

Blackheath Joint Working Party (BJWP) Meeting Minutes

Meeting 7pm, Thursday 4th November 2021

Venue: Zoom online meeting

Attendees

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

Cllr Geoff Brighty	Royal Borough of Greenwich
Tony Butler	Friends of Greenwich Park
Philip Craig	Greenwich Society
Sue Corlett	Hare & Billet Action Group
Meg Dinkeldein	Tidy Blackheath Group
Gemma Marston	Glendale Services
Mike Norton	Westcombe Society
Nicholas Pond	London Borough of Lewisham
Helen Reeves	Blackheath Society
David Walker	Blackheath Society

1. Apologies

- 1.1. Apologies from Cllr Leo Fletcher- Royal Borough of Greenwich, Cllr Mariam Lolavar- RBG, Janine Whittaker - RBG

2. Minutes of 21 September 2021 meeting and matters arising

- 2.1. **Larger litter bins on Blackheath:** Meg has sent an email to the relevant council officer to ask about costs including installation. No reply has been received and Meg will follow this up.
- 2.2. **Missing gazebos:** To date, no-one has applied for compensation from insurance. Gemma confirmed that if insurance is involved, the policy would be with Glendale. There is some query as to who last used the property and who brought it back.
- 2.3. **Algae on Prince of Wales Pond:** Nick confirmed that this has been identified as harmless duckweed and it is not a danger to dogs or children. It is due to be cleared up soon.
- 2.4. **Tea Hut:** Kevin Bonavia said that council officers should have signed off an application to replace the hut in current location before the owner went ahead. Cllr Mariam Lolavar has written to say that Greenwich is now keen to progress the application for the old toilet block. The Crown Estate has now completed its staff restructuring and an officer has been appointed to deal with the issue. A meeting is now being pursued.

3. Blackheath Events 2022

- 3.1. Gemma Marston presented the Lewisham plans. All proposals are exactly the same as for the events this year with the possible addition of a new two-day music festival in August. This proposal is from a commercial company and is in its very early stages. No formal application has yet been received. Kevin suggested that the BJWP would consider any application which has been made to Gemma by the January meeting.
- 3.2. The Kite Day was considered to have been a great success, despite the lack of wind, and a repeat event was approved for 2022. Kevin recorded thanks to the Blackheath Society members responsible and it was suggested that contact is made with Kellie Blake for next year's Borough of Culture celebrations.

- 3.3. Gemma reported that the Race for Life has also been a great success and it has raised more than £11m since coming to Blackheath.
- 3.4. The Marathon will take place in October 2022 for one more year before probably returning to its original slot earlier in the year.
- 3.5. The November firework display will only return if a private sponsor is identified.
- 3.6. There has been no application for an OnBlackheath festival in 2022.
- 3.7. The events proposed for Greenwich are also the same as for 2021 with a possible addition of the Cellar Door Cinema which is currently at the early stages of consideration.
- 3.8. Tony Butler observed that two of the planned funfairs are due to run over three weeks, which increases the likelihood of damage to the Heath. Kevin asked if this is longer than in the past. In Janine's absence, Gemma confirmed that the proposed fairs are longer than in the past but the same as in this current year. Geoffrey Brighty thought that the fairs this year were longer to compensate for there being fewer fairs due to the COVID restrictions. Sacha will ask Janine to clarify the position.
- 3.9. Geoffrey asked if the general view is that the fairs are becoming too long as, if so, this should be clearly communicated to Greenwich. The committee confirmed this is their view.
- 3.10. Tony noted that an extra fair has been included for Christmas. Meg repeated her concern about winter fairs which have historically done more damage to the Heath. Customer parking has now been stopped but the fairs are now much bigger and taking up all the available space. Kevin suggested that our concern about Christmas fairs should also be communicated to both councils and discussed at next meeting in January.
- 3.11. Concern was expressed about the clash of dates during the October half term. With the fair and the circus on different sides of the A2, there is concern about children crossing the road.
- 3.12. Tony and Mike Norton also queried why the recent filming of Bridgerton is still not included in the events calendar on Greenwich side of the Heath and count as days used. Philip queried the large number of vehicles associated with the filming and why these appear to be exempt from the parking restrictions. These queries will be passed to Janine for a response at a future meeting. It was agreed that both councils should alert parking attendants to come to the Heath to issue parking tickets for illegal parking.
- 3.13. Kevin summarised:
 - clashes between events on both sides of Heath need to be sorted
 - length of funfairs too long and concern about a December fair
 - filming etc should be included in the calendar of events

4 Blackheath Joint Events Policy Review.

- 4.1 The amenity societies confirmed their concern about a maximum of 90 days' events for each council.
- 4.2 As noted in the previous meeting, Greenwich has asked for an amendment to allow for applications to be considered throughout the year, not only in October. Lewisham and Glendale are happy with the original draft but would accept an amendment if it confirms that the views of the BJWP can be taken into account by the relevant officers and councillors prior to any final decision.
- 4.3 Kevin asks that the BJWP comments from the previous meeting (on 21st September 2021) are included in the report to decision makers in both councils.

5 OnBlackheath Fund Review

- 5.1 Helen confirmed that the final payment of £15,000 for 2019 has now been received. The current balance is £34,000. There are still a number of applications, amounting to approximately £10,000, which have been granted but not yet claimed.
- 5.2 The entomology survey: £4,800 has been granted (+VAT?). Nick confirmed that the survey has been carried out. He will arrange for the invoice to be issued and for the final report to be circulated.
- 5.3 Gorse and Broom on Whitfield Mount: £2,400 allocated, nothing yet claimed. Nick confirmed that the broom has been removed and the gorse is due to be planted in the Spring. Nick will remind Glendale to issue an invoice.
- 5.4 £300 allocated for Christmas tree and lights 2020. David will follow up the invoice for turning the lights on and off for Christmas 2020. The remainder of the grant can then be use for Christmas 2021.
- 5.5 Up to £750 for the maintenance of the raised beds in Tranquil Vale and the garden in Montpelier Vale. The grant is still available for maintenance of the two projects.
- 5.6 Up to £400 has been allocated for the reseeding of the bunds and the wildflower meadows. Nick will find out if this has been carried out and if it is still needed.
- 5.7 The 2021 comparative butterfly survey has been completed and paid for with funds still available for the final report.
- 5.8 Future applications: Kevin suggested that, as there may not be any additional funds in the future, it would be cautious to reserve some funds for suitable projects which may arise in the future. We do not need to seek out new projects for the total funds available but we should still provide information about the possibility of applying for funding at the public meeting in Spring 2022.
- 5.9 Sue asked about the children's playground which has been suggested for Talbot Place. Kevin brought the meeting up to date with the plans which are currently being developed. It is expected that a bid will be made for the Community Infrastructure Fund (CIL).
- 5.10 It was suggested that this would be a good topic for the annual public meeting in February.
- 5.11 The Blackheath Society proposal for completing and maintaining the bunds on the Heath: Nick reported that a meeting had taken place between relevant officers in Lewisham. In order to consider a grant, we shall need to know the costs, particularly of long-term maintenance. Nick will ask officers to arrange a meeting. The Westcombe Society and the Friends of Greenwich Park would also like to be involved.
- 5.12 Wildlife images. £300 had been provided for additional photographic images for the Heath walks. Most of this has now been spent with a small balance for final adjustments.

6. Future dates

- 6.1 The next committee meeting will be held on Zoom on January 13th 2022. The agenda will include decisions on the content of the February public meeting and the application for the August music festival, if received by then.
- 6.2 The public meeting will be held in The Bakehouse on Thursday 24th February.

6.3 Councillors will go into pre-election purdah in March so the first meeting after this is likely to be in May.

7. AOB

7.1 Tony asked to record thanks to Kevin and Sacha for getting the last minutes out early. This was generally welcomed.

7.2 Geoff Brighty noted that a mobile, illuminated advertising screen has been parked regularly on Duke Humphrey Road and he will raise this with parks officers.

The meeting ended at 8.45 pm.