



**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 22nd October 2007, 7.30pm
held at The Ackroyd Community Centre, SE23**

Present:- BHFUG members:

Gavin Bolam (Chair)	Kylie Barnes (Secretary)	Sydney Couldridge	Nicholas Taylor
Andrew Barnes (Treasurer)	Alan Bailey	Mark Wellband	Albert Blackmore
Councillor Susan Wise	Malcolm Trott	Caroline Sefton	Nick Marks
Elizabeth Downie	Anne Scott	Paul Baker	Marcel Jenkins
Molly Bertrand			

Apologies:-

Lara Al-Jabi (Glendale)	Councillor Jackie Addison	Warren Gregory – Met Police
Gemma Marston	Sue Hout	Pippa Graber
Sylvia Scott – Ward Councillor	Juliette Flower	Maureen Couldridge

1. Welcome and Apologies

Gavin Bolam opened the meeting.

2. Committee Report

Gavin Bolam (GB) produced the Chairman's Annual Report for 2006/2007. The report showed how many meetings there had been since September 2006. That the Constitution was still in use and the bank account had a healthy balance. As part of the Constitution, people attending the meetings should, where possible make a voluntary donation of £1 to help cover some of the running costs, including the hall hire for the meetings. As applications for funding progress, a funding sub committee was formed at the last meeting on 6 September and the members will be holding a meeting in the near future.

The committee elected at the AGM in September 2006 was as follows:

Gavin Bolam - Chair
Kylie Barnes - Secretary
Andrew Barnes – Treasurer (elected in his absence)
Mark Wellband
Sydney Couldridge
Alan Bailey

The Group has held three very successful planting days this year. The first was a bulb planting day in October 2006. We had over 30 volunteers including children to help on the day. Sadly, as the bulbs began to blossom, Glendale's made a mistake and mowed down the bluebells. A record of planting is now with the park maintenance team so this shouldn't happen again. The hedge planting day on 20 January 07 and the second on 17 February, all made possible by the support of Lara Al-Jabi from Glendale's. The weather in January was awful – we were working in mud and it rained very hard. In February we had glorious sunshine and the job was completed in record time.

With thanks to Gavin Bolam for successfully negotiating for resources from Glendale's, the Group is able to organise another bulb planting day on Saturday the 10th November at 10.30 along with putting up the sponsored bird boxes from the fun day. There will be 2 hedge planting events early in 08.

These events are really important in getting people from the local community involved and raise the level of awareness of the group. It is important to give them a sense of ownership and care towards Blythe Hill Fields. It is hoped that regular events like this will take place more often next year. There are photos of these events on the website.

The Group continues to use its own web-site – www.blythehillfields.org.uk where minutes of meetings, agendas and information on the group can be viewed. The web site is continuing to grow, with regular additions of pictures taken by local people and it can be used for a number of ways, including booking stalls for the fun day etc. In practical terms it's a document store for Group agendas, minutes and reports but it is also a place of reference for new members to access information about the Group. It is a means of sharing ideas on the discussion boards and a gallery for pictures of Blythe Hill Fields and events and activities that the Group organises.

The Chair thought it would be a good idea to extend external relationships with other user groups within the area to establish how they work and achieve their aims within their user groups.

3. **Treasurer's Report & Statement of Accounts to 30 September 2007**

Andrew Barnes reported that there was £2,152.92 in the User Group's Bank Account and £85.61 currently being held in petty cash.

4. **Support of the Group**

GB has tried in various ways to encourage people to support the user group in terms of leaflet dropping, putting up posters in shop windows to encourage people to come to our meetings and get involved.

It is imperative that any improvements/enhancements to Blythe Hill Fields are supported by a majority of park users and local residents. It is clear that since holding the Fun Day in June, people have expressed a strong interest in having another fun day however, for this to happen, it is vital that more volunteers come forward to help with organising such a complicated & varied event.

5. **Councillor Susan Wise**

Some time ago, the User Group invited Councillor Susan Wise to speak at our meeting and tonight she introduced herself to the user group committee and attendees of the meeting. She was aware of our User Group and that we had had 2 feasibility studies done previously and was aware of the issues that were raised in those studies.

1. Lighting – would not come under their pfi funding requirements so it was unlikely that the fields would have lighting installed.
2. Street furniture – Lewisham Council were exploring this issue and it was thought that more benches were needed; more bins as there were only 2 in the whole of the fields, more notice-boards (one at each entrance).
3. Glendale's 10 year contract comes to an end in 2010 and Lewisham Council are currently re-writing the contract and it was felt an audit needed to be done in the fields on terms of the work that is carried out by Glendale's as there is no quality control carried out.
4. There is a tree replacing programme is currently in progress
5. Children's play area – There are budgets for play areas and it is dealt with by 5 directorates and divisions, one of them being Greenspace (community services)
6. Biodiversity – Nick Pond was the person to speak to about this.
7. Dog Issues – there are lots of dog baiting sessions going on within the fields and this is putting off people using the fields at any time of day/ night. The dogs are using the children's play area as a training ground; hence the equipment is being damaged by the dogs hanging from various objects which are being used to train them to fight.
8. Surveillance cameras – there is no chance of this being installed in the fields.
9. Drop kerbs had recently been installed in Codrington Hill – S. Wise is to establish why these have been done. One of the kerbs has been installed right at the exit from the fields straight onto a main road. Should a child be on a bicycle and fail to stop in time, they could be seriously injured should they go straight into the road.

6. **Committee Resignations & Appointments**

GB stated that he was going to be resigning as Chair at the AGM.

All members of the Committee for the User Group had to resign, be re-elected and seconded by members attending the meeting.

- Gavin Bolam resigned as Chair Alan Bailey has been elected to stand as Chair
- Gavin Bolam was re-elected as a Committee Member
- Andrew Barnes resigned as Treasurer and was re-elected as Treasurer
- Kylie Barnes resigned as Secretary and was re-elected as Secretary
- Sydney Couldridge resigned as a Committee Member and was re-elected as a Committee Member
- Mark Wellband resigned as a Committee Member and was re-elected as a Committee Member
- Molly Bertrand was elected as a Committee Member
- Ray Ashley resigned as a Committee Member due to ill health

7. Any Other Business

Glendale has kindly given us more bulbs to be planted within the fields. The bulb planting day will take place on Saturday the 10th November 2007 starting at 10.30am with hedging to take place in January / February 2008. Dates of these activities are to be confirmed.

Caroline Sefton mentioned that an archaeologist might be able to do a dig within the fields to find artefacts.

Elizabeth Downie suggested that we don't hold a fun day in 2008 but hold one every two years. It was felt that as such a lot of work had gone into organising the last one, momentum might be lost if one were not held next year as people have already expressed an interest in one being held next year. This would be discussed as an Agenda item at the December meeting.

8. Dates of the Future Meetings

The next meeting will be held on the 6th December 2007 at 7.30 at the Ackroyd Community Centre, Ackroyd Road, SE23.

MISSION STATEMENT

Blythe Hill Fields User Group (BHFUG) exists to represent everyone living around or using Blythe Hill Fields. Our purpose is to achieve sustainable improvements and facilities in this vital resource for the benefit of the whole community. We aim to promote the increased use and enjoyment of this essential open space.