



Friends of Albert Road Recreational Ground & Play Area

Chair's Report AGM – 19th November 2007

1. 2007 has been a year of continuous progress and consolidation in the Albert Rec. This was also a period marked by a historic event in the park which was the construction of a very impressive memorial in honour of South African Anti-apartheid leader, Oliver Tambo, which was completed in October 2007.
2. FARRG has continued to perform a crucial community role working closely with Haringey Council, the Pavilion and Haringey Tennis, local schools and other relevant agencies.
3. Particular highlights during 2007 include the award of a 'Green Flag' for the second year running as well as completion of significant improvement works in the Children's Play Area which is now more popular than ever.
4. Community focused events have also continued to form a significant part of FARRG's work in the Albert Rec. Notable events during 2007 include:
 - Wednesday, 17th October – Oliver Tambo Memorial Opening Ceremony
 - Sunday, 14th October – Family Fun Sports Day
 - Friday, 13th July – Fundraising Children's Dancethon at the Pavilion
 - Wednesday, 6th June – Green Flag Inspectors' Visit to Albert Rec
 - Monday, 4th June – FARRG Oliver Tambo Memorial Consultation Meeting
 - Saturday, 12th May – Area Assembly in the Albert Rec with FARRG involvement
 - Sunday, 29th April – Children's Easter Egg Hunt
 - Friday, 18th April – FARRG Community Party at the Pavilion
 - Tuesday, 23rd January - Sports Minister Richard Caborn visit to Pavilion and Albert Rec Tennis Courts

All of the community events attracted a good number of local people and the outdoor activities were particularly well attended by local families with children.

A bulb planting day is also scheduled for 2nd December 2007 and our first FARRG Christmas party will take place on 8th December at the Pavilion.

5. Special mention must be made of the Oliver Tambo initiative and the official unveiling ceremony in the Albert Rec which took place on the 17th of October 2007. This was certainly a historic event not only for the Albert Rec but for the entire area. The initiative was a truly remarkable example of what can be achieved by the local community through partnership with the local authority and local schools. My special thanks go to Mike Terry of Alexandra Park School for the determined way in which he canvassed support for the wonderful idea of erecting a memorial and, of course, to Haringey Council and the South African High Commission whose financial and moral support was crucial to delivery of this brilliant addition to the Albert Rec. My thanks go also to all of our committee members and to Alexandra Park School and Rhodes Avenue Primary School (both teachers and pupils) for the enthusiastic way in which this initiative was embraced. I should add that the two time capsules buried by FARRG on behalf of the community and by the two



Friends of Albert Road Recreational Ground & Play Area

schools within the memorial grounds are due to be opened after the year 2107! The FARRG capsule was sponsored by most members of the Committee.

It is important to ensure that local residents and park users remain engaged with this project which will have a continuing impact on the park. It is also my opinion that further community centred events should be organised around the memorial in the future. In view of the inevitable security measures adopted in relation to the unveiling ceremony on 17th October 2007, that event was not as inclusive as it might have been and I hope that this can be remedied in the future.

6. It is important to note that we have continued to co-operate with and provide support for Robby Sukhdeo, owner of the Pavilion and Haringey Tennis, on a whole range of issues, including instances of anti-social behaviour and two unfortunate burglaries in the Pavilion Café which have led to increased security measures around the pavilion building. We have also been in touch with local residents who have formed a 'neighbourhood watch' partly in response to incidents of anti social behaviour emanating from within the park at night. We will continue to press the local authority and the police for additional resources and measures to counter such behaviour and we will remain vigilant to any criminal activity in the park. We will also continue to lobby for extra lighting to be made available along the Albert Rec pathways which are extensively used by pupils after dark especially in the winter months. FARRG is also represented by Neil McAllister on the Safer Neighbourhood panel.
7. Another area of co-operation between FARRG and Robby relates to the latter's ongoing plans for the development of the tennis courts and further refurbishment of the Pavilion. FARRG will continue to support plans for improvements to the tennis courts which we see as a vital facility within the Albert Rec.
8. The Albert Rec continues to be used extensively by local community groups and children for its primary purpose which is that of a recreation ground. Saturdays and Sundays are particularly busy with teams playing a variety of sports including foot ball, cricket and Aussie Rules' football.
9. Our website has served as a useful marketing and communication tool throughout 2007 and my thanks go to Gianluca Lo Iacono for continuing to maintain this diligently.
10. A number of unsung local people play a significant part in enhancing the life of the Albert Rec and the Pavilion and in making these places community centres of excellence and inclusiveness. I am recommending that FARRG should establish an



Friends of Albert Road Recreational Ground & Play Area

annual community prize to be awarded to such people for their contribution to the life of the park and the Pavilion.

11. Finally, my thanks, as usual, go to Haringey Council's Tony Healey and Neil Armstrong for their continuing commitment to the Albert Rec and, of course, to Robby for being generous with provision of the Pavilion and refreshments for our meetings and for sponsorship of a number of our events.

Peter Droussiotis – 19th November 2007