

Friends of Hilly Fields

Minutes of meeting 8th June 2010

Present:

Martin Hyde LBL
Kay Foley LBL
Rachel Mooney
Helen Mercer
Andrew Harper
Jill Jenkins
Ruth Pepper
Keith Ward
Barbara Morris
Daniel Demicheli
Michael Bridge
John Bowen
Joanne Godwin
Hill Jenkins
Michelle Fullarton
Pam Cenamon
Barbara Cyrus

Apologies

Vince Glendale, Russell Penn

1. Martin Hyde (London Borough of Lewisham Parks Development Manager) explained his role and that of the Friends group. The new contract with Glendale was also explained. This is a contract for maintenance for 10 years, but with the possibility of a cut-off after 5 years and the right to terminate at any point. The new contract allows for moneys made by Glendale for additional activities in the park to feed back into park management.
The maintenance issues raised at the previous meeting were raised again and Martin Hyde requested that the letter drafted be sent to him to deal with.
A particular issue raised with Martin was the condition of the footpaths. He said these were very expensive to repair and there were no large sums available. They would pursue any possibilities particular with the cycling officer.
2. Kay Foley (London Borough of Lewisham Animal Welfare) had been invited following a serious incident in which a dog had attacked another dog, and when its owner intervened, the attacking dog had then bitten the man. Kay reported on her powers and the powers of the police. She outlined the main points of Lewisham Dog Control Orders which may also be found at:
<http://www.lewisham.gov.uk/Environment/AnimalWelfare/YourDogAndTheLaw.htm>

There was a lengthy discussion about the possible means of dealing with dangerous dogs and the growing problem on Hillyfields. In the incident mentioned above, the police had become involved, but the meeting was concerned at the difficulty of obtaining swift and effective action to control dangerous dogs.

3. Development issues: Rachel Mooney reported that she had applied for a sustainability grant for the new playground. This would ensure ongoing public involvement in maintaining the playground. She had applied for gardening equipment, and funds for storytelling and other children's activities. She confirmed that remedial work to the grass and planting would be undertaken by the contactors in autumn.

Martin Hyde said they were looking at replacing the waste paper Bins – it will cost about £600 for each new bin. The group need to think about where these could be best located. RM will get a plan prepared for people to use.

4. Orchard. £1,000 has been bid for from the Capital Growth fund. We have been assured that there has been little vandalism in other areas, which have this sort of scheme. It will be our responsibility to water the trees. It was suggested that all the trees should be varieties of apple. The mini orchard is planned for the area between the stone circle and the nature reserve. The trees are to be planted there in November. There has been an initial meeting with the London Orchard Project.
5. Other trees. Transition Brockley and Rachel Mooney had also made an application to the Forestry Commission and are waiting to hear in respect of a bid of £2,500 to buy more trees for the rest of the park and equipment for the orchard. It was suggested that these might be medlars and mulberries.
6. Bird Champion. Keith Ward reported. Comparing the period since our last meeting with the same period last year, the numbers of birds seen and of species seen remain largely similar except for the House Sparrow. Last year he reported an average of 10 present during each visit, with a maximum of 27, and I found them on every visit. This year not only was the average down to 7 and the maximum down to 15, but they were present on only half my visits. On the positive side, many of the bird boxes are now occupied, and the tree on the NE corner of the playground now has Woodpigeon, Mistle Thrush and Blue Tits nesting in it.
Chris McGaw runs the Rivers and People Project for Lewisham Council and on two occasions in May I joined his Dawn Chorus walks along Waterlink Way. I'm pleased to announce that he's planning to include Hilly Fields in future events. Nick Bertrand will take a tree-related walk around the park and Chris will take an evening birdsong walk, hopefully in the next ten days.
Please watch <http://hillyfields.blogspot.com/> for details.
7. Bowling Green. Jill Tritton reported that, thanks to money from the Ladywell Community Fund, the sprinkler system was now up and running.
8. The work to the cricket wicket was out to tender and the winning tenderer is due on site in August 2010.

9. Eastern Avenue. The gate was still not being closed. Glendale has contacted Prendergast School to see what can be done.
10. Café. There have been some unsolicited expressions of interest in developing a café. The council will need to set out what they want from such a project. They will most likely offer the existing building as a footprint for refurbishment or rebuild with possible room for extension. This will be for use as café, toilets and park keeper's office. In return for initial investment the council could offer a long term lease with an initial rent free period. This will be advertised in the first period to see if there are any objections. Should the council wish to progress then they will advertise for expressions on their requirements. We were told there is no council money available for repairs and maintenance of the building or developing a Café.
11. Jonathan Petherbridge from the Bubble Theatre explained their touring programme and said they wanted to include Hilly Fields in their touring production of 'The Sirens of Titan' this August. Everyone agreed this would be very welcome.
12. AOB: Details about an on-going survey of stag beetles will go on the notice-board. Jo Godwin and Kay Foley have volunteered to organise a dog activity day.

Date of next meeting:

**7.30pm Tuesday 14th September 2010 in the park keepers Room,
top of Eastern Road.**

Post meeting note

Any funds for notice boards and litter bins has now been "frozen".