings**

The date of each Committee meeting will be confirmed at the previous meeting, and in the Minutes. The Secretary will be responsible for reminding / informing members of forthcoming meeting(s), normally in writing, giving appropriate notice.

## **Subcommittees**

The Committee may appoint subcommittees to work on specific issues. Each subcommittee must report back to the Committee, and be guided by them if necessary. In the event of a disagreement, the Committee can overrule the subcommittee. A subcommittee should consist of a minimum of 1 existing committee member, and has the power to co-opt up to 4 members per subcommittee. Each subcommittee can decide for itself whether it wants to appoint a chairperson.

Co-opted subcommittee members may attend main committee meetings, but may not vote at these meetings.

## **Committee Attendance**

Committee members who cannot attend a meeting should give their apologies to the Secretary, if possible before the relevant meeting, but if not, as soon as possible afterwards.

Members who miss 3 consecutive (scheduled) meetings, or more than half the year's scheduled meetings, may be asked to leave the committee.

## **Committee Quorums**

The quorum for the Committee shall be 3 committee members.

## **Public Access**

All meetings of the Friends shall be open to the public without restriction. Members of the public can participate fully in all meetings and can contribute to meeting quorum requirements.

## **Equal Opportunities**

The 'Friends' will ensure that everyone is given the opportunity to become involved fully and equally, regardless of race, gender, age, sexuality, disability or religion.

## **Community Cohesion**

The 'Friends' will ensure that community cohesion is actively promoted and will seek both the active participation and empowerment of all publics.

## **Amendments to the Constitution**

If amendments to the Constitution are necessary, members will be informed in writing and given the opportunity to consider and vote on the amendments. The amendments will only be made if there is a two-thirds majority vote of all members.

## **Dissolution**

'The Friends' may be dissolved by a resolution passed by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting at an Annual General Meeting. This resolution may give instructions for the disposal of any assets held by or in the name of "The Friends of Nursery Row Park" provided that if any property remains after the payment of all debts and liabilities, such property shall not be given or distributed among the members but shall be given to other organisations having similar aims and conservation objectives as 'The Friends'.

THIS CONSTITUTION was adopted as the Constitution of the FRIENDS OF NURSERY ROW PARK at a Meeting held in 67 Balfour Street, Walworth, SE17 on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2008.

Signed        Luke Miller..... (Chairperson)

Signed        Jim Rossiter..... (Secretary)

Signed        Allen Gillespie..... (Treasurer)