

Manor House Gardens User Group

Minutes for the meeting held on 22nd April, 2008

Present: Jim Mallory (Chair), Angela Joy (Joint Chair), Elizabeth Bentley (Treasurer), Anne Fisher, Sue Byford, Peter Richardson, Richard Bainbridge, Sylvia Ling, David Plumer, Linda Cohen, Cllr. Paul Bentley, Sheila Peck, Cllr, Sven Griesenbeck, Martin Hyde (Lewisham Parks), Adrian Wickham (Glendale), David Atherton (Lewisham Education), Chris Threlfall (Lewisham Education) Aysin Djemil(Pistachios in the Park)

1) Apologies: Patricia Richardson, Charles Batchelor, Rowan Bosworth-Davies, Caroline Bosworth-Davies

2) Minutes of the last meeting (29 Jan 2008)

A brief form of minutes was presented, and amended to change the phrase "continued use of the gate between the gardens and the school playground" to remove the word "continued".

3) Northbrook School - planning application

A proposal from the developers was tabled (distributed). Chris Threlfall talked to the proposal. Thanks the User Group on behalf of the Borough for their consideration of the proposal to accept increased use of the MUGA and tennis court by the school in exchange for refurbishment of both areas. The problem of access via the gate remained. The Borough's view was that direct access gave least disruption, particularly for emergency use.

Sue Byford read from a letter from former MHG users' group chair, Rowan Bosworth-Davies, in which he stated that there was an agreement with the school, dating from the time of the Heritage Lottery funding, that the gates not be used by the school.

There was considerable discussion.

Chair proposed that there should be a request for 2 public meetings, to give the wider community a chance to comment, one to be on a Saturday. Pointed out that there was broad agreement with the proposal apart from the question of access, provided that there was a clear published timetable of use by the school.

There was a need for clarification about lunchtime use, since members of the group who had attended an earlier meeting at the school had understood the acting headteacher to say that students would be kept on the school site at lunchtime. Chris Threlfall was quite clear that the proposal included lunchtime use.

Agreed that Chair would write to Planning Officer.

4) Locality Fund - Park Bench

Funding of £1500 had been received from the Councillors' Locality Fund. Agreed that the bench would be located in the shade of the group of trees nearer the lake, but still within the main grass area. Same design as before, with Glendale to order, install and invoice.

5) Safer Neighbourhood Team - no member attended

6) Wild-flower planting - 30 March 2008. A well-attended event with children coming from local Guide and Scout organisations.

7) Green Flag - preparations

Judging would take place on May 27th from 10 am. Sustainability issues being tackled. Tidying up, including brick wall near Brightfield Road entrance. Gate springs to be replaced. It was pointed out that the springs were too powerful for dog-users in wheelchairs to manage, and it was said this would be dealt with.

8) Dogs - Discussion, following last meeting, about dogs on leads

As the members who had raised this issue last time were not there, this specific matter was left for a future meeting. However, Adrian explained that it was possible to take out Dog Control Orders, though this was very expensive and not a route that Lewisham had so far chosen to go down. But it did allow specific areas to be designated.

Cleaning of dog faeces by Glendale takes place about once a week.

Report of dog fights at night in the Gardens - this had not been notified to police so far as anyone was aware.

Problem of excessive shade by trees in dog area preventing grass growth and making area muddy - could some of the self-seeded trees be removed?

9) Future events

Party/picnic in the Park (28 June) - Aysin Djemil organising

Local schools to be asked to participate - already participation by St Matthews and Baring

Dog show + appeal for DEBRA (1st Saturday in Sept) - Angela Joy organising

10) Composting site - Cllr Paul Bentley

Awaiting risk assessment. Martin Hyde apologised that this had not been done. However reported that Glendale does have the necessary ISO accreditation.

There would be a report at the next meeting.

11) Glendale report (see also Green Flag preparations)

The Conservation Officer is looking for a "Bird Champion" for each park. Leaflet to go on display on cafe and community noticeboards.

Question of First Aid raised.

Thanks for the new children's equipment expressed.

12) Date of next meeting (AGM) 15th July at the Good Shepherd at 7.30 pm.

13) A.O.B. Manor House Library

Photos on view in mobile. They are now working on lift shaft. There is no clear idea of what the landscaping on park side will be - Martin Hyde to chase. What form will the iron railings take, if any?

What will the location of the garden's entrance be?

Sue Byford stated that there was now a possible revenue stream for the building.