



**Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday 18 September 2008, 7.30pm
held at The Honor Oak, SE23**

Present:- BHFUG members:

Kylie Barnes (Secretary)
Mark Wellband

Gavin Bolam
Lara Al-Jabi (Glendale)

Sydney Couldridge
Albert Blackmore

Marcel Jenkins
Caroline Sefton

Apologies:-

Andrew Barnes (Treasurer)
Cllr. Jackie Addison

Josh Smaller
A. Bailey

Elizabeth Downie

1. Welcome and Apologies

Kylie Barnes opened the meeting in Alan Bailey's absence.

2. Minutes of the Last meeting and Matters Arising

It was mentioned by Sydney Couldridge that the hedge planting had not yet been done by Glendale's yet. However, Lara Al-Jabi said that she and a colleague had replaced the hedging by Austin Close. Darrell Abercrombie said on our last inspection to Alan Bailey and Kylie Barnes that they would be putting plants in pots along Austin Close and replace the whips along the Montacute Rd boundary. Lara will look into this for us.

3. Play Builder Bid - Update

Alan Bailey submitted an application on the 20th June which was accepted and the Group was invited to go along to the Civic Centre on Saturday 13th September 2008 to do a full presentation with all the other applicants. The funding process will be carried out over a 3 year period, the first stage having had 6 applications already approved, which covers bids that had schemes which could be completed and implemented within this first financial year of funding. It is hoped that the user group will be selected in the second year phase. We should hear later on this year if we have been successful.

4. Benches Bins and Signs

Martin Hyde, the Parks regeneration manager has been able to carry forward to 09/10 the £10,000 funding opportunity that came up earlier on in the year. Originally, we thought that supplying new signs or benches within the fields would be a good idea but at this stage, we are still not sure how and what to spend the money on. Deciding to hold the money for us until next year would be a better option until we are more certain what people want it used for.

It was also suggested to think about having memorial benches in the fields. Benches or the finance of the benches would come from the donator. KB mentioned that she had been in touch with Rachael from Hilly Fields who had mentioned that they had a memorial bench installed but that it had become a shrine on a yearly basis which became covered in flowers and candles, and that no-one was able to sit on the bench. It was mentioned however, that having a memorial bench could in fact connect the fields to the community as a whole. GB suggested getting colleges to make the benches would be a cheaper option.

5. Future plantings of bulbs and whips

KB asked Lara Al-Jabi if Glendale's were able to offer any bulbs for planting this autumn. She confirmed that there were some bulbs available but that she would check the dates. It was suggested that we should tie the bulb planting session in with Nature's Gym. KB suggested that the previous year's whip plantings that had taken place now needed tidying up as some areas had overgrown. This could be done at the same time as the hedging is done.

It was suggested the weekends either side of the October half term which were the 25/26 October or 1/2nd November to have the bulb planting day. Hedging days for the New Year would be set at the AGM in October.

KB mentioned again about Glendale's mowing the hedging down and that it was suggested by Cllr Sylvia Scott for us as a User Group to have a plan of where the mowing should take place and to notify us of when mowing was occurring. Glendale's have agreed to put up a fencing arrangement when planting has taken place to alleviate the hedging being mowed down again. AB, KB and Darrell Abercrombie met in May/June and Darrell said that it was an accepted practice to put up a fence after planting had taken place to protect the new plants. One section still needs replanting though and there was mention of putting pots there which SC said has not yet been done.

AB and Lara submitted an application for funding for trees. As yet, we have not heard whether we have been successful yet, the result will be available at the end of September. If we are successful, we could tie in the cherry and crab apple tree planting day along with the bulb planting.

6. **Festival 2009**

A festival has been agreed by those attending the meeting. The date has already been decided as 27th June. Hilly Fields are having their festival on the 20th June and Lewisham People's Day is on 11th July.

KB suggested that we would need funding in order to get the event started as there weren't enough funds in the User group's bank account at the moment.

Josh (Lewisham Community Football) suggested that he could run the same kind of thing as this year's event but needs the date confirmed so that he can put in place people needed to run the activities.

Councillor Scott mentioned that the hay bales was an excellent idea and to have these again. She also mentioned that there is the Localities fund for the assembly. We should have had details already but we haven't. There is also the London Quadrant or Lewisham Homes or the Brockley PFI. Cllr Scott said she would forward over details.

7 **Any Other Business**

a) **Logo Competition**

4 entries were received and Sydney Couldridge is finalising them for selection at our AGM.

b) **Festival Pictures**

Marcel Jenkins has not been able to post the Blythe Hill Fields Festival photos onto the web site as they all need reducing in size. MJ said it was in hand and that he would deal with this issue.

c) **Roman Road**

Sydney Couldridge forwarded over details to KB about a web site forum which had very interesting articles on the roman road which runs through Sydenham through Blythe Hill Fields. KB said she would forward the e-mail over to members on the e-mail for their information.

d) **Mustard Filming**

We were very pleased to receive a donation of £100 from the Mustard Filming Company for using Blythe Hill Fields as their venue for filming an advert for the Daily Mail.

e) **Protection of the Fields**

On the BBC news, it was mentioned that community land could be protected to prevent council's or developers building on it. This is something that the group should look into.

f) Alternative Events in the fields

It was mentioned that we should do something on Bonfire night - Cllr Scott mentioned that Lewisham Council does bonfire night in conjunction with Lewisham Council on Blackheath so all finances are directed into that event.

g) Farmers Market

GB looked into this a while ago, but nothing came of it. GB is willing to look into this again with Lara Al-Jabi to see if something can be set up within the fields. Manor House and Hillyfields have a farmers market in place. Lara to chase.

h) Up and coming AGM – MJ suggested that we should now call ourselves Friends of Blythe Hill Fields, trading as Blythe Hill Fields User Group. Now would be an ideal time and MJ is willing to amend the constitution to show the new changes.

i) Josh from Lewisham Community Sports is currently using the fields on Tuesdays, Wednesday and Thursdays for the children of Stillness School because Guys Ground is currently being developed.

j) Notice board – Could we have a new one at the bottom of Codrington Hill. Our current notice board has developed a default and KB reported this. Lara to establish if this was repaired.

6. Date of next Meetings

It had been proposed to have our AGM on the 23rd October, but it seems that the Ackroyd already has the room booked for the Councillors Ward Meeting. AB to find somewhere else – KB suggested the Honor Oak again.

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.