

**Blackheath Joint Working Party
16th April 2015, 19.30
Age Exchange, Blackheath**

Attendees

Cllr Kevin Bonavia (KB)	Blackheath Ward Member (LBL)
Helen Reeves	Blackheath Society
Sue Corlett (SC)	Hare and Billet Action Group
Shirley Broughton (SB)	SMINC
Keith Townend (KT)	
Tony Butler (TB)	
Philip Craig (PC)	Greenwich Society
Cllr Gareth Siddorn (GS)	Blackheath Ward Member (LBL)
Mike Norton (MN)	Westcombe Society

Laura Gregory (LG) LBL (Minutes)

1. Apologies And Introductions

Apologies were received from Cllr Matthew Pennycook, Cllr Gareth Siddorn, Cllr Amanda de Ryk, Cllr Paul Morrissey, David Walker and Martin Hyde.

Cllr Pennycook has resigned – a RBG replacement will be identified in due course.

Laura Gregory (LBL) was introduced as the minute taker for the evening.

2. Minutes Of Last Meetings (15th January and the Public Meeting on the 19th February 2015)

i Accuracy

SC passed on apologies for the meeting on the 15th of January and this was not recorded in the minutes.

Misspelling of one of the BJWP attendee's names – should read Stephen Rodel [*to be confirmed*] from RBG.

Subject to the above, minutes from the BJWP meeting on the 15th of January and the 19th of February were agreed as an accurate reflection of the discussions.

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ii Matters Arising

KB explained that it would be good practice for the BJWP minutes to be published on the council website. ACTION: secretary to liaise with governance about the usual process for publishing minutes.

ACTION: KB asked if the BJWP secretary could identify a copy of the BJWP constitution and circulate to the group for reference.

HR alerted the group that two further bids had been submitted for the expansion of All Saints Primary school and encouraged responses to the consultation on these proposals.

3. Review of Pre-application Questionnaire - Magic of Thailand (this item was brought forward on the agenda as the applicants attended the meeting at short notice).

KB explained to the BJWP that the application for the event had only recently been received and apologised that the group were reviewing the pre-application questionnaire at the last minute. Jackie and John, the event organisers from Magic of Thailand (MoT), were introduced to the group.

Jackie explained that they have both been working in events management for over 10 years, and over the last 4 years the two of them have been running their own events. Most notably, they have run a MoT event in Poole and last year in Brighton. Keen to expand to new locations they are keen to hold an event in London and felt Blackheath was ideal given its beauty and transport links.

PC asked about the notice period for the festival, which is planned for July. The pre-application questionnaire states it would take 6/8 months to prepare for such an event. Jackie explained that as they've already run the event a number of times in Poole and in Brighton there would be less infrastructure set up required, so it would be possible to be ready to run an event by July.

KB explained that speaking to the BJWP was only a small part of the process, and that the group's role is simply to pass comments to the council who would ultimately decide if the event should be approved. KB also pointed out that as the organisers plan to sell alcohol at the event they would need to have a licence from the council's licencing department.

Jackie said she was aware of this – KB stressed that the timeframe would be quite tight to get approval for the event and a licence.

HR asked for more details on the purpose of the event. Jackie explained that the concept of the event is to bring Thailand to Blackheath and that the event is aimed at families. Some of the funds raise from the event are used both to support a large Thai temple in Wimbledon to run cultural activities and a language school but also to support a school in Thailand for

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disadvantaged children. The aim of the event is also to support cultural diversity in London and the organisers and backed by the Thai Embassy and Thai Tourist Ministry (the Thai ambassador in London would likely open the event).

Jackie explained that there would be food and produce stalls, similar to a Thai market. The event would also see cultural performances (Thai dancing, beauty pageant, ladyboy shows, Thai boxing, singing etc.) The organisers hope to run the event on the 1st/2nd of August from 10.00am -7pm.

KB queried the content of some of the shows to ensure they would be family friendly, which Jackie confirmed they would be. HR asked for more details about the beauty pageant and Jackie explained that such shows are a big part of Thai culture and an opportunity to show off regional dress and that she'd be happy to send some clips if the group had concerns about the activity. The group discussed changed attitudes toward beauty contests and agreed they might not be something the council would want to support (although admitted it was difficult to judge having not seen this type of contest)- KB suggested Jackie note the comments made by the group on this activity.

HR asked about the financial model for the event. Jackie explained that to run the event would cost approx. £30k most of this is funded by the stall holders payments plus sponsorship from the Thai Embassy. Stall holders are able to make a profit from sales. In addition, the organisers charge £3 per ticket for both days.

MN queried the noise levels referred to in the pre-application questionnaire explaining that he thought they were excessively high. Jackie explained that she'd already thought it should be lowered to 80DB at the perimeter but hadn't wanted to change the document in advance of attending the meeting. MN explained that the perimeter was less relevant that considering the noise impact on the nearest noise sensitive residential building. KB explained to the organisers that it would be likely that the noise levels would need to be limited to 65Db – John agreed that this would be feasible for them. Jackie agreed that they would be keen to consider the noise impact from various locations. The BJWP suggested they consider checking that the sound would not go above 65Db at the following sites:

- Talbot Place/Duke Humphrey Rd
- Montpellier Row (near Prince of Wales Pub)
- Vanbrugh Terrace
- St German's Place

MN explained that for events of the heath parking is discouraged and event organisers are asked to encourage visitors to take public transport. HR added that the car parks listed in the pre-application questionnaire were quite small and would be full from usual traffic on the days of the events. KB suggested the event organisers should continue to liaise with Martin Hyde about possible locations for staff parking, and also to ensure public transport is promoted in any event publicity.

SB asked about the layout plan in the pre-app questionnaire as it was not to scale and explained that the proposed site risked damage to the acid grassland. Jackie explained that

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the site had been chosen as it was close to a water supply and agreed to have further conversations with Martin Hyde and Nick Pond at Lewisham council to identify a suitable site that would have minimum disruption to the heath and the patches of acid grass land (this should include the movement of event vehicles).

KB noted that, as the organisers expect the event to be limited to 2,000 attendees over the weekend, it would not be considered a major event for the policy – although noted that the dates the organisers have picked are always very popular so there'd be fierce competition should the organisers seek to run the event on an annual basis.

SC asked about the size of the Thai community on London and queried if 2,000 attendees was an over/under estimate. Jackie explained that there are approx. 15 other Thai cultural events so this wouldn't be the only opportunity those interested would have to attend something. Jackie explained that if possible they'd welcome more than 2,000 visitors and that they employ more staff than required to ensure they can cope with demand. KB explained that the organisers would need to decide what their upper limit would be at any given time for the event and ensure measures were in place to monitor this. The BJWP would recommend to the council that a limit for the event be set should the event be approved. The police would also need to be advised on the likely numbers attending.

Jackie took the comments on board and reassured the group that the event she and John ran in Brighton had 10,000 attendees.

KB explained to the organisers that they would need to consult with the local community on the event and outline their plans for people moving to and from the event. KB explained that the Blackheath Assembly could be a good place to do this – highlighting the market place event due to take place on the 20th of June at 12pm at the Age Exchange and also suggested the organisers do a leaflet drop in the local area (this should include contact details residents could use should they have questions/comments). PC suggested the organisers consider hiring a hall to run a drop in session and HR queried if the organisers would be informing the local Thai community/restaurants – Jackie confirmed they would be.

KB thanked Jackie and John for attending the meeting at short notice.

ACTION: Notes to be passed to Martin Hyde to pick up in liaison with both the event organisers and licensing staff within the council. BJWP members to send any other specific points on the application directly to Martin.

4. Blackheath (SMINC) Nature Conservation Group

KB thanked SB for the helpful note circulated to the group in advance of the meeting and asked SB to outline the decisions/actions the group needed to take.

Point 1: dealt with

Point 2: SB to discuss with MH to see if further monitoring pre and post events can be undertaken. MH to also discuss with Greenwich counterpart.

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Point 3: Police need a copy of the Wilkie report with information outlining suggested routes across the heath. SB to pick up in discussion with MH.

Point 4: Covered in agenda item 5

Point 5: Agreed

Point 6: Covered in agenda item 5

5. Allocation of OnBlackheath Funding

KB circulated a summary document detailing the proposed funding allocation. The group discussed the items noting the following:

Item 1: This bid came top of the vote – it's a large amount and there are some concerns about how the funding would be managed. KB spoke to the bidders about managing the funding and agreed a process of submitting receipts with a suggested cap of £500 allocated each year.

Item 2: Interpretation signs are expensive and there doesn't appear to be economies of scale in buying in bulk. Suggestion that funding agreed for 1 sign.

Item 3: KB explained that a great deal of work has been done on this already – discussion about if bollards or bunds would be more appropriate, likely bollards would be best. Whilst the site is on Lewisham land the school is in Greenwich. Suggested that MH liaise with Greenwich and the school to agree a proposal and remedy together (including proposed to split funding).

Item 4: It would be possible to get two islands if we get the match funding – HR explained BHSOC may match funding allocated by BJWP and that a private donor has agreed to match the total raised.

Item 5: Agreed

Item 6: KB explained that he didn't have strong views and thought that the surplus funds could be allocated to the SCRAPE project, otherwise it would need to be re-allocated. SB highlighted that to facilitate the SCRAPE project a survey of the heath needs to be conducted. At the January meeting Cllr Morrissey agreed to explore options for European Funding for a survey – the BJWP agreed it would be useful to determine if that would be feasible.

The group agreed the remaining surplus from this year's funding should be ring-fenced from the SCRAPE.

AOB

BHSOC AGM

HR - The BHSOC has a AGM at the end of June (24th) and the committee have agreed to have space on the agenda to discuss wildlife and environmental projects happening on the heath.

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HR keen to have some input on both information to cover at the event and how to present the information in a fun and engaging way. HR asked that if BJWP members know of anyone in the environment world that might be suitable to attend to let he know.

KB explained that there's a full council meeting scheduled for that evening so it may be difficult for the Blackheath councillors to attend, however he will try to ensure the local MP can attend. KB also suggested that MH be invited to present.

Green Flag award

The judges will be attending on the 6th of May at 10.00 am- KB will be attending – other BJWP members are welcome to attend. ACTION: MH to circulate details and locations for this.

Dates for future meetings

KB explained that due to MH's changed working hours the BJWP meeting need to move, otherwise MH will be unable to attend.

The group agreed to move the meeting to the 4th Tuesday of the month and that the meetings should take place every other month. The proposed meeting dates for the coming year are:

- 23rd of June (note this is the day before the BHSOC AGM)
- Skip August
- 22nd September
- 17th November
- 26th Jan
- 23rd Feb (Public Meeting)
- 22nd March

KB stressed to the group that at times it can be difficult for all of the councillors on the BJWP to attend– given the other evening commitments they have. However, he would like to see at least 1 councillor (ideally 2) from each borough attend each BJWP meeting. In addition, an equivalent to MH at Greenwich needs to be identified and invited to meetings.