

**FRIENDS OF  
BLYTHE HILL  
FIELDS**



## **MEETING MINUTES**

**8pm on 29<sup>th</sup> October 2019 at the Blythe Hill Tavern**

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### **In Attendance**

Nicholas, Rich, Julian, Darren, Svea, Graeme, Tim, Jim, Helen, Suzanne with guests Grzegorz (?), Glendale Parks Services Manager and Peter Maynard Green Space Contract Officer - Lewisham Green Scene.

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### **Welcome**

Nicholas welcomed everyone to the meeting and prior to AGM actions introduced our guests. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved prior to this meeting..

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### **Agenda**

#### **1. Update from Lewisham Green Scene / Glendale.**

Peter Maynard introduced Grzegorz the new Parks Services Manager for Glendale. Peter also advised that following an extended transitional period - parks services would be returning in-house to be managed by the Council, with Glendale ceasing to manage borough parks in October 2020.

PM clarified details of our Lewisham Greening Fund application confirming that replacement bins are scheduled to be installed in January 2020. Economies of scale mean they will be the same style across all parks and will be a rust free design, (wooden coated in fibre glass) so as to ensure longevity. Similarly for replacement benches - style may differ due to bulk ordering across the borough. Where possible they will try to match what we already have in situ from existing Glendale stocks. Picnic tables will also be a fixed design offering an extended top to make them fully accessible.

As previously reported, there is no decision as yet for either a drinking fountain as further research & liaison with Thames Water is required to establish if it is possible and associated costs.

Green Flag: Peter again supported the Friend's goal to secure this award. In addition to overall impression, tidiness, facilities etc, he advised that demonstrating strong volunteer and community involvement would go a long way in supporting our bid. Assessments are due to take place in January\* - and although we may

be unlikely to have our Community Garden in place by this stage – having a clear plan and indication of our intentions would suffice. (\*Grzegorz will confirm actual date).

Topics also discussed were: Park Signage; Green Flag Award; Community Garden – See agenda items below.

Peter and Grzegorz left the meeting.

## 2. Election of Committee

As presiding Chair, Nicholas read through the Committee **Summary of Friends activity** over the last 12 months. See Appendix 1.

Rich presented the **Treasurers Report** including a financial summary of the 2019 Blythe Hill Fields Festival. See Appendix 2. He advised that the figures still needed some finalising but that this years Festival generated our largest surplus to date. (Of which £4,000 had already been earmarked in support of our Lewisham Greening Fund Application).

Nomination & Election of Executive and General Committee. The existing Executive Committee effectively stood down and Nicholas invited nominations for individual roles.

Secretary – no new nominations. Suzanne agreed to stand for another year and was seconded by Helen.

Treasurer – no new nominations. Rich agreed to stand for another year and was seconded by Helen.

Chair – Tim Part was nominated and unanimously seconded by those present.

People & Wildlife – Julian and Darren volunteered again for this role and were seconded by Suzanne.

Festival Organiser – Helen volunteered again for this role and was seconded by all present.

General Committee members - Graeme, Jim and Svea all volunteered to stand on the General Committee.

## 3. Park Observations – General / Litter / Use

General	Litter	Use
Several posts sharing autumn skies and morning photos up o the Fields.	Litter pick was held on 21 <sup>st</sup> October and another suggested. Our thanks to local residents for their regular efforts in	Lots of regular users

ACTION:

## 4. Current projects & Future Objectives

Lewisham Greening Fund – Covered in Point 1

Green Flag Process and Application – Covered in Point 1

Park Signage: Graeme updated Peter, Grzegorz and the group on project progress to date. The proposed design as presented at this years Blythe Hill Fields Festival includes both historical and nature references. We are still awaiting signoff for certain images et and once we have these approvals Graeme

can forward the final design with copy etc to Lewisham and Glendale for review/approval. Graeme agreed to forward details of our costing exercise to support our choice of preferred supplier.

**ACTIONS:** Signs Committee to complete signage information / finalise image approvals

Final designs to be sent to Glendale / Lewisham for approval

Introductions to chosen supplier (Graeme to supply evidence of costings/quote exercise also)

**Community Garden:** Peter Maynard suggested that evidence of plans for replacing the planting island at the top of Blythe Hill Lane entrance with a Friends Community Garden would support our Green Flag bid. See point 1. The group agreed to call out to the wider committee to see if volunteers with specific gardening expertise could help finalise a design / planting list to incorporate the criteria of Sustainable, Drought Resistant and Low maintenance as suggested.

**ACTION:** Call out for experts

**Montacute Road Mural:** Graeme reiterated that the latest view from the Mural working group was that owing to the design and structure of the existing fences, design and costs were proving prohibitive. It was suggested and agreed that we seek to paint the walls a single shade of graffiti proof paint.

**NCIL - Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy:** Nicholas raised a previous suggestion that in order to maximise the potential success of any future funding or grant opportunities - a longer term plan for the Fields needs to be formalised. It was suggested and agreed that the Friends should investigate funding criteria from NCIL for a new consultation along the lines of the previous Groundworks consultation. All agreed that a formal plan would enable the Friends to be more targeted and consistent with funding approaches.

## 5. AOB

Suzanne reminded all that a recommendation had previously been made to amend the Friends of Blythe Hill Fields Equal Opportunities Policy but that formal acceptance of the change was needed. Those present agreed to the insertion of "Subject to the Committee's discretion" in the fourth paragraph.

**ACTION:** Suzanne to amend policy and request upload to the website.

2019 Festival reporting: Owing to summer holidays and general committee availability it was noted that there has not as yet been a report of the Festival in general. Helen suggested reviewing this again January when considering the next event. Nicholas asked that it be tabled as ongoing.

Suzanne enquired as whether there had been any review or analysis of the feedback data and comments recorded at the Festival. Graeme confirmed they still had this material.

**ACTIONS:** Graeme & Signs Committee to finalise copy & images and send designs to Lewisham/Glendale

Festival Comments data to be collated and reviewed

Planting: Svea suggested we call for volunteers for another tree planting event in mid-November or take part in the [Woodland Trust – The Big Climate Fightback campaign](#), #EveryTreeCounts. A national event taking place on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> November. If we take part we can publically pledge via their website.

Svea confirmed we do already have some saplings to plant.

It suggested that we also hold a bird feeder / wreath making activity on the same date.

ACTIONS: Call out for tree planting volunteers

Call out for volunteers for other activities – Bird feeder/Christmas Wreaths etc

## 6. Date for next Meeting

- Meeting: Monday 18<sup>th</sup> November





## Chair's / Committee Report

It has been another eventful year for the Friends of Blythe Hill Fields. Sadly our previously elected Chair Ellie Rogers resigned as she and her family found their dream home and moved away to Kent. But Nicholas Taylor stepped into the role as Chair once again and we thank him for his continued support and Ellie for her longstanding support of and contribution to the Friends and the Blythe Hill Fields Festival.

And proving that we are about so much more than the annual Blythe Hill Fields Festival - here is a little recap of all we have achieved over the last 12 months.

- The long awaited installation of new playground equipment. A project originally suggested in 2016 which required far more funds than we had at the time. With the support of many but led to a happy conclusion by Fiona Salmon – who has since moved away from the area, a bucket swing, pirouette and wobble bridge were installed, much to the delight of little ones.
- We updated both our logo and launched our new website. Our thanks to Jo for her designs and the Website Team led by Tim for creating a new modern site designed to be easier to maintain and update by committee members.
- With help of volunteers we planted new tree saplings in March and held another Seed Scattering event which attracted lots of little helpers happy to sow and stomp.
- Katherine organised a Spring Wildlife Walk in conjunction with London Wildlife Trust and identified lots of plants and local wildlife up on the Fields. [Read the full report here.](#)
- And then of course, we held another successful Blythe Hill Fields Festival. With the support of external funding from local businesses and a community funding application for the Project managed by Helen with the support of all the committee - this time raising over £8,000 to put towards future projects. Some of which had already been earmarked as our contribution towards our Lewisham Greening Fund application. We did not call for objectives at

this years Festival as just prior to the event, the Friends applied to the Lewisham Greening Fund to secure; additional rubbish bins; additional picnic tables; a drinking fountain and a new piece of aerobic gym equipment to complement the Fitness Trail.

Our ongoing projects include new Park Signage, a Community Garden and applying for Green Flag status. Lots to be getting on with.

Thank you all for your hard work and efforts this year. We're a wonderful mix of skills, ideas and determination. Now it's time to think about planning for 2020 and beyond!

29 October 2019