

Friends of Hilly Fields

Minutes of meeting 8th March 2011

Present:

Rachel Mooney
Helen Mercer
Andrew Harper
Sue Luxton
Keith Ward
Ruth Pepper
Fred Harding
Ruth Mayes
Mike Bridge
Dee Condon
Catherine Thompson
Jill Jenkins
Marcus Cox
Tom Molton
Symon Knightswood
Vince from Glendale

1. Maintenance

- Meadow: complaint that it had been mown too early. RM suggested needed micro management and that Vince (Glendale) to contact friends prior to cutting, so that friends could confirm that flowers are not being cut too early.
- Trees: there had been five attempts to plant the Brockley Oak, but not one had survived. The last oak had been dead or nearly dead when Glendale planted it. Glendale offered to contact Marcus before planting the replacement so that he could oversee that is planted correctly.
- Footpaths and steps. Rachel reported that the money was available to renew the path between the bowling green and the toilet block. However, money for the steps from the lower Vicars Hill entrance had not been secured. Rachel had requested the specification for the works so that friends could see what was planned. The friends had wanted the entrance to have cross-overs etc. But thought it unlikely that this would be included.
- Friends were not sure what work was being undertaken by the Green gym and it was suggested that a meeting should be held with Lara so that the Friends and Green Gym can coordinate. The Green Gym might also be able to forward some of the friends' nature conservation plans for the park.
- Stone Circle: One of the stone slabs has had a major crack in it for a couple of years now, probably the result of a fire. Rachel had met up with the original architect and a local stone mason, to discuss the options of redoing the central slabs with smaller slabs and then recarving the months and seasons. She will investigate the costs and BrocSoc might help to fund the replacement.
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2. Development issues

- Playground: National Lottery visited the playground on 22nd February, as it is viewed as a very good example of community design and consultation. Rachel reported that she has progressed the sustainability grant and was organising a story-teller to work with local schools and nursery this May/June. The question of the boggy area at the lower end was raised – the initial large ponding in the park was a result of a break in the pipework to the pump. However, it is also not draining away underground and water is seeping out at bottom of park and across path. It was suggested that we plant in the boggy grass to try and alleviate problem. Rachel has some planting to organise as part of sustainability grant and will look at this area.
 - Octavia Hill Memorial Garden. Helen and Rachel outlined the progress that had been made to revive the fenced off garden area between the bowling green and the bothy. It is hoped that we can raise funding and get the project started for the anniversary of her death next year. The overall plan is to create a woodland garden focussing on winter and spring planting. Possible features including a water feature or a 'living sculpture and an arbour. Once we have a few sketch ideas and idea of sources for funding, there would be fuller consultation. The most likely source of funding will be the Heritage Lottery Fund. The proposal was generally welcomed by the meeting.
3. Bowling Green: Jill emphasised that they were trying to make it clear that this is a park facility and not separate. Rachel requested that photos of the Bulbs from the Big Bulb Plant were sent to them when they flowered.
 4. Bird champion. Keith reported that the Friends took part in the RSPB's national bird survey on 29th January. <http://hillyfields.blogspot.com>. Lara from Glendale and Rachel had workshop for children (and adults too) building bird boxes, colouring and doing quizzes. It was agreed that Rachel and Keith would look into possibility organising a dawn chorus event. A full report is attached.
 5. Orchard: the planting of the orchard on 15th January and the follow-up wassail had been very successful. Seven trees were planted involving up to 50 people. It was reported that some groups have adopted trees. The Friends will liaise with Transition Town Brockley about getting a rota to water the trees. Volunteers are welcome, each small tree needs 10 litres a week each until end of April when it should have 20 litres each. LOP say that they can't be over watered.
 6. Additional tree planting with the forestry commission grant is to be carried out by Glendale, we are awaiting imminent delivery of trees, these will also need to be watered by Friends of park.
 7. Proposal for a café on site of toilet block. Fred and Ruth reported that the Council was offering lease for the toilet block to become a café and that they were putting in a tender, subject to a surveyor's report on the building. The council requested interested tenderers to meet with the Friends. The café must be on the site of the existing block. Fred outlined that they would be working as a franchise with Pistachios who run the Manor House café. They were looking to create a local community café, using local produce where possible.
 8. Cricket: it was reported that Envirowork which had been the keen advocates of the cricket pitch had gone into liquidation last August, although Rachel was not told until December. Glendale has taken over the contract from 1st March 2011. It was

reported that teams were waiting to use the pitch. The council have been advised that they should not use the square until 2012, except for a few junior and exhibition games. Concerns were expressed about the effect of the fenced off area on the Fayre in June.

9. Eastern Road gate. It was reported that the gate never gets closed. Vince suggested that Glendale could include the closure of the gate on someone's round, this would need to be done in consultation with the school. Road will be resurfaced after the Prendergast rebuild is finished.

Next Meeting **Tuesday 10th May at 7.30**, in Park keepers Room.

Dawn Chorus has been arranged for

5am on Thursday 19th May 2012, probably meeting by stone circle

Chris McGaw from Lewisham's People and River Project will lead this walk.

Contact Chris McGaw 07850 713 974

www.natureconservationlewisham.co.uk/rivers-people/

Bird Champion Update from Big Bird Watch

Black-headed Gull 10

Blackbird 2

Blue Tit 4

Carrion Crow 6

Common Gull 16

Feral Pigeon 4

Goldfinch 25

Great Spotted Woodpecker 1

Great Tit 3

Greenfinch 1

House Sparrow 16

Jay 2

Long-tailed Tit 2

Magpie 3

Mistle Thrush 3

Redwing 13

Ring-necked Parakeet 5

Robin 2

Starling circa 60

Woodpigeon 10

Wren 2

That's 21 species, beating our 2009 record!

Dates for your diaries

Brockley Max Children's event 4th June 2011, volunteers can contact: efumagalli@hotmail.com

Hilly Fields Midsummer Fayre 18th June 2011, see www.brockley.com/brocroc/ if you wish to volunteer.