



## **WALWORTH COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

MINUTES of the Walworth Community Council held on Tuesday 1 March 2011 at 6.30 pm at Walworth Methodist Church, London, SE5 0EN

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**PRESENT:** Councillor Martin Seaton (Chair)  
Councillor Catherine Bowman  
Councillor Patrick Diamond  
Councillor Lorraine Lauder MBE  
Councillor Darren Merrill  
Councillor Abdul Mohamed

**OFFICER SUPPORT:** Tim Cutts, Team Leader, Planning Policy  
Kate Johnson, Planning Policy Officer  
Dipesh Patel, Principal Enforcement Officer  
Pauline Bonner, Neighbourhood Coordinator  
Lee Griffiths, Community Council Development Officer  
Alexa Coates, Principal Constitutional Officer

### **1. INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME**

The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

### **2. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillors: Coyle, Garfield and Morrissey.

### **3. DISCLOSURE OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS**

There were none.

### **4. ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR DEEMS URGENT**

There were none.

## 5. MINUTES

### RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 24 January 2011 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the chair.

## 6. DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS (IF ANY)

There were none.

## 7. COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

The chair made the following community announcements:

### United St Saviour's Charity

The charity were promoting information about flats available for older people in Southwark and grants available to community groups.

### Air Quality Strategy consultation

The chair invited Dipesh Patel, Principal Enforcement Officer, to explain the consultation process for the air quality strategy and action plan consultation. The strategy was being updated and the council had 20 measures to improve air quality in the borough. Dipesh invited residents to get involved in the consultation and give their view of whether these measures were right for Southwark. The consultation was available on the council's website and residents could request a hard copy of the strategy from Dipesh. Dipesh also informed residents of a free text service, 'Air Text' which gave updates on pollution levels for the following day.

### Census 2011

The chair encouraged residents to take part in the census in 2011, explaining that the population figures gathered effected the level of grant funding the council received from the government. The population figures taken in the last census were inaccurate and this affected and it was important to ensure this didn't happen in 2011. The chair explained that the data collected in the census was not used for any other purposes.

### Your Service Your Choice

The housing consultation would be sent to all tenants in the Borough and would ask for residents priorities in how to spend the housing budget. The chair encouraged residents to respond to the consultation.

### Council Assembly 6 April – Themed debate

Cllr Mohamed, cabinet member for Equalities and Community Engagement, informed residents that following the recommendations of the Democracy Commission the council

would be having its first themed debate on “The future for Southwark- developing our plan for the Borough”. Cllr Mohamed encouraged residents to keep an eye on the website where they will be able to post their views, or even submit a question or raise a deputation at the April meeting from mid-March: [www.southwark.gov.uk/democracy](http://www.southwark.gov.uk/democracy) and to attend Council Assembly on April 6th from 7pm at the Town Hall to hear the debate

## **8. OPEN SPACES IN WALWORTH**

The chair explained that the theme of the meeting was open spaces in Walworth and the intention was to look at what was classed as open space in Walworth, how it was used and what space should be designated as open space.

### **8.1 PLANNING POLICY PRESENTATION**

Kate Johnson, planning policy officer, the planning policy context for open spaces in Walworth. Kate explained that national, regional and local guidance which governed the council's approach to planning on open spaces. Strategic Policy 11 in the Core Strategy sets out the Council's approach to open spaces and states:

*We will improve, protect and maintain a network of open spaces and green corridors that will make places attractive and provide sport, leisure and food growing opportunities for a growing population. We will protect and improve habitats for a variety of wildlife. We will continue to protect important open spaces from inappropriate development, including Metropolitan Open Land (MOL), Borough Open Land (BOL) and Other Open Space (OOS). We will also promote and improve access to and links between open spaces.*

Kate outlined where the open spaces in the Walworth community council area were and explained that these had been reviewed in 2009 and that this would be reviewed again as part of the work for the Open Spaces Strategy for Southwark. Workshops would be held in May/June 2011 with the final strategy being agreed later in the year.

Tim Cutts, planning policy team leader, took questions from the floor relating to: the effect of the London plan on the Southwark Plan, the prioritisation of section 106 funding for open space and the effect of the localism bill on planning guidance. In response Tim explained that the London Plan would be taken into account in any policy changes made by Southwark but that the Mayor had not indicated there would be any changes to how metropolitan open land is protected. Affordable housing and transport are the highest priorities in terms of section 106 funding and the Southwark Section 106 Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) sets out standard charges per dwelling for open space. The government had announced their intention to abolish regional spatial strategies but these would not apply to Southwark as the London Plan was to remain. The localism bill suggested a greater role for neighbourhood planning but it was unclear how this would operate in practice as the bill had not yet received royal assent.

### **8.2 BANKSIDE OPEN SPACES TRUST PRESENTATION**

Helen, from the Bankside Open Spaces Trust gave a presentation on what the trust did. Helen explained that the trust had been formed to help people interested in protecting and

developing local parks in the Bankside area. The trust brings together different steering groups and assists them in navigating bureaucracy and securing funding. The organisation is run by local trustees and is dependent on grant funding.

The trust is involved in supporting local projects such as gardening clubs and also works to raise awareness of planning developments such as the Southwark Plan. Helen explained that the benefit of an organisation like the trust allowed different groups to work together and think more strategically.

Helen took a questions relating to food growing initiatives in the area. Helen advised that the Bankside trust had secured funding for an initiative in the SE1 area. She advised that local TRA were a good place to start to build interest in food growing schemes.

### **8.3 OPEN SPACES WORKSHOPS**

The meeting broke into workshops on the following issues:

- Workshop 1 – Types of open spaces
- Workshop 2 – Quality of open space in Walworth
- Workshop 3 – Creating a new network of green spaces

The notes from the workshops are attached as an appendix to the minutes.

### **8.4 SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION**

The groups fed back some key points from their discussions:

#### Group 1

- Value of diversity of open spaces
- Open spaces can cater for a whole range of activities
- The need for natural and semi natural environments
- Open space can bring people together and provide a safe environment for a range of activities

#### Group 2

- Importance of community involvement in protecting and developing open spaces
- The need to keep open space green
- Would like to make East Street greener without impacting on the market
- People can bring ideas of what they see all over London back to Walworth to develop the open space
- It is important to involve the community and develop spaces where people can gather safely
- The importance of keeping open spaces safe so people don't feel intimidated to use them

#### Group 3

- Safeguarding spaces
- Strategic vision
- Open space to consider spiritual needs and wellbeing
- Build on green links

#### Group 4

- Need for diversity
- Would like green links to be developed e.g. a route up to Elephant and Castle uniting Walworth
- Develop an umbrella of organisation to influence the council

The chair asked residents and in particular friends of parks groups if they would be interested in the idea of developing a network of groups across Walworth. Residents supported the concept.

Peter Wright, chair of East Walworth Links, added that they would like to invite people to attend their next meeting on 24 March and were happy to work with other groups in the Walworth area.

Residents commented that it would be helpful if any network could be provided support from a council project manager similar to that which support Cleaner Greener Safer schemes. It was also requested that the network was formed as a sub-committee of the community council. The chair advised that this would need to be investigated from a constitutional and resources perspective.

It was also requested that the community council lobby to ensure that any new proposal contains a requirement for s106 funding for green space preservation.

Cllr Diamond commented that he felt the planning process should take more account of the view of local people and referenced the recent application at Carter Place Gardens.

The chair suggested that the proposals for the establishment of a local network of friends of parks come back to the next meeting so that the constitutional and resource implications could be investigated.

#### **RESOLVED**

That the following motion be agreed:

That the community council encourage the establishment of an informal local network of friends of parks and interested parties, in the Walworth area.

The motion was proposed by Cllr Mohamed and seconded by Cllr Seaton.

#### **9. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

The following public questions were submitted and the chair advised written responses would be provided at the next meeting:

How are the council budget cuts going to affect the Cleaner Greener Safer Programme in the Walworth area?

**10. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS**

**RESOLVED**

That the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1 and 2, Access to Information Procedure rules of the Constitution.

**11. SCHOOL GOVERNOR NOMINATIONS**

Executive Function

**RESOLVED**

That Mr Robert Hadfield by appointed school governor Crampton Primary School

The meeting ended at 9.30 pm.

**CHAIR:**

**DATED:**

## Open Spaces Workshop

### Walworth Community Council 1 March 2011

#### Consultation Feedback

The open spaces workshops were held on 1 March 2011 during Walworth Community Council meeting at Walworth Methodist Church. Approximately 60 people attended the workshops. Participants were divided into three groups and each group took part in 3 workshops on the following topics:

Workshop 1 - Types of open spaces  
Workshop 2 - Quality of open spaces in Walworth  
Workshop 3 - Creating a network of green spaces

In each workshop, a structured discussion was led by a facilitator and notes were taken. At the event, each group elected a spokesperson who summarised the outcome of the group's discussions and fed back to the wider meeting.

The comments made in the workshops will feed into the development of Southwark's open spaces strategy which will be published for consultation later in the year.

#### **Workshop 1 – Types of open spaces**

In this workshop, participants discussed the different types of open spaces which exist in Walworth. The workshop aimed to identify what the different types of open space are used for and who uses them. The workshop also looked at whether people feel like they have not enough or too much of certain types of open spaces in Walworth.

Along with the workshop discussions, we also received 8 questionnaire responses which helped to identify the following key themes.

##### 1. How do you use the open spaces in Walworth?

- As a walking route
- As a place for recreation
- Play space for children
- Dog walking
- Food growing
- A place for exercise
- Community events
- A place for nature – bird watching, wildlife walks
- A place for relaxing

Comments: Most of the feedback focussed on the use of open spaces as a place for walking and recreation. Open spaces were used most often as walking routes between destinations. Open spaces were also frequently used as areas for sport and recreation. People suggested that open spaces are also being used increasingly for food growing and as a venue for community events.

## 2. What kinds of open spaces do you visit outside Walworth?

- Greenwich Park
- Royal Parks
- River Thames – Southbank
- Kennington Park
- Brockwell Park
- Battersea
- Hampstead heath
- Clissold Park
- Kew Gardens
- Dulwich Park
- Southwark Park
- Burgess park

Comments: The Royal Parks were some of the most popular open spaces visited outside of Walworth. Most of the parks identified were large parks with a wide range of facilities and easily accessible by public transport.

## 3. What range of activities can take place in open space?

- Sports
- Social events
- Gardening
- Community building
- Allotments
- Open air theatre
- Music
- Ice skating
- Socialising
- Festivals – community type activities
- Natural activities in the park
- Boat lakes
- Lido
- BBQ areas
- Wildlife areas
- Children's play areas
- Orchards and food growing
- Green links / wildlife corridors
- Spaces for education – nature areas

Comments: There was a wide range of activities identified that can take place in open spaces indicating how important it is for open spaces to have a variety of different functions that appeal to people of all ages. The importance of open space as a place for community events and social gatherings as a way to provide an area with a greater sense of identity and promote higher levels of resident satisfaction was a recurrent theme among participants.

## 4. What types of open spaces would you like to see more of?

- Small safe pocket parks or community planted areas
- Parks where natural play and exercise provide activities
- Community growing projects



- Multi-use projects e.g. bike track and food growing project at the Burgess Park Kart Track
- Provision in open space for elderly
- Community spaces around housing
- Wildlife areas
- More open spaces with water
- Orchards

Comments: Most of the comments received supported improving the range of activities at existing open spaces and increasing the community involvement in managing open spaces. More wildlife areas and areas for food growing were identified as important uses of open spaces to encourage. Burgess Park Kart track was a popular example of where a mix of uses was working well on one open space.

5. What types of open spaces do you think work well together?

- Spaces which have a large diversity of activities
- Spaces which are linked together by a green chain link
- Local parks easily accessible from surrounding residential areas

Comments: The key priority identified was having a wide range of activities which work well on one site. It was also important to link up the existing spaces through the use of green links, promoting a network of connected open spaces that serve people of all ages and different interests.

## **Workshop 2 – Quality of open spaces in Walworth**

This workshop looked at what factors make an open space important to local residents. This will included discussion on why some open spaces are considered to be better than others, identified successful open spaces in the area and other open spaces that people would like to see improved.

1. What do you think makes a good quality open space?

- Accessible
- Safe
- Involves local people
- Well used
- Well maintained
- Variety of plants and mature trees
- Lighting
- Cycle paths
- Water fountain
- Bins for recycling
- Seating
- Bird boxes and bat boxes
- Playgrounds and youth facilities
- Use of public art
- Maps and signage with interpretation
- Toilet facilities that are well maintained
- Cafe facilities

Comments: Discussions on what makes a good quality open space identified that well used and well maintained space is perceived to be of better quality. Open spaces that include a lot of different features such as seating, water features and wildlife areas were considered to be of higher quality than areas that were in use for a single purpose such as grass areas and sports pitches.

## 2. Where are there examples of good quality open spaces in Walworth?

- Burgess Park Kart track
- Nursery Row Park
- Salisbury Row
- Burgess Park
- Surrey Square.
- Walworth Garden Farm
- Kennington park
- Pasley Park.
- Darwin Court.
- Bird in Bush park
- Chumleigh Gardens
- Faraday gardens
- Brandon estate

Comments: Burgess Park kart track was often quoted as being a good quality open space in Walworth. The different uses of the space were seen to be working well, bringing a wide range of people together. Other examples of good open spaces in Walworth included many of the smaller pocket parks and areas within housing estates.

## 3. Where are there examples of good quality open spaces across London?

- Hampstead heath
- Dulwich upper Woods
- Royal Parks
- Lea Valley
- Crystal Palace Park
- Mile End Park
- Nunhead Cemetery
- Southwark Park
- Peckham Rye Park
- Kennington Park
- South Bank River Walk
- Bonnington Square
- Battersea Park
- Cleaver Square
- West Square
- Primrose Hill
- Redcross Way
- Walworth Garden Farm
- Stave Hill, Rotherhithe
- Clissolds park

Comments: Examples of good quality open spaces across London were mostly large parks such as the Royal Parks and more local examples such as Kennington Park

and Nunhead Cemetery. However examples of good quality open spaces also included smaller parks such as Walworth Garden Farm.

4. What do you think are the most important ways to improve open spaces?

- Encourage community investment and get local people involved
- Making them more easily accessible for all types of visitors
- Better enforcement of dog control
- Manageable planting
- Running water
- Drinking water
- A lido
- Toilets
- More parks to play football.
- Improved wildlife habitats
- Sense of identity / place
- More variety – spans seasons
- Benches, chairs and picnic tables
- Safety – number of people using it, lighting at low level,
- Amenity spaces
- Hedges and planting for birds

Comments: The most important way to improve open spaces was most often seen to be by increasing the level of community involvement in managing the open space. Getting local people involved was seen to be the key means of ensuring local residents got the most benefits out of the use of the space. Other improvements suggested were improvements to the accessibility of open spaces, more wildlife areas and better facilities such as toilets and seating.

5. Are there any open spaces in Walworth you think could be improved?

- Burgess Park
- Green links through residential areas and the parks
- Carter Place Garden
- Pasley Park
- Newington estate
- Wansey Street
- Children's play areas in East Street and Surrey Gardens
- Estate gardens

Comments: Burgess Park was the open space most people suggested they would like to improved in Walworth. It was also noted that better links between green spaces would lead to overall improvements across all the open spaces in Walworth.

### **Workshop 3 – Creating a network of green spaces**

This workshop looked at the links between different open spaces. Residents were invited to discuss how and where links between open spaces should be encouraged and to identify key routes that could be used to promote sustainable modes of travel in and around Walworth and the wider area.

1. Where are there existing green links between open spaces in Walworth?

- Burgess Park surrounding East Street Market
- Salisbury Row local area.
- Very little in the Walworth Area
- Walworth Green Chain Links
- Don't know
- None
- Not aware of any formal links

Comments: There was limited awareness of any existing links between open spaces in the Walworth area which suggests more work is needed to look at what links exist, how they are used and who uses them in order to be able to promote the existing links and encourage new links in the area.

## 2. Where would you like to see new links between open spaces?

- Around estates generally and toward public highway and spaces
- A green chain link from Bankside to Peckham.
- Walworth Road to Larcom street and Balfour street
- Links from schools
- Fielding Street allotment to Charlie's Garden on Fielding street and Empress Estate / Gateway Street
- Linking the small parks
- Need to connect Burgess Park more effectively

Comments: Several links through the area were suggested including a link from Bankside to Peckham. Other suggestions included linking schools to open spaces and connecting Burgess Park more effectively.

## 3. How can we make links greener and how can we use them better?

- Increased planting
- Local involvement in the process and implementation
- By prioritising pedestrians on the road network and where possible closing roads to vehicles and green the routes and habitats
- Communication – i.e. encouraging people to come into the park
- Better lighting
- Green walls on derelict buildings
- Better signage
- Allotments / food growing on route
- Art work – like sustrans route
- Seating
- Information boards on history and wildlife
- Diversity of planting and wildlife
- More street trees
- Bins for dog waste
- Recycling bins

Comments: Ways of improving green links were mostly centred around the need for more signage and activity along the links for example with art work or the use of the links for food growing

## 4. What do you think is the most important function of green links? i.e. for biodiversity, transport, recreation

- Recreation
- Biodiversity and Wildlife
- Health and well being – mental, spiritual and physical
- A quiet passage for school children

Comments: Green links were seen to be important for a number of different reasons including improving biodiversity value as well as bringing many benefits to local people.

5. We asked residents to score the features of green links (identified in the table below) from 1 to 5 in order of how important they were with 1 being not very important and 5 being very important.

The following results are taken from the 7 questionnaires received that answered this question

Features of Green Links	Questionnaire Number							Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Links to other open spaces	4	5	5	5	5	5	2	31
Links to transport hubs	5	1	4	1	3	4	1	19
Links to places of interest	3	4	3	4	2	3	4	23
Links to residential areas	1	3	2	3	4	1	3	17
Links for improvements to biodiversity	2	2	1	2	1	2	5	15

Comments: The results from the questionnaires showed that the most important feature of green links should be to link one open space to other open spaces. All the other types of links were considered to be of lower importance. Although links for improvements to biodiversity scored the lowest, it was noted that any links to other existing open spaces would most likely lead to improvements in biodiversity.

Date: March 2011

Author: Kate Johnson, Planning Policy Team

Please contact Kate Johnson in Southwark's Planning Policy Team if you would like to find out more about this event or about Southwark's open spaces strategy.

Email: [kate.johnson@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:kate.johnson@southwark.gov.uk)

Tel: 020 7525 5345

Web: <http://www.southwark.gov.uk/planningpolicy>