

Blackheath Joint Working Party (BJWP) Meeting Minutes

Meeting 7pm, Thursday 13th May 2021

Venue: Zoom online meeting

Attendees

Cllr Kevin Bonavia (Chair)	London Borough of Lewisham
Sacha Bright (mins)	BJWP Administration
Joe Beale	Nature Conservation Group
Cllr Geoff Brighty	Royal Borough of Greenwich
Tony Butler	Friends of Greenwich Park
Sue Corlett	Hare & Billet Action Group
Philip Craig	Greenwich Society
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
Janine Whittaker	Events, Royal Borough of Greenwich

1. Apologies

- 1.1. Apologies from Cllr Juliet Campbell (London Borough of Lewisham), Cllr Leo Fletcher (Royal Borough of Greenwich) Cllr Amanda De Ryk (London Borough of Lewisham).

2. Minutes of 12 January 2021 and matters arising

- 2.1. The minutes were agreed with minor amendments.
- 2.2. The new BJWP circulation list prepared by Kevin and Sacha was reviewed and amendments were suggested and agreed.
- 2.3. Following Meg and Helen's report on existing litter bins, it had been expected that the BJWP would be shown examples of larger litter bins available so that BJWP could give advice as to which of these should be placed where. Nick Pond agreed to follow this up.
- 2.4. 9.1 Missing gazebos: Nick and Gemma reported that there is no audit/record of when these have been taken out for use and when returned. He confirmed that 2 appear to be missing and are believed to have been stolen. Gemma will investigate further. Liz Wright from the Blackheath Society will be asked to confirm when they were last used.
- 2.5. Forries School: Helen reported that both she and Paul Watts had received e-mails from Gina Raggett to say she intends to publicise their failure to prevent the forest school. Joe Beale added that he had received similar correspondence. Kevin repeated his statement that all necessary information had been sent to the Lewisham safeguarding team and Nick confirmed that all the necessary checks had been carried out.

- 2.6. Sue Corlett reported that advertisements had appeared on Facebook for forest children's parties. It was confirmed that, if on Blackheath, these would require an additional application and should be considered by the BJWP separately. Gemma will check if additional activities are taking place and if applications have been received.

3. Events planned for the Heath 2021

- 3.1 Gemma Marston for Lewisham confirmed that no additional events are planned on their part of the Heath. The fireworks will only take place if a major sponsor is found. Plans to extend the Kite Festival to 9th and 10th October with the children's funfair taking place on the Saturday were approved. The proposal to change the name of the event to "Kite Day" was less acceptable. Alternatives such as "Fair, Fete or Gala" were suggested.
- 3.2 Janine Whittaker for Greenwich reported that the recent half-term fair had been very well attended given current circumstances. Litter had been a problem and additional staff had been employed by the organisers to try to deal with this. Stewards had also been employed to deal with the parking problems. The 'Foodies' event will be as last year.
- 3.3 An additional fair has been suggested for Christmas but not yet agreed. Meg advised that this had been refused in the past to prevent more damage to the Heath.
- 3.4 Tony stated that Greenwich is getting very close to their maximum 90 days for events which many people consider to be too much.
- 3.5 There were no objections to the proposed open-air cinema so long as action is taken to prevent any parking.

4 Blackheath Joint Events Policy Review.

- 4.1 Janine explained that Greenwich would like more flexibility e.g. to allow acceptance of occasional late applications. Also, the terminology for the names of different officers varies between councils and needs to be amended.
- 4.2 The two councils have different procedures for agreeing events which need to be accommodated. The amended sections on parking and sustainability were accepted. The maximum number of days for events is still contentious. Some voting members would still prefer 90 days maximum for the whole Heath.
- 4.3 Helen suggested that it is difficult to comment on detailed changes unless a "tracked changes" document is available. It was agreed that this will be circulated to all members for their comments. (Janine)

5 Nature Conservation Group

- 5.1 Joe Beale gave a verbal report on behalf of the group. There is concern about the Greenwich Society's recent "guerrilla gardening" campaign. Members have complained that there has been no consultation and that, in some sites, native plants have been removed in favour of cultivars, which is not beneficial to wildlife. Philip responded that the programme also includes the

extensive removal of litter, which is appreciated. It was agreed that there will be further discussions before any future actions.

5.2 Concern was expressed about the recent mowing of the edges of the A2 by TfL, thereby destroying the flowering of the bunds for this Summer. This had not been agreed by either council. It was a mistake and TfL has apologised.

5.3 Joe reported that council ward funding has been agreed for tools for the Vanbrugh Pits volunteers.

5.4 There has been concern about some soil erosion in Eliot Pits. It has not been clear who has been trimming the shrubs or mowing the grass. Nick agreed that Lewisham would look into this.

6. Litter from Circus Field Events

6.1 Janine acknowledged that there had been a problem with litter from the recent fun fair and Greenwich will be looking at further methods of addressing this in the future.

7. OnBlackheath Fund

7.1 Helen confirmed that all funds had now been transferred from Glendale to the Blackheath Society bank account but that the 2019 payment of £15,000 from OnBlackheath had not yet been paid. Nick Pond will make enquiries.

Funds are still being reserved for three projects: the entomology survey, the Prince Charles Road bunds and the replanting of Whitfield's Mount.

An application for funding from the Hare and Billet Pond group was considered. The volunteer liability insurance was agreed but Nick will ask them about the nearly £200 for the "web hosting".

A new application for a new 2021 comparative butterfly survey was considered. The estimated cost of £1,500 was agreed.

8 Annual meeting

8.1 The Blackheath Society has offered to host a virtual meeting on Zoom. This was welcomed and agreed, for a date sometime in July. Sacha will circulate some options.

Kevin suggested that the main BJWP will continue electronically for the time being.

9 Future meetings

9.1 Kevin suggested that the main BJWP will continue electronically for the time being. A Doodle poll will be circulated for a July meeting.

10 AOB

10.1 Philip raised concerns about the work agreed for Duke Humphrey Road, when is it going to start? There is no up-to-date information.

10.2 Sue reported that The Hare and Billet had not been allowed to reopen until 17th May as the Heath had not been considered an appropriate outdoor venue.

10.3 Helen was asked for an update on the Tea Hut. It is understood that there is an agreement about terms and that the matter is currently with the Greenwich legal department.

The meeting ended at 9.15 pm.