

## MINUTES OF CLAPTON SQUARE USER GROUP MEETING 21.10.10

Present:

Amy Erickson (guest chair)

Neil Burgess

Issy Forshall

Sarah Pletts

Tony Pletts

Tanya Barrett

Eric Fong

Cynthia Gilbert

Councillor Guy Nicholson

Apologies:

Bruce Eadie

Rachel Chaplin

Louise Goodison

Susie Daniel

Father Rob Wickham

Helen Wickham

Neil Burgess is in favour of the Clapton Conference's aim to develop more of a centre to Clapton. The Clapton Pond User Group are influential in the Clapton Conference, and have been involved in objecting to plans for Pond House (which have been rejected twice), and objecting to plans for a new Tesco Metro. The Clapton Pond group are looking for a way to bring Pond House into community use, like the Tram Sheds.

There is now a Tram Sheds Trust to keep it as an arts centre, mentioned Amy Erickson.

Neil Burgess continues that there is a festival planned on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2011. Neil Burgess suggests that the Clapton Square User Group get involved. With events at both Clapton Pond and Clapton Square, at either end of Lower Clapton Road, and communities, businesses and artists in between being involved to re-enliven 'Murder Mile'. Clapton is a large area, but the idea is to focus attention on the area between Clapton Pond and Clapton Square. Perhaps we could have some pop-up exhibitions. The idea of the festival was warmly embraced at the latest Clapton Conference meeting. It might also be possible to have open studios and involve the Hidden Art of Hackney. Neil suggests that this is something the user

group can be involved in next year, as well as growing more pumpkins and sunflowers, which was only a partial success this year.

(If you wish to join the Clapton Conference mailing list, please e mail [dave@rindl.co.uk](mailto:dave@rindl.co.uk))

Tanya Barrett said that the Hackney Community Group on Linked In is slowly gathering momentum, and that this is a good local forum. It brings in a diverse group of people, and would be a good way to inform people about the Clapton Conference and other issues.

To join the Hackney Community Group on Linked In, follow this link:

[http://www.linkedin.com/home?myGroups=&trk=hb\\_side\\_mygrps](http://www.linkedin.com/home?myGroups=&trk=hb_side_mygrps)

Tanya Barrett also suggested that we make more use of Fix My Street to resolve issues with the council. Amy Erickson confirmed that this was a good tactic, which goes through the council's complaints procedure, and suggested that we report our long-awaited automatic gate closers and inaccessible hose too short to reach the top beds.

**Action:** Please use the following link to report the council if there are maintenance issues:

[www.fixmystreet.com](http://www.fixmystreet.com)

The User Group mailing list currently has 87 people on it.

Sarah Pletts has received 2 e-mail nominations to re-elect Neil Burgess as chair. No other candidates have been nominated. There were no objections and Neil Burgess was re-elected as chair.

Sarah Pletts will continue as Acting Secretary in the absence of any nominations.

Several people raised the issue of various groups' anti-social behaviour in and around the square.

Last Sunday morning there was a big argument in Cavendish Mansions, police were called, an intercom door was smashed, police attended the scene.

There was general frustration at the lack of communication between the CSUG and the Safer Neighbourhood Team. In response to Neil Burgess' latest letter to the SNT about the trouble caused by group of Eastern Europeans squatting in Clarence Mews, he was invited to a general meeting, which he was unable to attend. The SNT have not otherwise responded to numerous e-mails and answer-phone messages.

Neil Burgess explained that at the moment we have open drug dealing outside Muatta Books on Clarence Road, Eastern European drinkers causing problems with suspected criminal activity, and lots of anti-social behaviour in and around Cavendish Mansions.

Cllr Guy Nicholson asked whether Hackney Homes have been informed about the issues in Cavendish Mansions. It was confirmed that the problems have been reported for around two and a half years. Several residents have reported problems. There are issues with dogs, noise, anti-social behaviour and kids being intimidated, not wanting to come out. Residents confirmed that incident reports have been filled in, and the situation has been reported, at length in the offices of Hackney Homes.

Issy Forshall emphasized that lives were being seriously impacted in the neighbourhood. The immediate neighbours have been victims of the situation for a long time, but at the moment it has become a more public nuisance.

Cllr Guy Nicholson said that both the dealing in Clarence Road and the problems with the Eastern Europeans were straight-forward police issues. He asked that we report incidents to the SNT. Could we give the number of the problem house in Clarence Mews?

Some of the Polish drinkers may now be living at 24 Clapton Square. Sarah Pletts wanted to make it clear that most of our squatting neighbours (in 24 and 25 Clapton Square) are responsible members of the community, and the problem was with a small minority of them. Sarah Pletts also reported that the SNT have been patrolling around the square on foot and bicycle, but not necessarily dealing with the situation.

**Action:**

Sarah Pletts to invite the SNT to CSUG meetings with plenty of notice.

Neil Burgess to make contact again with SNT, and see if they have a 'surgery' coming up, or suggest a meeting, where we can raise the issues around the square.

Cllr Guy Nicholson to focus Hackney Homes attention on the situation in Cavendish Mansions.

If you want to report something to the Safer Neighbourhood Team, please contact:

Chatham Team, Homerton Police Base, Homerton Row, London E9 6SR. Tel 020 8721 2794/ 07748 938936. Or e mail: [Chatham.snt@met.police.uk](mailto:Chatham.snt@met.police.uk)