

Friends of Hilly Fields

Minutes of meeting 14th September 2010

Present:

Rachel Mooney

Helen Mercer

Jill Jenkins

Vince Frimpong (Glendale)

Andrew Moore

Andrew Harper

Mike Keogh

Josh Franklin

Barbara Cyrus

Keith (Park Keeper)

Apologies: Ruth Pepper, Keith Ward, Daniel Demicheli,

1. Maintenance: a letter has been sent to Martin Hyde about a range of maintenance issues such as grass cutting, leaves collection, the strimming of community planted areas. The letter asks Martin to set up a meeting with the Friends and Glendale. We need a plan of when and where Glendale will carry out maintenance work and they need to be Friend's ongoing development.
2. Other maintenance issues. Various repairs were needed: the exercise equipment needs repairing as concrete footings are exposed and it is often muddy beneath. The table tennis table needs to be levelled. Glendale confirmed they had done footing for table tennis and it would soon be levelled. They will check remit for the trim trail equipment. The Eastern gate is still not being shut and there has been fly tipping recently. It was reported that the gate can no longer be locked since road resurfacing did not reinstate the hole for the pole.
3. It had been proposed to replace bins and get a new community notice board. Funding for these has now been frozen but Rachel will create a plan anyway for future use. It was suggested that there be an additional bin near the stone circle.
4. Meadow. Nature's gym aims to translocate some seeds for Durham Hill's meadow flowers to Hilly Fields. A site in the park running along Vicars Hill was proposed. The meeting felt it would be better to add to the attempts at really establishing a meadow that had already been made on the main 'meadow' area. Generally, the smaller meadows caused more difficulty with management. It was also suggested that Nature's Gym could begin the work needed to prepare the ground for the orchard due to be planted near the stone circle in November.
5. Planning permission has been granted to Prendergast school for portakabins to be erected by the upper school on the grass. They will be there from half term for 18 months. Section 106 money might be available from the developers for work in the park. Greenscene are hoping to get funding for upgrading the tennis courts. Nothing is confirmed at this stage.
6. Rachel has secured £3200 from the National Lottery under their Community Spaces programme to secure the sustainability of the new playground. Monies have been granted for: (a) story-telling (b) eco-workshops for children such as making birdfeeders (c) tools so that volunteers can help to maintain the playground and carry out community planting. This is to supplement the existing maintenance. Rachel asks people to come forward with ideas and help for workshops and with offers of help with maintenance.
7. Rachel with Transition Brockley have secured £1500 from the Forestry Commission Community Grant Scheme for additional trees for the park. This money must be spent by 31.3.2010. The idea was to buy medlars, pears, hazels and mulberries to supplement planting in park. The planting of the orchard will take place in November – it will be advertised on the website as volunteers will be needed. We will also be asking people to adopt a new tree and ensure that each tree is well-watered.
8. It was suggested that some of these trees could be planted in the quiet garden area. There is still the idea of creating a Kyrle Memorial or Octavia Hill Memorial Garden in this area. It was agreed that we would approach landscape students at Greenwich University to see if they could develop ideas, for instance for an Edwardian garden. We agreed the garden would also need to be as easy maintenance as possible.

9. The Bowling Green is doing well and is getting wider community involvement. Rachel had applied to the Big Bulb Plant for free bulbs again, but had not heard whether we have been successful. Last year's tulips had been a great success.
10. Lewisham Community Sports had a successful summer with 900 children coming. With the building at Prendergast they will no longer be able to use the lower site and will be using the music block instead as their base for holiday times in the next 18 months.
11. Cricket pitch. The work on the wicket was completed in August. There are also plans to improve the outfield and make changing rooms in the Bothy site. There was a query over the corrugated shed near the Bothy currently used by the footballers. Rachel to confirm with Envirowork what longterm plans are.
12. Café. Martin Hyde is advertising to the public in SE London Press that the council is proposing to offer a lease for a café at the current parkeeper's office and toilet block. This will give a date for any objections. If there are no objections the council will seek expressions of interest in the block being developed as a café. Lewisham will then invite tenders. Lewisham will not pay for any building work but most likely they will provide a long-term lease and a rent-free period.
13. Dogs _ Organisation of a dog event in the park is still in the planning. No further dog attacks have been reported.
14. Bird champion. Thanks to Keith, Hilly Fields is now included in the Rivers and People programme. **Bird Champion update:**
Chris McGaw of Lewisham's Rivers and People Project took an evening birdsong walk around the park on 10th June. We saw or heard around 15 species that evening, thanks to Chris' birdsong identification skills, including a Great Spotted Woodpecker, a pair of Mistle Thrushes and a Sparrowhawk.

July and August is a naturally quiet time for birds in the park so there's not much to report except that the Ring-necked Parakeets are back.

An East End Park has a permanent notice listing all the birds that have been seen over the last year or two. Knowing that 27 species have been seen in the park may encourage more people to look out for them. Keith would be happy to provide the text for such a notice.

On Wednesday 6th October, 2-4pm, there will be an event run by Rivers and People Project in Hilly Fields. A walk, probably guided by a member of the Creekside Education Trust, will "focus on trees in the urban park". Meet at the entrance at the top of Vicar's Hill. For more information:

Chris.McGaw@Lewisham.gov.uk or 07850 713974.

Please also watch <http://hillyfields.blogspot.com/> for details.

15. AOB
 - Rachel to discuss with Vince on where the Green Flag pole goes.
 - Paving flags left when benches were removed need to also to be removed and the grass re-seeded.
 - Suggestion that the Friend's Group provide a board, which can be used to inform people of what wildlife to watch out for each month.
 - The slab in the centre of the Stone Circle needs to be renewed as it is very badly cracked. Rachel will get estimates for the cost of replacement, otherwise we will have to find a way to repair it.
 - The tree officer has now completed the park's tree survey, highlighting short and long-term work required for trees.
 - Contractors who built the playground will be returning to restore the grass and plating that died over the summer. The suppliers have been and fixed the pump in the playground. Sand has blocked the drainage pipe with sand and the design is flawed, so that it cannot easily be cleared, hence the water not draining down plug hole.
 - The next Nature's Gym is on 23.9.10 from 11-2 in the Adelaide Road meadow.

Post meeting note: Orchard Planting confirmed for 4th December 2010.

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 30th November 2010, venue to be announced