

Blackheath Joint Working Party (BJWP) Meeting Minutes

5 November 2019

Venue: Age Exchange, 11 Blackheath Village, SE3 9LA

Attendees

Cllr Kevin Bonavia (chair) London Borough of Lewisham
Sacha Bright (mins) BJWP Administration

Nicholas Pond London Borough of Lewisham
Philip Craig Greenwich Society
Sue Corlett Hare & Billet Action Group
Shirley Broughton Nature Conservation Group
David Walker Blackheath Society
Helen Reeves Blackheath Society
Marilyn Little Westcombe Society
Cllr Aidan Smith Royal Borough of Greenwich
Julie Watling Glendale Conservation Officer
Cllr Geoff Brighty Royal Borough of Greenwich

1. Apologies

1.1. Apologies were received from Gemma Buttell (Glendale), Vince Buchanan (London Borough of Lewisham), Cllr Juliet Campbell, Cllr Amanda De Ryk, Cllr Mariam Lolavar, Janine Whittaker (Royal Borough of Greenwich), Tony Butler Friends of Greenwich Park.

2. Minutes and Matters Arising

2.1. The minutes of the 17th September 19 meeting were agreed with one amendment the "Hare and Billet Society" should read "the Hare and Billet Action Group".

Action points:

- 2.2. Some members had difficulty finding the minutes on council websites. Sacha was asked to check if they had now been added.
- 2.3. Sacha has met with Lewisham officers but not yet with Greenwich. Aidan agreed to follow this up.
- 2.4. Kevin has had a response from Lewisham cyclists regarding the Quietway and Sacha will circulate.
- 2.5. The cyclists have denied that it is cycles which have caused the erosion of the grass; they believe it is walkers who start the problem, followed by cycles.
- 2.6. Neither the Showmen's Guild or the circus providers have been invited to attend the meeting this year. It was agreed that there are no urgent queries about these events.
- 2.7. Kevin reported on the Fireworks which went well this year in spite of the weather. Greenwich provided £15,000 towards the costs. A further £8,500 had been obtained from crowdfunding.
- 2.8. It was reported by Lewisham that the shingle behind the tea hut had been put there for parking to avoid soil erosion. It was queried if the tea hut pays for this and Kevin asked if Glendale would check the details of the lease or license.

2.9. It was reported that the upkeep of the bus shelters is the responsibility of TfL. Sacha was asked to contact John Wallace at Lewisham to ask if he would contact TfL about the condition of the shelters in Prince Charles Road.

3. Allocation of the community fund

3.1. It was agreed to allocate up to £750 to the Blackheath Society for the upkeep of the raised beds on Tranquil Vale and the garden in Montpelier Vale.

3.2. Up to £300 could be spent on the Christmas tree to be provided by the Blackheath Society.

3.3. Up to £400 will be allocated to reseeding the bunds and the wildflower meadows. Nick Pond will liaise with Glendale about the costs.

3.4. £2,400 had already been allocated to the Nature Conservation Group for the removal of broom on Whitfield Mount to replace it with gorse. Shirley Broughton to send quote and details.

3.5. There had been a request for insect hotels. Nick Pond felt they would not be suitable for the Heath. It was better to leave the occasional falling branch which would serve the same purpose.

3.6. Regarding the suggestion that money could be given to TfL for trees on the A2 roundabout, Sacha to ask John Wallace at Lewisham to contact TfL about their tree planting policy.

3.7. It had been suggested that hedging plants could be planted on the triangle at the eastern end of Shooters Hill Road. The estimate for this had been £2,752.82. David Walker reported that residents feel this is not necessary as there is as there are enough trees there already. It was suggested that more trees could be planted at the western end of the road subject to consultation with the residents.

3.8. The conservation group have requested an entomology survey partly to see which areas of the Heath would be most affected by events such as OnBlackheath. It was estimated that this would cost approximately £4,800. Nick queried that such a survey would provide the information needed for that purpose. Kevin suggested that we should have more information about the extent and purpose of the proposal.

3.9. As we have now received a grant for five consecutive years Kevin asked Sacha if she could prepare a report on how the money had been used so far. As in previous years the money has been administered by Glendale Nick will ask them to provide the necessary information to Sacha.

4. Proposal for an extension of the forest school.

4.1. James Hazlerigg-Kinlay attended the meeting to present his proposals. The original agreement was for up to 3 sessions a week to be reviewed after one year. Sessions of 2 hours currently take place on one morning and one afternoon. The new proposal is for three sessions for 4-5 hours each on every week of the school term. The children will meet at all Saints Church and walk over to Eliot Pits. If the weather is too bad they will stay the church and have a session there.

4.2. There were queries about safeguarding and about the legal status of the school. Is it a registered company and is it listed with OFSTED?

4.3. Regarding safeguarding, there will be 4 adults for 16 children. The area will be cordoned off with tape so that children do not wander off or go into the wildlife areas. There will be a portable loo in a tent and all the contents will be removed from the site at the end of each session. No fires will be lit at the

Blackheath site. Sessions will go on after dark on winter afternoons and all the children will be issued with head torches.

- 4.4. Forries Education will become a registered company and it will be subject to inspection by OFSTED. It is already a member of the Forest Schools Association and is now applying for full accreditation. James intends that all the requirements will be in place before the new school arrangements begin.
- 4.5. Regarding rent for the site the School operates at four locations in Lewisham and a single fee is paid to Glendale for the four sites.
- 4.6. James agreed to check the Heath bye laws to ensure that he can comply with them all.
- 4.7. He aims to start to the new arrangements in the Summer term 2020.
- 4.8. Nick reported that he was not aware of any damage to the Heath as result of the forest school but that this will be monitored regularly.
- 4.9. Shirley Broughton on behalf of the Nature Conservation Group expressed concern as this is a site of special ecological interest. She believes there is some evidence that certain butterflies have already been affected. The group do not consider it appropriate that the Heath should be used for commercial purposes. There had also been concern about the removal of some bramble bushes but Nick reported that this been done for other purposes.
- 4.10. It was agreed that, subject to OFSTED and company registration, the school can go ahead and would be subject to annual review. It was also hoped that a certain number of places could be made available at lower cost or free of charge for families who could not afford the fee.

5. Kite festival

- 5.1. Diane Summers from the Blackheath Society joined the meeting to present a proposal for a small kite festival to take place on the Heath on 4th October 2020. There had been a long tradition of kite festivals on the Heath but not in recent years.
- 5.2. The Blackheath Society would be working with a kite club from Kent who have experience of running similar events.
- 5.3. The proposal was met with general enthusiasm and was agreed.

6. OnBlackheath

- 6.1. Nicky Hodgson from Festival Republic joined the meeting. This company has bought the license for OnBlackheath. The event will be changed to make it more commercially viable and less community orientated.
- 6.2. There is a major concern that the 2020 event will coincide with the Football Fan Zone in Greenwich Park for the European Cup. They are currently considering a fallow year but this will not be decided until the end of January.
- 6.3. The new owners are happy with the current license and will not wish to change either the existing site or the maximum numbers of people expected.

6.4. This year's removal of the readmission policy was raised as it had caused considerable upset, particularly for families with young children who wished to take children home in the late afternoon and to return for the evening performance.

6.5. There was also concern that households bordering the event did not receive invitations for free passes. It seems that these had been available on request. Nicky Hodgson would investigate the distribution of information.

6.6. Members expressed considerable concern about the sale of the licence as this had originally been presented as a local event for local people.

7. AOB

7.1. The Blackheath Society had received complaints from their members about usually loud noise from the recent half term fair and also the practice of describing the Heath as a 'Common' on their posters. Both points were noted by Glendale.

7.2. The Hare and Billet action group reported a recent incident when three stolen Land Rovers were driven around the Heath at night causing considerable noise and damage.

7.3. Helen reported on a recent proposal by local businessman for a Tree Trust to plant trees on the Heath. The meeting confirmed that this proposal would not be welcomed.

7.4. Provisional dates for meetings in 2020 were proposed subject to suitable rooms being available.

Date of next meetings:

- 7pm - Tuesday 21 January 2020
- 6.30pm – Tuesday 18 February 2020 (Bakehouse Theatre)

Blackheath Joint Working Party provisional meeting bookings 2020

Tuesday 18th February	Bakehouse Theatre Public Meeting
Tuesday 31 March	Age Exchange Studio
Tuesday 9 June	– Age Exchange Studio
Tuesday 22 September	Age Exchange Studio
Tuesday 20 October	Age Exchange Studio
Tuesday 24 November	Age Exchange Studio
Tuesday 19 January 2021	Age Exchange Studio
Tuesday 23rd February 2021	Bakehouse Theatre Public Meeting