

Blackheath Joint Working Party (BJWP) Meeting Minutes

15 January 2019

Venue: Age Exchange, Blackheath

Attendees

Cllr Kevin Bonavia (chair)	London Borough of Lewisham
Cllr Geoff Brighty	Royal Borough of Greenwich
Cllr Mariam Lolavar	Royal Borough of Greenwich
Tony Butler	Friends of Greenwich Park
Janine Whitaker	Royal Borough of Greenwich
Sue Corlett	Hare & Billet Action Group
Philip Craig	Greenwich Society
Shirley Broughton	Nature Conservation Group
Mike Norton	Westcombe Society
Dame Helen Reeves	Blackheath Society
John Thompson	London Borough of Lewisham
Chris Devine	Royal Borough of Greenwich
Vince Buchannan	London Borough of Lewisham
Rachael Hook	Royal Borough of Greenwich
Margaret Dinkledein	Blackheath Society
David Walker	Blackheath Society
James Bravin (mins)	London Borough of Lewisham

1. Apologies

- 1.1. Apologies were received from Cllr Amanda de Ryk, Cllr Juliet Campbell, Cllr Aiden Smith, Lisa Lawrence, and Gemma Buttell.

2. Minutes and Matters Arising

- 2.1. There were no points of accuracy regarding the minutes.
- 2.2. Cllr Bonavia noted that minutes still needed to be added to both Council websites. Cllr Bonavia also asked if amenity societies could link to the minutes once they are available.

ACTION: Amenity societies to link to BJWP minutes on their own websites.

- 2.3. Cllr Bonavia said that he had notified Kelly Blake about the complaints regarding the Fireworks posters. Dame Helen Reeves asked that in the future could she cut down any posters that are advertising events that have already taken place. Cllr Bonavia said it was fine as long as they were not damaging posters that might be reused for repeat events. Cllr Bonavia also noted that although the Fireworks was a proposed cut from Lewisham's budget, the cut would be taken in 2020. There was work being done to try and find full sponsorship for the event.
- 2.4. Shirley Broughton noted that she had not seen the map of the events, so this remained an action for Gemma Buttell.

ACTION: Gemma Buttell to send Shirley Broughton event location map.

- 2.5. Vince Buchannan noted that he had met with representatives from OnBlackheath.
- 2.6. Tony Butler noted that John Lynn had informed him that the consultation regarding changes to Blackheath gate junction had now closed but the results had not yet been published.
- 2.7.
 - 2.7.1. Cllr Bonavia noted that Mike Norton did present BJWP's objections to the impact of housing developments proposed at the former Tesco site might have on the views of Blackheath. Cllr Bonavia noted that he also spoke on behalf of Lewisham and Blackheath Ward. He said that the committee voted 4:3 in favour of taking the developments forward.
 - 2.7.2. One member suggested that the BJWP write to Sadiq Khan expressing their concerns about the development.

ACTION: BJWP Member – to draft letter Mayor of London setting out the reasons for opposition to the development. Letter to be circulate to BJWP members before submission.

3. OnBlackheath

- 3.1. Cllr Bonavia noted that a change of dates to OnBlackheath could mean that some meadowland on the Heath would be used during the summer, and this had raised concerns that had been discussed at a previous BJWP meeting.
- 3.2. Vince Buchannan informed the BJWP that he, Nicolas Pond, and Alex Wicks from OnBlackheath met to discuss the impact of moving the event to an earlier date. Based on the proposed dates Nicolas Pond has produced a briefing which sets out a plan which would allow the movement of the dates with the following mitigation:
 - **Introduce a spring meadow rather than a summer one**
 - **Increase area of summer meadow elsewhere on the heath**
- 3.3. Vince Buchannan said that this approach would not cause any long-term dis-benefits for the heath and it was Nicolas Pond's view that from an ecological perspective that on balance there was no problem with an earlier event.
- 3.4. Shirley Broughton said that she would like to hear a second opinion from another specialist regarding the impact on the heath. In addition she asked if there would be any impact on nesting birds. Vince Buchannan said that he would be happy to forward any questions to Nick Pond, but Green Scenes position is that, based on expert advice, they would be happy for the event to take place at an earlier date.
- 3.5. Cllr Bonavia proposed that a single item BJWP meeting be held to discuss the ecological impact of the moving, and allow Nick Pond to answer any questions that the BJWP might have.

ACTION: Cllr Bonavia – to organise a meeting with Nick Pond and BJWP to allow members to discuss the impact of moving OnBlackheath.

- 3.6. Cllr Bonavia introduced Tom Wates and Alex Wicks from OnBlackheath to present their pre-application survey. Cllr Bonavia noted that the issue around the timing of the event would be left to one-side, as this had been discussed already and would be covered at the one issue meeting.
- 3.7. Tom Wates noted that it was exactly the same event, same capacity, same setup, with the only change being the proposed date as discussed earlier. Tom clarified that Whitsfield Mount would not be included in the footprint of the event as with the 2018 event.
- 3.8. Tom Wates noted that Pre and Post event letters would be sent out (27th June for the pre event meeting, 24th – 25th for the post meeting). He said that no one attended the post event meeting this year.
- 3.9. One BJWP asked why the capacity is 24,999 when the event has never been that big. Tom Wates said that would be maximum capacity for the event, but they have never sold the full number of tickets. David Walker asked if there would be road closures – Tom Wates said that would depend on the number of tickets sold.
- 3.10. Cllr Brighty said a larger event would inevitably create more noise. Cllr Bonavia said that the noise impact is reviewed every year and this would be taken into consideration.
- 3.11. Shirley Broughton asked what the impact of not holding the event would be. Cllr Bonavia advised that it is a significant income stream for the Council, and at a time when cuts are being made. Vince Buchannan said that if the OnBlackheath event were not to go ahead then Greenscene would heavily market Blackheath to try and find a replacement event, as the income is so important.
- 3.12. Cllr Bonavia stated that in principle the BJWP agreed the event going ahead subject to the issue regarding the ecological impact of an earlier event being resolved.
- 3.13. Rachael Hook said that there were a couple of pre-approval questionnaires (Marathon, Twilight Walk, and Non-animal circus), that she had received. Cllr Bonavia said that these should be circulated and any comments could be discussed at the public meeting.

ACTION: Rachael Hook – To circulate the pre-approval questionnaire for other events to the BJWP for comment. Any comments to be discussed at public meeting (4th March).

4. Cyclists riding on the grass of the Heath

- 4.1. Dame Helen Reeves noted that a member of the Blackheath Society had commented that cyclists were cutting corners over the Heath South of Whitsfield Mount. This is causing damage to the grass.
- 4.2. Vince Buchannan said that Bye Laws prevent people from cycling on the Heath but unfortunately desire lines do form and they can be very difficult from stopping. Vince said that he was happy to organise an onsite visit to look at the different locations of desire lines.

ACTION: Vince Buchanan – organise a site visit to investigate different locations where desire lines are forming to see what can be done to intervene.

- 4.3. One BJWP member raised the issues of drivers parking their cars on the heath. In particular around the Blackheath Prep School. Cllr Bonavia agreed to write to the school to ask them to raise the issue with parents.

ACTION: Cllr Bonavia – to write to Blackheath Prep School raising the issue of cars parking on the Heath.

5. Quietways

- 5.1. Cllr Bonavia introduced two representatives from Living Streets (Formerly the Pedestrians Association).
- 5.2. Living Streets presented that they have had some reservations regarding the proposals in particular the fact that it was putting cyclists and pedestrians on the same path, and the allocated 2m width was not wide enough to accommodate both.
- 5.3. Living streets indicated that they were happy with the proposed zebra crossings, however there were some issues with the shared crossing and that they had been in dialogue with Sustrans about these issues.
- 5.4. One member said that there is some signage that is incorrect along one of the paths.

ACTION: Cllr Bonavia – To work with staff to correct the incorrect signage that indicates cycle path is divided when in actual fact it should indicate that the path is shared.

6. Disused toilet block

- 6.1. Cllr Brighty and Dame Helen Reeves are to meet with a planning officer at Greenwich to discuss the next steps for the disused toilet block.

7. Planning Annual Meeting

- 7.1. Cllr Bonavia said that the annual public meeting was to take place at the Bakehouse, but he would double check this. He also advised that members should meet a little bit early (6.30pm) so that they could discuss any matters arising.
- 7.2. Cllr Bonavia asked members of the BJWP what items they would like to see on the agenda for the public meeting.
- 7.3. It was agreed that the for
- **Community Projects**
 - **History of the heath**
 - **Work of BJWP over the year**
 - **Wildlife presentation by Joe Beale**

8. Resourcing

- 8.1. Dame Helen Reeves said that the Blackheath Society would still like to provide admin support to the BJWP, but the Society would like to know the total number of hours of work that it would be and what the remuneration would be.

- 8.2. Cllr Bonavia said that he hoped that Royal Borough of Greenwich would be able to match the money that Lewisham Council will provide. Cllr Lolavar said that no money had been agreed.

ACTION: Cllr Bonavia – To speak to contacts at Royal Borough of Greenwich to discuss all possible funding arrangements.

ACTION: Paul Aladenika – To provide outline of the cost and hours of work that are needed to support the BJWP

Date of next meeting: Public Meeting 4 March 18:30 at the Old Bakehouse Theatre

Addendum

9. On 22 January members of the BJWP met with Nicolas Pond to discuss the ecological impact of changing the dates for OnBlackheath. Nicolas presented his view that with a mitigation plan in place, moving the event would not have a negative ecological impact on Blackheath. Following discussion and opportunity for BJWP members to ask questions, BJWP members voted in favour of the adopting the new dates.