

Friends of Garthorne Road Nature Reserve

AGM - 18th June 2016 – Devonshire Road Nature Reserve

Welcome and apologies

Present

Ernest Thomason
Ami Evans
Ben Morris
Christine Ongsiek
Chris Andrews
Tom Molton
Jo Dubiel

Apologies for absence

Jess Kyle (Lewisham Conservation)
Nick Pond (Lewisham Regeneration)
Rebecca Woodall

Chairman's update

The recent guided walk organised by the Forest Hill Society and led by Ernie was well attended and enjoyed good weather.

Ernie has been doing a weekly butterfly transect on the site – the most common variety is Speckled Wood. He has also noted that sloe worms can be found on the site.

The committee would like to prepare an audited map of the site which would aid any future discussion for work and improvement.

- There are some existing maps from the council audit made around ten years ago.
- Ernie is currently using the MyForest tool on sylvia.org to map the individual habitats.
- Tom Molton mentioned that an ecologist friend Pete Robinson is preparing to do a planned survey of the site on 23rd/24th July – the results of this are likely to be very useful to the committee

Constitution and committee

The draft constitution proposed by Ami Evans was accepted by majority vote.

The following committee of six people was confirmed by the AGM:

- Ernest Thomason (Chair)
- Ami Evans (Treasurer)
- Ben Morris (Secretary)
- Rebecca Woodall (Media and communications)
- Christine Ongsiek (Media and communications)
- Chris Andrews

We have not heard from three people who expressed an interest in committee membership since the last meeting. We will contact them to check if they still want to be involved either on the committee or as normal members.

Membership

We discussed the difference between membership and being on the mailing list.

It was agreed that we should seek to build a list of people who have explicitly agreed to become members by signing a membership form. This will make it easier to claim significant membership when applying for funding.

The committee will look at establishing a means of doing this online although it will be useful to learn what other groups do here, particularly Devonshire Road. We will also consider claiming Facebook membership as group membership.

Access to the site

Since the last meeting it has been confirmed that we can be covered by Lewisham Council's site insurance so long as any access to the site is planned with them.

The committee will ask Lewisham Council for access codes to the site.

The committee will also establish a shared calendar so we can keep track of the various different work and open days being planned by the various organisations that use the site including Lewisham Council.

Open day

The committee agreed to work towards holding an open day on the site in late summer. Ideas discussed for the open day included:

- Holding a guided walk, similar to the event that Ernie led recently
- Hosting a picnic on the site
- Making the day more child-orientated by bringing in nature specialists such as Richard Jones (“Bugman Jones”)
- Publicising the day more widely through other mailing lists such as the London Natural History Society and South London Botanical Institute as well as a range of print and online media.

Work day

The committee also resolved to try and hold a work day, preferably before the open day though timing will depend on what is currently being planned by Lewisham Council. If weekends are difficult to arrange we could consider evening sessions instead.

We should try to get access to the shed on the site so we can access any tools stored there or, in time, store our own.

A brief discussion of work identified some limited path clearing as the highest priority work.

AOB

The longer term objectives for the committee were discussed. Holding an initial open day and work day were agreed to be a realistic and sufficient ambition for a first summer.

In the autumn the committee will start to look at options for funding so we can consider projects to improve the appearance of the site entrance.

The committee are also keen to look at improving the security of the site. This will be easier to survey in the late autumn at which point we will walk around the site and determine where the gates are and how difficult it is to break in.

Actions arising from the meeting

Ami Evans

Ask Jake at Devonshire Road how to manage membership sign-up.

Ben Morris

Look into creating an online form for membership sign-up.

Contact members who have expressed an interest in committee membership but have not responded to recent emails.

Chris Andrews

Create an online calendar that holds a shared view of activity on the site.

Canvass a date for the committee-sponsored open day among committee members.

Contact Lewisham Council for clarification on access to the site and any tools that may be available for work days.

Obtain access codes to the site from Lewisham Council for the committee members.

Committee

Confirm availability for an open day in August and work days during July\August.