

# Blackheath Joint Working Party

22 September 2015

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## Attendees

Cllr Kevin Bonavia (chair)	London Borough of Lewisham
Cllr Aidan Smith	London Borough of Greenwich
Shirley Broughton	Nature Conservation Group
Jane Dyer	London Borough of Greenwich
Kellie Blake	London Borough of Lewisham
Sue Corlett	Hare & Billet Action Group
Margaret Dinkeldein	Tidy Blackheath
Mike Norton	Westcombe Society
Helen Reeves	Blackheath Society
Joe Beale	Blackheath Society
Steve Roedel	London Borough of Greenwich
Tom Wates	On Blackheath
Andy Thomas (mins)	London Borough of Lewisham

## 1. Apologies and introduction

Action

Apologies were received from Cllr Amanda De Ryk; Tony Butler, Cllr Mehboob Khan, Martin Hyde, Gemma Buttell, Phillip Craig, David Walker

Cllr Bonavia explained that he was going to change the order of the meeting so that Tom Wates could leave when the discussion about On Blackheath had taken place

## 2. On Blackheath

### A. Report from Tom Wates (On Blackheath)

Tom explained that there had been no formal debrief yet and that this will take place on 30 September as some of the key people involved had gone to do other work straight from the event and would not be available until that time. Information is still being collated and the report this evening would just be an overview. Tom reported that he was disappointed that remedial work on the Heath had not yet started. An email had been sent last week requesting that work should start but the inclement weather had delayed things.

Tom said that feedback indicated that customer experience had been excellent. He was very pleased that the event had attracted lots of families – some with children. The music on both days had stopped at least 15 minutes before the time stipulated by the license.

The weather had been good over the event, which limited damage to the land. Tom had been to make an inspection with an experienced

groundsman and they had found a small diesel spillage which had been cleaned up immediately. The rest of the damage was mainly due to the fact that it had started raining on the Tuesday during the set-down which resulted in some damage from vehicles. The ground is very muddy in places and there is a plan to chain harrow and aerate and then undertake light seeding if necessary.

Steve Roedel suggested that from a horticultural point of view this work shouldn't be rushed and that the ground should be allowed to dry out a little.

#### B. Survey Report from Helen Reeves (Blackheath Society)

Helen emphasised that this was very much a provisional report as the survey is still open and the results have not yet been properly analysed. There had been 300 responses so far, coming from a wide age range between 30 and 80. The general view seems to be that the event was well organised and that the crowd had been well behaved. Noise had not been too much of an issue but there were complaints about too much bass. There had also been lots of queries about what would be done to repair the Heath.

#### C. Noise

Kellie Blake reported that there had been 8 complaints over the weekend to Lewisham Council and a further 3 that had come in afterwards. Vanguardia is currently writing a report. The wind was blowing in the direction of Greenwich which helps to explain why there are more complaints from Greenwich. Jane Dyer reported that there had been 20 complaints to Greenwich Council but that noise levels had not exceeded the point at which notices would have been issued

Tom responded to say that he is not happy when there are any complaints and would like to work with the group to see how things could be improved in the future. Cllr Bonavia reminded him that he would need to organise a post consultation meeting and Tom said that this would take place before the end of October.

TW

#### D. Land issues

Shirley Broughton reminded the meeting that the area includes rare grassland and said that the level of damage was extremely unfortunate. Seeding would not be a good idea and that any remediation needed to be done carefully. It was agreed that this should be communicated to Glendale

Joe Beale argued that the event is too big and that yearly damage at this scale shouldn't be allowed to continue. It would make more sense to make the event smaller with acoustic music.

Tom responded that the level of investment required meant that the event would not be viable if it was smaller. Also that the overwhelming response had been a positive one.

The question was raised by the chair as whether anybody would be willing to work with Glendale around the repair work. Shirley responded that it would be good if work could be delayed to give time for a group of people to "get their heads together". It was agreed that Glendale should be asked to hold back until this has taken place.

SB  
MH

Tom asked that communications be sent out to local residents so that they understood why there were delays to the work taking place. Helen said that this would be done by the Blackheath Society.

HR

### 3. Minutes of the last meeting

#### A. Accuracy

The minutes were agreed as factually accurate but Margaret Dinkeldein pointed out that there were two 'typos'. At 2b "Glendales" should read "Glendale" and under the heading "Coach parking in Greenwich Park", "coach divers" should read "coach drivers".

#### B. Matters arising

Steve Roedel that the Heath Keeper mentioned in the minutes is a current and experienced member of staff called Larry Blake and he will be invited to the next meeting.

SR

### 4. Magic of Thailand Event

There was no formal report and so the chair gave some brief feedback based on information that he had. This was:

- ♦ There had been no complaints over the weekend
- ♦ The event had not reached its target in terms of ticket sales
- ♦ The organisers would be applying for a license to run the event again next year

Jane Dyer said that Greenwich Council had not been consulted on the event and she was keen that this did take place next year. Previously there had been a protocol between the two Council's but she thought that with the changes in personnel that this might have been lost. It was suggested that Martin Hyde is asked to speak to Lewisham's licensing team to ensure that consultation take place in the future.

MH

Kellie Blake pointed out that some parts of the Heath are licensed for events. It was agreed that this information should be provided to a future meeting. Again, Martin to be asked to find this information.

MH

Shirley Broughton asked the question as to whether there might be three events on the Heath next year if the Jimmy Mizen event takes place. The chair responded to say that there is an agreement that only two large events (over 5000 people on each day) would take place each year but that the Magic of Thailand didn't qualify as a large event. Shirley asked if this was what Lewisham wanted. Cllr Bonavia responded to say that a policy is currently being developed for parks across the whole borough. Martin Hyde is currently consulting and has sent out an email inviting views. Martin is to be asked to resend this email.

MH

### 5. Upcoming Events

Kellie Blake reported that the annual fireworks event is planned for 7 November. Fireworks will be fired at 8pm and at the moment it is not anticipated that there will be an music. A fair will be operating from mid-day and food outlets from 5pm. The layout for the event will be the same as in previous years and the same road closures are being submitted.

Kellie said that there is still a large hole in the budget. London & Quadrant, Glendale and Hamptons estate agents are sponsoring. The budget is £98,000. Cllr Bonavia added that with continuing pressures on Lewisham Council's budget, it is becoming increasingly difficult to justify the expenditure. Lewisham is waiting to hear whether Greenwich Council will be contributing funding this year. Kellie said that she would like to see more local businesses sponsoring the event.

Shirley Broughton asked whether this event qualifies as a large event. The response was that it doesn't because it is not a commercial event.

## **6. Project Funding Update**

### **The Hare & Billet Pond**

Eugene has been in contact with Glendale and there are some issues about equipment that need to be resolved before the project can continue.

### **Prince of Wales Pond**

A meeting has taken place on site with Angus and Martin and it is anticipated that work will start on the project around the end of September. Screen planting should begin around the end of November.

### **The bund on St Germans Place**

The bund is now in place. Parents of schoolchildren have been driving over it but it is hoped that this will stop when things start to grow on it.

### **The bee bank**

Has been commissioned and work should have started in April and it is not clear what is happening. Martin Hyde to be asked for an update.

MH

### **History Boards**

Helen has had a couple of meetings with the proposers and no agreement has been reached yet on how many should be produced. The cost of producing the first board will be relatively expensive because it would need to include the cost of research and planning etc. Costs of subsequent boards would then get cheaper. Helen expressed the view that it is not worth starting the project until we know how many boards can be funded. The Blackheath Society will make a contribution but won't know how much this will be until details of On Blackheath funding is available.

## **7. Nature Conservation Report**

A written report was presented from which the following issues were discussed:

### **Encroaching scrubland**

Steve Roedel has talked this through with his colleagues and they have no objections to the proposed plan of action. It was agreed that a meeting should take place to take this forward.

### **Vegetation on the bund**

Agreed that this is not such a big issue

Glendale appears to be leaving grass cutting around the scrub on Whitefield's Mount which is having a detrimental effect on the flora and

fauna. This should be communicated to Martin and Gemma so that they can address. MH, GB

There was a request for an update from Nick Pond about the SMINC review. Martin Hyde to be asked to communicate this. MH

### **8. Any Other Business**

Steve Roedel reported that an application has been submitted by the Greenwich Society to carry out work some landscaping work and install a sign. Helen suggested that it would be good if they could talk about working with the Blackheath Society on this. The proposal should also come to this meeting at some point.

Helen reported that a meeting had taken place about the lavatory block near the Folly Pond and that it had been agreed that the Greenwich Council legal department should be asked to write to crown Estates about either knocking the block down or finding an alternative use for it. If a letter is written it was agreed that local residents should be encouraged to also write in support. A letter should also go from the BJWP.

It was reported that a number of caravans had parked on the Heath over the summer which had successfully been moved on quite quickly. A question was asked about whether there was good coordination between the two Councils and the police and Steve said that there is.

Sue Corlett reported that there is a lamp post askew on Hare & Billet Rd. Also that the pipistrelle bats are still flying around the Heath after concern that they might have been disturbed by On Blackheath.

Margaret Dinkeldein reported that there had been an occasion on a Monday when there had been a large amount of litter around the Heath. During a conversation with a Glendale operative, she had been told that he was the only person emptying bins and that he wouldn't be back until Saturday. Margaret wanted to clarify whether this is the case. She will email Martin to find out. Cllr Bonavia reported that there will be a reduction in street cleansing and so it will be important to monitor this kind of thing. MD

Joe Beale reported that there is a bench on Whitfield Mount that is burnt and has a hole in it where lots of beer cans and other rubbish gets left. His suggestion was that given its condition it might be a good idea to remove the bench. This should be communicated to Martin and Gemma for consideration. MH, GB

Cllr Bonavia reported that the Blackheath assembly is planning an event on a Saturday in June 2016 and would like to use Church Fields. The idea will be to have stalls and invite local organisations to take part. The point was made that tables and chairs would need to be provided.

Dates of future meetings:

17 November  
19 January  
23 February  
15 March