



MEETING MINUTES

8 pm on 17th Feb 2018 at the Blythe Hill Tavern

In Attendance

Ellie, Lulie, Jo, Madeleine, James, Jim, Nicolas, Helen, Jane, Fiona, Fran, Tim, Svea, Josh, Suzanne.
Also Steve Langley - Glendale, Peter Maynard - Lewisham Council and Richard Wells – Hunters, Catford.

Welcome

Ellie welcomed everybody to the meeting, including guests.

Meeting Minutes

Prior to the meeting, the minutes of the last meeting were circulated prior to the meeting and agreed.

Agenda

1. Glendale and Council Q&A:

Ellie opened to floor for any specific questions for Glendale or Lewisham Council.

Jane alerted them to uneven paving slabs near the park entrance that were clearly unstable explaining difficulty encountered by those using buggy's etc. Peter assured they would look into it.

Ellie presented a question on behalf of Darren who was unable to attend the meeting: Post the success of the Blythe Hill Fields Fork Walk and seed sowing, where volunteers sowed seeds in designated areas – leaving a swathe clear for a pathway, he asked if Glendale could mow the pathway area. Although now unmarked, all being well, once the seeds grow it should be clear where the pathway actually is when it comes time to mow again at the end of summer.

Ellie confirmed that Gemma at Lewisham Council had been notified regarding all details of the event, and a map and list of seeds sown supplied. Peter and Steve confirmed this should be possible.

Greenflag: Peter advised that volunteers would be needed onsite for an initial review of the Fields suitability for the programme.

There were no other questions raised.

ACTION: Suzanne volunteered to meet for a Greenflag review visit with Lewisham Council.

2. Project update / Table Tennis

Ellie explained that at the 2017 Festival, attendees, were asked to vote for their preferred funding goal for the Fields (mural, table tennis and signs). The Table Tennis table was most successful. Glendale have now raised concerns regarding the proposed placement of the table based on experience of installations in other locations and problems regarding draining etc. The location was previously agreed by the Friends taking into account existing uses of the space and ensuring it was accessible to all potential users and it had been agreed that additional matting would be purchased to prevent water logging.

Glendale's recommendation is that it must go on a hard standing surface. Those present highlighted the current uses for the existing hard standing including turning & access point for cars, vans during the Festival, used as an exercise area, location of Festival toilets etc as well as location for current mobile refreshment provider. It was noted that children also hurtle down the path from the playground using that as a turning space. The existing bench and bike rails would also inevitably need to be moved.

The Friends asked if it were possible to extend the existing hard standing to accommodate current usage and still allow for the placement of the Table Tennis Table, keep the bench and bike rails in situ. Glendale expressed reluctance to introduce further hard standing to the Fields and said a case would have to be made - stressing all decisions must survive scrutiny.

The placement of the Table outside the existing playground was voted on in our last meeting and intended to encourage and attract other users of the Fields;

Placement: Three locations were suggested as they offered the best options for accessibility, visibility and practicality. The final placement (Option A) to the left of the hard surface opposite the playground was chosen as it provides: a flat surface, adequate drainage, and access for all ages. (Table would not be placed inside the playground which is aimed at under-12s only).

In light of Glendale and Lewisham Council's revised concerns, our options as they now stand are:

1. Place the table on the current hard standing and lose access to it for all other uses
2. Marginally extend the existing hard standing to accommodate all existing and future uses
3. Cancel the Table Tennis installation altogether

ACTION: Friends to discuss and decide how to proceed and make a case for additional hard-standing if necessary.

Project update / Playground

Fiona updated all present on the status of the Playground improvements confirming that with the groups approval a funding application would be made to the National Lottery – Awards for All scheme. FS and KS

had sources 4 quotes, only 3 of which came through. Following consultation with Glendale and Lewisham Council and confirmation that they had worked with this supplier - the least expensive option was chosen by the Friends for the installation of items voted for by children at the 2017 Festival. They include;

Wobbly Bridge – to be placed inside the existing woodchip area by the Pirate Ship

Pirouette – to be placed on the hard standing within the playground.

Cradle Swing – chosen as a more accessible swing for special needs park users for whom there is currently no existing provision.

With committees approval once submitted it would take 3 months until the application decision is received. The proposal is to go for the maximum £10,000 to cover purchase, groundworks, installation and ongoing maintenance of the equipment. The cost for all this currently stands at approximately £11,750 which exceeds the funds raised for the project by the Friends.

All present agreed to submit the application once final financial details had been provided and reviewed by the Executive Committee.

ACTION: FS to obtain required finance details from Treasurer (Dave) and update the form for final review by the Executive Committee.

3. Future Events and Fundraising

We have learnt of an additional funding programme through Lewisham Council – called Our Space which offer tiers of funding to a maximum of £5k. If successful, all project work must be completed during September 2018. The deadline for any application is April 30th.

The 5k maximum and timescales exclude it as an option for additional playground funding as we can't guarantee a response to our other grant application and installation etc being completed during that month. As an alternative, two previously proposed projects were suggested:

Proposed Mural - On the Montacute Road walkway through to the Fields. Ellie confirmed an exploratory meeting was planned for later in the month (our contact has been away on business) but was unlikely to be achievable in time for a funding application to be submitted. Peter Maynard advised that Lewisham Council would need to approve final designs before any work commenced.

Community Garden – Using the existing flower bed by the noticeboard as you enter the Fields from Blythe Hill Lane the idea is to utilise the space, encourage community involvement to plan, plant and maintain the garden. Recognising how the space is currently used, we would also hope to incorporate the existing trails made by children with willow tunnels etc. Some work has already been done on this idea and Suzanne agreed to try and complete the application before the 30th in consultation with Shaha.

All present agreed we should proceed with an application.

Separately - following the success and popularity of the Seed Sowing, another proposal for a family focused planting activity has been suggested. The idea is to plant Sunflowers in pots around the railings of the playground as you enter Blythe Hill Fields. Suggestion is for the pots to be fixed to the existing railings

which can then act as a trellis to support the sunflowers as they grow. Ideally to be sown in May with a radiant display from June to August if all goes to plan.

All present agreed this would be a lovely activity and Glendale raised no objections to the fixing of pots to the railings.

Svea enquired as to the replacement of lost trees that had not survived previous replanting. It was agreed to postpone discussion of this for a future meeting. Glendale agreed to remove the dead trees and at James's request agreed to see if they could store the stakes and wire etc for future use.

ACTION:

- Suzanne to complete Our Space Funding Application with details from Shaha.
- Replacement of lost trees to be added to next agenda.
- Glendale to confirm if they can store tree stakes and wires for future planting.

4. Business advertising on Facebook Page and Online criticisms

In light of several recent business postings – the question of whether or not to ban any and all business promotion posts was raised. After some discussion and debate it was agreed that if the Friends page exists to promote the use and value of Blythe Hill Fields to the local community, then local businesses are part of that community. It was also pointed out that existing page guidelines do state that business posts are only permitted if relevant to the use of the Fields or if an incentive is offered to the Group Facebook followers, (a discount etc.).

It was agreed that Admins would in future respond to such posts quoting the guidelines. If a post was not deemed relevant and specific to the use of the Fields or local community and no incentive offered it would be deleted.

Ellie asked for some new Admins and both Svea and Tim volunteered.

ACTION: Ellie to grant Svea and Tim Facebook Admin access.

Suzanne raised that some criticisms had been raised online about the Friends and Ellie having a business operating in the Fields. It was noted that the aim of the Friends was to increase use of the Fields. Of particular concern were suggestions of impropriety by the group and our decision making processes. This was discussed and it was noted that all decisions within the group are reached by consensus, and given that the attendance of the last few meetings has been 18/13/14/17 respectively, no single individual is in a position to hold sway.

The public perception of Blythe Hill Fields is very positive and this was reiterated by the Peter. It was agreed that the Friends should be more proactive regarding publicising projects and activities completed and developments currently being undertaken.

Attendees expressed their continued confidence in our current Chair, Ellie Rogers.

ACTIONS:

- Suzanne to produce an on-going FAQ document relating to different issues regarding the Fields.
- Admins to respond to future online criticisms with standard invitation to attend our meetings.

5. Insurance and Finance

Discussion postponed in absence of the Treasurer.

6. Festival Updates

Festival Signage: Jo requested alternative storage for the new signage as they no longer have space.

Fran offered possible storage as has Richard from Hunters – Jo to liaise.

Music: Josh confirmed that 6 acts have been selected and agreed for the Festival and that several DJ's have offered their services this year. Given time restrictions on the day it is only practical to have one DJ perform. It was agreed that in the interests of fairness that Josh would request a demo from each so a vote could be taken as to who was chosen.

Security Wristbands for children at the Festival: Luli advised that 2,000 printed Blythe Hill Fields Festival wristbands could be purchased for £80.

Activities: Several climbing wall companies have been approached but none are available on the 1st July. Suggestions for alternative activities for older kids were sought and both Wildlife drawing* and Archery suggested. The Wildlife drawing organisation also provide aerial displays - Lulie to investigate these options further and report back to the group.

Gazebos: Fran advised that if additional were needed the local WI group have two they would hire.

Stalls: Mads and Fiona confirmed that around 18 stalls have been booked so far with new requests coming in regularly. We have several food stalls lined up and options for ice-cream vendors.

*In light of noted congestion around the food van area last year it was agreed that we would review proposed pitches around the cross roads to avoid it this year.

Face-painting: Fran confirmed that we have 3 face-painting organisers interested this year and it was confirmed that they are traditionally placed beside the Kids Tent. Fran to confirm they can provide their own tent, tables, chairs etc. Pitch fee discussed and agreed.

Kids Tent: Fran confirmed that Jamii Café have offered their *Lego Club kit* for a kids tent activity and also would like to provide a quiet space - sensory tent. Badge Making: The kit is available for use again this year but new backs will need to be purchased. Suzanne agreed to provide the paper circles.

Dani Povey has agreed to organise volunteers for the Kids Tent again this year.

Woodland Stage: Take Flight and Kids Yoga have been confirmed as has a SteamPunk author and storyteller.

Additional possibilities and costs: Punch and Judy, Rent a Dinosaur, Circus Skills, and Tea Dance for Little People.

Breastfeeding Tent: Fran confirmed she is still waiting to confirm this. Ellie, Jo and Lulie confirmed they know Maria and would also try and make contact.

A Dog Show: was also suggested as an acknowledgment of the dog walkers and owners making use of the Fields. It was agreed that contact should be made with the Chandos in light of their recent ChanDog activity.

Hay bales and Vans: Jim explained we would need extra vans to collect and return tent frames , along with tables and chairs and hay bales. The Ackroyd Centre have confirmed tables and chairs could be collected on the Sunday morning if brought back Sunday evening. Mad agreed to ask Ocean if he could drive one of the vans and Lulie offered hers for use on the day.

Nicolas has confirmed that she will chase up the contact person for the Allotments via Lewisham Council with regard to collecting hay bales at the end of the day.

Toilets: Ellie agreed to chase Gavin for various contacts regarding toilet hire as previously provided details appear incorrect.

7. Future Meeting Dates

Next Friends Committee & Festival Meeting - yet to be agreed

ACTION: Suzanne to circulate potential dates.

Saturday 12th May, Monday 14th or Tuesday 15th

SMcD

25.4.18