



**Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday 2 April 2009, 7.30pm
held at The Ackroyd Community Centre, SE23**

Present:- Friends of Blythe Hill Fields members:

Alan Bailey (Chair)	Kylie Barnes (Secretary)	Gavin Bolam	Sydney Couldridge
Lara Al-Jabi (Glendale)	Albert Blackmore	Elizabeth Downie	Marcel Jenkins
Judith Brassington	Nicholas Taylor	David Thomas	Liz James

Apologies:-

Andrew Barnes (Treasurer)	Josh Smaller	Cllr Sylvia Scott & Jackie Addison
Anne Scott	Molly Bertrand	Zahra

1. Welcome and Apologies

Alan Bailey opened the meeting.

2. Minutes of the Last meeting and Matters Arising

There were no amendments but some updates since the last meeting to report.

- c) The boundary fence to Codrington Hill has been repaired and the pavement as well. The repair to the barrier at Montacute Road is also complete.
- d) Roman Road – No response from Gary. AB will follow up with him but unlikely soon as GB will be busy over the Summer.
- e) Tree Planting/Schools. Contact not yet made. AB will try to do so and link in to Festival.
- h) Wildflower Meadow. On tonight's agenda under Local Assembly/Mayor's Fund

3. Hedging and Maintenance 14th March 2009

AB, SC, GB, MJ and Lara Al-Jabi continued with the hedge clearing and planting programme of works within the fields. However, as there had only been four volunteers this time AB felt that if Glendale's were going to continue to support us in our quest for a better bio-diversified Fields, we would need more volunteers on a regular basis to show them that we are committed to continue this work on a long term basis. AB suggested that we might need to think in terms of fewer events and more publicity of them if we were to continue to deserve support for this important work. This will need to be borne in mind when making plans for next Autumn and Spring.

4. Update on Playbuilder bid for improvements to the Children's playground

AB, KB and SC met with Martin Hyde on the 16th March 2009 where it was confirmed that Blythe Hill Fields had been awarded £75,000 of PlayBuilder funding for the children's playground to be spent in year 09/10. Hilly Fields also had funding of £75,000 confirmed. The emphasis of the funding is for Focus on Play for 8-13 year olds which would encourage children's sense of play. The new playground may be outside of the footprint of the existing playground but it would depend on new plans and a possible planning application may need to be done in order to do this. MH stated that there would be 2 ways of dealing with getting the work done- one was to employ GreenScene who would manage the whole process, procure all the equipment or (two) to employ a landscape architect who would do the consultation, design, any planning application and implement as a whole package – doing all the work and seeing the work through to completion, however the fee would be 13% of the budget plus 2% to deliver. The latter is the option preferred by the Dept for Children, Schools and Families who are providing the funds and is also preferred by GreenScene. At the meeting with MH we had indicated that we thought this would be the better way forward too.

The plan is for GreenScene's selected contractor, Groundwork S E London, to hold a meeting with the Friends towards the end of April to get things started. That meeting can address questions such as "Why a Landscape Architect" and "Why Groundworks SEL". If a Planning Application is involved, that could happen June/July with the work being done in the Autumn. With a completion deadline at the beginning of April 2010.

It was also mentioned that it would be nice to have a play area for the Under 5's. Approximately 2 years ago, there was funding available for the under 5's but the funding was removed at short notice. It was suggested to have a meeting in the fields on a Saturday to ensure that you would get a large part of the community along to air their views on what sort of equipment would be good for the playground area. Our Festival might provide the right opportunity.

5. Festival Saturday 27th June 2009

Posters for help are currently being displayed in numerous places and some volunteers have already expressed interest to help however we need more volunteers than we currently have.

- Banners – we need some of these to advertise our event around the perimeter of the fields.
- Stalls – the fee of £20 has been agreed to have a stall at the event.
- Recycling – Rubbish – Nicholas Taylor and Kylie Barnes are due to meet Sam Kirk to discuss rubbish and recycling at the event.
- Police Cadets – we are making enquiries to see if they can help at the event on gate duties.

6. Crofton Park Ward Local Assembly – Mayor's Fund

We had Liz James from the Local Assembly attend our meeting. An Outline Proposal via e-mail had been sent to the Secretary from the Local Assembly. The e-mail was forwarded to Committee Members prior to the meeting and copies were handed out to the members in attendance this evening. Questions were raised as to their intentions and what they had to offer the Friends. A lengthy discussion took place but the general consensus was that they would be permitted to have a stall. It was decided at the meeting that we would welcome the Local Assembly's presence at the festival so they might raise their profile. We welcomed their offers with some provisos. We didn't want to see the "nature" of our event change. We didn't want the event taken over by others. We didn't want the event "swamped" by more attendees than we could cope with and thus diminish the experience. We needed the proposed "wider exposure" to bring in more volunteers to run the Festival as well as more visitors on the day and didn't want the Festival "re-branded" as the Local Assembly's event. It was felt that a "one year" experiment might be a good basis to try it. The Outline Proposal is copied below.

"Outline Proposal to Blythe Hill Fields Festival 2009

Lewisham Council has set up a number of Local Assemblies around the borough - with one in each ward. Overall the Crofton Park Assembly will have around £50,000 to spend on a number of wards initiatives before the end of financial year 2010/11. This is alongside funding that may be available from the Mayors Fund (of which Blythe Hill festival was a recipient of funds last year). The assembly has 5 main priorities:- Streetscape, Openspaces (led by Nicholas Taylor), Community Cohesion, Youth Provision and Access for All.

The Assembly coordinating group and sub groups are working up a number of proposals under each of these themes which will go to the assembly for consideration over the next 2 assembly meetings (May / September?). The community cohesion subgroup has highlighted that a sense of identify is a key issue for the ward, and also that the ward lacks any key events that provide a community focus (when compared to Telegraph Hill (Festival) or Brockley Cross (Christmas event)).

Proposal - *In that light (and subject to agreement by the coordinating group, assembly etc) we would like to investigate with the Blythe Hill Festival Organisers your views as to raising the profile of the festival more widely across the ward (especially residents in the north and east of the ward) as part of a development of more community focused events in the ward. The aim would be to complement what you do - and in no way interfere with it - but promote it as a key event across the whole ward.*

Aims - *There are two complementing aims of what we are trying to do:*

- 1) To raise the profile of the festival as a key Ward Event*
- 2) To use the festival to further raise the profile of the assembly.*

In Detail - 1) To raise the profile of the festival as a key ward event

We apologise if you carry out any of these things already but have thought about (subject to your agreement) promotional activities to complement your own and raise the profile of the Festival in parts of the ward that are farther away than might be your normal catchment. A number of people have volunteered to leaflet new areas of the ward - include leafleting outside Crofton Park Station for example - and we have asked whether Lewisham

Council funds might be available (even if 'in kind') to help pay for these. Father Bates has suggested a large banner at St Hilda's to advertise the event, and we also wondered whether other poster sites might be possible, again to complement what you do.

2) To use the festival to further raise the profile of the Assembly

The Community Cohesion Group are also considering whether we could have a presence (a stall etc) at the festival that could be used to also raise the profile of the assembly. We were specifically thinking of providing information on the assembly, having a 'graffiti wall' where people could write up ideas that the assembly could consider, perhaps some competitions etc. as part of the Festival event. Further details would need to be worked up in due course.

Whilst we are seeking some help from the Council - as we see it as an Assembly promoting event - the stall would also be staffed by a number of members of the co-ordinating group from all the various themes - and would not be a Lewisham Council stall. It would be about the Assembly etc.

Feedback - *We would be grateful for any thoughts you might have on these ideas and suggestions for other things we might like to think about, views on practicability, and how we might go about organising a stall etc and how we might be able to help the festival further.*

The coordinating is very very conscious that this is your festival and we really want to make it clear we want it to stay that way. We just want to see if the assembly can help promote it so that it might develop into a key Crofton Park annual event (building on what has already been done).

Community Cohesion Sub Group"

Most importantly, we felt that we ought to make sure that we checked the views of the Friends who were not able to attend on the 2nd of April. This exercise is underway, to be concluded by 12th April so Liz has as firm a position as we can muster for the next Local Assembly Coordinating Group meeting on the 15th.

Proposals to go to the Local Assembly re allocation of Mayor's Fund

We considered three proposals. A plan to restock the Fields with new trees to replace those gone, dead or dying and one to create a wildflower meadow were approved. They will need a bit more work but the plan is to feed these in to the Local Assembly.

A third proposal to create an area more conducive to ball games was discussed. Several very serious concerns were raised but, most importantly, the technical viability of some of the more complex options involved was challenged and these will need to be resolved if those options are to be reconsidered. There was some support for the concept of a small area close to the playground where the existing grass might be improved without intrusion but there were those who felt existing spaces were adequate.

7. Any Other Business

- The Pilot project for signage – New signs have been installed in BHF. We will let Friends know how to let Lewisham have their opinions.

8. Dates of Meetings for 2009

The meeting dates that were suggested at the last meeting are now subject to change due to clashes with other events. All of our meetings are held on Thursdays at 7.30 p.m.

Our next meeting is due on Thursday the 4th of June but this is under review.

MISSION STATEMENT

Friends of Blythe Hill Fields (FBHF) 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.