

**Blackheath Joint Working Party
15th of July 2014, 7.30pm**

Age Exchange, Blackheath

Attendees:

Cllr Kevin Bonavia	Blackheath Ward Member (LBL)	(Chair)
David Walker	Blackheath Society	
Mike Norton	Westcombe Society	
Shirley Broughton	Westcombe Society	
Martin Hyde	Parks and Regeneration Manager (LBL)	
Sue Corlett	Hare and Billet	
Cllr Gareth Siddorn	Blackheath Ward Member (LBL)	
Cllr Aidan Smith	Greenwich West Ward Member (RBG)	
Anna Townend	Greenwich Environment Forum	
Lee Beasley	RBG	
Laura Gregory	Customer Services (LBL)	
Philip Craig	Greenwich Society	
Chris Wortley	RBG	
Ollie Miller	RBG	

1. Apologies And Introductions

Apologies were received from Cllr Matthew Pennycock, Cllr Amanda de Ryk, Cllr Paul Morrissey, Tony Butler and Gemma Buttell from Glendale.

Laura Gregory (LBL) was introduced as the minute taker for the evening. The group agree to Cllr KB offer to be the temporary chair for the evening until the election of the group's chair was covered at item 4 on the agenda.

2. Minutes of last meeting (8th April and 24th of June)

- i. Accuracy- all agreed
- ii. Matters Arising: MH and Cllr AdR meeting to discuss the changing rooms on the heath and the potential improvements of the area in conjunction with All Saints School.

3. Greenwich Tall Ships Regatta- Parking (Chris Wortley and Ollie Miller- RB Greenwich)

OM explained that Greenwich will be hosting a tall ships regatta from the 5th-9th of September 2014. The ships will set sail from Falmouth racing to the Isle of Wight and then sail non-competitively into Greenwich and Docklands. For the duration of the regatta ships will be located at the following sites:

- Greenwich Peninsula (Enderby's Wharf and Victoria Deep Water Dock)
- Maritime Greenwich
- Royal Arsenal Woolwich
- West India Dock

Likely the event will draw a large crowd across the sites- although as the event is ticketed it is difficult to predict with certainty the volume of visitors that could attend. As part of the publication for the event

visitors will be encouraged to walk and make use of public transport, the DLR will be running a peak time service throughout the Regatta and where possible South Eastern Trains will be running longer services. However, there may still be some visitors that choose to travel by car and as such provision for additional vehicles has been considered as part of the events traffic management plan.

CW explained that they had identified three potential car park sites, each with a capacity of 1500 spaces:

- Woolwich Common
- Circus Field, Blackheath
- A car park at the O2

The hope is that these sites aren't used, but in order to avoid nuisance parking in the side streets close to where the tall ships will be located RBG were keen to establish some specific car parking sites that could be used for the duration of the event. The sites will include provision for queuing within the perimeter so as to avoid traffic disruption on the road.

A parking event management company will be recruited to run the sites (currently in discussion with companies that have previously managed events at Twickenham, Ascot and large music festivals). The brief to the parking management company will be to protect the land at each site, and in the case of Blackheath alternative arrangements would be sought if the weather conditions were so bad (e.g. if the site was waterlogged) in order to protect the heath. The company would also provide a towing off company should any vehicles breakdown and regular litter picking arrangements within the car parks will be in place.

Cllr KB thanked CW and OM for their clear presentation and opened to the group for questions.

- SB asked if the site would be enclosed?
 - CW confirmed there were no intentions to enclose the site on Blackheath due to the natural bund. The entrances and exists would be clearly signposted and they would make use of the natural locations for these. LB agreed that he didn't think a fence would add value providing vehicles were properly directed.
 - CW also added they would look to restrict the weight of vehicle wishing to park on the heath to light passenger vehicles.
- DW asked what provision is in place should the three identified sites become full?
 - CW explained that the sites in Woolwich and the Heath would be in touch via radio so they would be able to direct traffic away from one site to the other if one had become full. Leaflets with maps and detailed directions of how to find the other sites would be handed out.
 - In addition, it is possible to allow visitors to pre-book parking spaces. The advantage of this would be that it gives an indication of the potential volume of traffic wishing to use a specific site, allowing the management company to re-direct any 'on the day' visitors to one of the quieter sites.
- AT asked if the leaflets handed out to visitors wishing to park also gave directions and details of how to travel via public transport to the sites the tall ships would be in.
 - CW and OM agreed this would be a useful addition to the promotional materials and agreed to take this point back with them.
- Cllr GS suggested that allowing visitors to pre-book parking spaces risked undermining the message about using public transport to travel to the event.
 - CW agreed there were pros and cons of the approach and that they didn't have to offer this facility. If it is offered, the intention would be that it would not be made overly prominent. Offering the facility would enable RBG and the parking management company to make better plans and manage demand on the day.

- Cllr GS agreed but felt the majority of visitors were more likely to turn up and not pre-book parking.
- Cllr KB asked if there was a contact number council members and members of the BJWP could use during the event should they be made aware of any specific issues affecting local residents as a result of the event.
 - OM agreed to provide details of the command centre during the event. In the meantime, CW provided his direct dial No (0208 921 5487).

4. Election of the BJWP Chair

Cllr KB put himself forward as a nomination for chair and was supported by PC and DW, there were no other nominations and such Cllr KB was elected chair of the group.

For the position of vice chair, Cllr AS nominated Cllr PM to the position, this was supported by PC, there were no other nominations and Cllr PM was elected as vice chair of the group.

Cllr KB suggested the positions should be reviewed in 12 months time- this was agreed by the group.

5. OnBlackheath Festival Update

Cllr KB explained that on the 24th of June a special meeting of the BJWP was held to prepare comments for the OnBlackheath (ONBH) abridged event management plan. These comments were then taken by a representative group of BJWP members to a meeting with Peter Gadsdon, chair of ESAG and Kevin Sheehan, Executive Director of Customer Services. Peter Gadsdon then raised the points at ESAG and provided comment back to DW.

DW explained that he had written minutes from that meeting which have been circulated to BJWP members. The minutes were also sent to Peter Gadsdon who added comments to them and included a copy of the redacted ESAG minutes. DW felt that most of the points identified by the BJWP at the special meeting on the 24th had been covered, however there were a number of outstanding points, namely:

- Noise on Hyde Vale- it appears this may still be above the agreed 70dB. The ESAG minutes show that they have asked Vanguardia to bring the anticipated level down to be in line with what's expected. DW explained he was aware that Environmental Health officers in RBG had been pushing hard for this. MH confirmed that Environmental Health officers at LBL had also been involved in these discussions and that a noise meeting between the Environmental Health officers and Vanguardia had been arranged to take place before the next ESAG meeting (24th of July).
- Re-routing the 380 bus up Belmont Hill- DW explained that this will take place for 5 days (reduced from 9) in order to facilitated ONBH. This will still cause disruption for the residents of Hare and Billet Rd. DW's understanding is that Dave Wheeler (LBL Highways) is still pushing for more to be done to reduce the disruption and inconvenience and is in discussion with TfL about the issue.
- Poor communications by ONBH and the requirement for a public meeting- DW explained that the ESAG meeting minutes show that Tom Wates from ONBH agreed to have a public meeting in advance of the event, this is also part of the licensing agreement given to ONBH but no date has been agreed yet. PC queried the aim of the meeting, and felt that if it was held too close to the event the opportunity for the public to make representations about the plans for the event would be limited. Referring back to the conditions of the licensing agreement, Conditions 53 and 54 state:

Local Residents Liaison

53. The Premises Licence holder will set up a publicised meeting each year with local residents prior to the relevant Event to discuss the plans for the Event and receive residents' representations.

54. The premises Licence holder will set up a publicised meeting each year with local residents after the relevant Event to receive residents' representations.

- DW suggested that the BJWP should ensure the post event meeting is as meaningful as possible and Cllr KB agreed it would be a good idea to get a range of participants to attend (people that had attended ONBH, residents that neighbour the event, those that live a little further away).

Cllr KB thanks DW for his feedback, MH will be attending the next ESAG meeting on the 24th of July and will raised the points above, in addition MH will also raise concerns he has about security and cleansing outside of the arena.

In addition to the points above, the following comments were made by the group:

- DW queried the changes to the finish time for the music (set at 10.30 pm) and also the sale of food and drinks (set at 10.00pm) and expressed concerns about the availability of public transport after 11.00pm for those leaving the event. MH agreed he would raise the concern about late trains at the ESAG meeting, but felt the police were in favour of the later finish times as it prevents large volumes of visitors crowding local pubs and bars.
- SB asked what provision will be in place to protect the acid grassland- MH explained that part of the heath will be fenced off protecting the acid grassland, mowing will have also taken place which removes trampling issues. Photographic evidence will be taken before and after the event.
- MH advised that an interest group had asked if Hare and Billet pond could be fenced off for the duration of the event for safety and protection reasons. MH agreed to raise at ESAG.
- PC suggested that as well as the post event public meeting with ONBH, the BJWP should have its own special meeting in advance of that to discuss issue to be raised. MH agreed that a special BJWP meeting would need to be arranged for this purpose.
- MH stressed that the timetabling of the meetings would be quite tight in order to enable the outcomes of the meetings to feed into a revised events policy. This policy would then need to be taken to Mayor and Cabinet for approval, this is currently scheduled on the LBL council forward plan to be considered in January 2015.
- Cllr KB agreed to speak to Kevin Sheehan about the process for revising the events policy to determine if it's possible to advise applicants that submit applications in the autumn that a revised policy is being prepared, and therefore their application may be subject to the new policy. In addition MH asked LG to check if the LBL forward plan is a public document as this would show that the events policy is due to be revised in autumn/winter 14/15.
- DW concluded that he and others are due to meet with Peter Gadsdon again on the 24th of July at 11.00 am, just before the ESAG meeting. Cllr KB agreed to see if Cllr AdR could attend and Cllr AS agreed to see if any of the Greenwich councillors would be available to attend. The meeting is due to take place on the 5th floor of Laurence House.

ACTION: at the next BJWP meeting agree some suggested dates for a. the special BJWP meeting to discuss the ONBH post event and b. some dates to suggest to ONBH as to when they should hold their post event public meeting.

ACTION: MH to take specific points to be raised at ESAG meeting and report back to the BJWP.

ACTION: Cllr KB to check if Cllr AdR can attend the meeting DW has arranged with Peter Gadsdon on the 24th of July. Cllr AS to check if any Greenwich councillors are also able to attend this meeting and advise DW.

ACTION: Cllr KB to speak to Kevin Sheehan about the events policy to determine if it is possible to advise applicants the policy is being revised. LG to confirm if the forward plan is a public document (*meeting follow up- the forward plan is a public document as is published on the council website here at item 54: <http://councilmeetings.lewisham.gov.uk/mgListPlanItems.aspx?PlanId=152&RP=139>*)

6. Timetable of Events (2014)

MH provided a copy of the events timetable for 2014. Care has been taken to space the events out and to host them on areas of the heath that protects the acid grassland.

Since printing there was a late request from RBG for Smarts Circus to use the heath in late October/early November. There is a clash with the Fireworks and LB has requested that Smarts consider alternative dates to avoid fireworks weekend.

LB asked the BJWP to consider the proposal from Smarts which he and LB summarised for the group. Smarts is a reputable company, who until 2010 used the heath every year, they are now looking to re-establish themselves. The event will be fully contained within the circus tent, there are no animals and there are no noise considerations. The group agreed in principle to the request subject to a suitable date being identified.

Update on Race for Life

MH explained that following the event there appeared to be no damage to the bunds and there were no complaints to the hotline. There were however some complaints received about litter. Good provision was put in place by the event organisers who arrange for volunteers to pick litter during the event and up to 6.30pm. MH suspects that some of the issues may be as a result of the litter being disposed of in the open top bins on the heath. These are not protected by lids and therefore it is easier for birds to pull the litter back out of the bins. MH suggested the BJWP could consider using some of the money from ONBH to replace the open top bins on the heath with ones that have covers. MH also suggested that designated 'throwing' areas could be identified (as is the case in the Tour De France) to prevent runners throwing bottles into the long grassed areas of the heath.

MH agreed that he'd invite Race For Life to attend the BJWP in January to discuss plans for the event next year.

Plans for Village Day

Cllr KB explained that following a discussion at the Blackheath Assembly meeting plans have begun to develop for a Village day on the 6th of December 2014. The aim of the event will be a celebration for residents and businesses in the village. Organised activities will centre around Age Exchange, Blackheath Halls and the Conservatoire- and other businesses, schools etc. will be invited to host their own activities. The activities will be run by volunteers and the communications for the event will be managed by the Blackheath Assembly. The culmination of the day will end with the switch on of the new Christmas lights. There's currently no expectation that there would be an impact on the heath, there may be some minor traffic changes but nothing has been confirmed yet.

MH confirmed this fitted with the events calendar and the group were positive about the proposal.

SC asked if the Good Hope Festival would be going ahead this year. Cllr KB confirmed that it would not be going ahead this year, but that it would be quite likely that an application would be received to be considered for next year.

ACTION: MH to invite Race for Life representative to attend BJWP meeting in January 2015.

7. Draft Byelaws

MH asked the group to consider the draft Byelaws that have been circulated. These are based on Byelaws provided by DEFRA for common land, the intention is to present these to Full Council for agreement. If successful the laws would cover the Lewisham side of the heath (current Byelaws date back to 1935, Greenwich have more recent Byelaws agreed in 1986). Amendments to the Byelaws would need to be cleared by DEFRA and also by full Council at LBL. As such, MH requests that the group note the content of the document.

Prior to sign off full public consultation would be undertaken and then the MH would present them as a proposal to full Council.

8. Part-Funding Offered For Cosmetic Improvements to Princess of Wales Pond

DW explained that he'd been approached by a resident named Ian Smillie who was willing to part fund cosmetic improvements to Princess of Wales Pond. SB, DW and Rodger Marshall met with Ian Smiley to discuss in more detail, a quantum of money wasn't discussed and DW wanted to seek a steer from the BJWP as to if they were happy for discussions to continue to see what proposal may be drawn up. The group agreed. MH advised that he'd be happy to attend any further discussions arranged.

If a proposal were to proceed, match funding could be identified from the Blackheath Society and possible form of the money from ONBH could be used for these improvements. MH suggested how the money from ONBH should be discussed as an agenda item at the next meeting.

MH outlined that due to the flooding that took place on South Row the LBL highways department were considering installing a soakaway in the heath opposite South Row. This would be a 2 meter chamber, but only a small grid would be visible on the surface

ACTION: DW to continue discussions with Ian Smillie re: Princess of Wales Pond and report back to BJWP in due course.

ACTION: how the money from ONBH could be used for improvements on the Heath to be added to the agenda for the next meeting.

9. Dates for Future Meetings

The group agreed to the following dates:

- 25th of Sept
- 20th of Nov
- 15th of Jan
- 19th of Feb (public meeting)
- 16th of April.

All meetings to be held at the Age Exchange and to be scheduled from 7.30-9.00 pm.

10. AOB

- Setting up a conservation sub-committee – interested volunteers to contact SB and bring report to future meetings.
- 23rd of August some Entomologists will be visiting the Heath.
- The BJWP distribution list needs to be updated
- Autumn 'Spring Clean' needs to be added to agenda for the next meeting.

ACTION: BJWP secretary to update the distribution list.

ACTION: Add spring clean to the agenda for the next meeting.