

# Friends of Garthorne Road Nature Reserve

Committee Meeting - 1st November 2017 – Honor Oak Pub, SE23

## Welcome and apologies

### Present

- Ernest Thomason
- Ben Morris
- Rebecca Woodall
- Jon Baggs
- Shahanara Begum
- Sue Austin

### Apologies for absence

- Ami Evans
- James Morgan
- Jess Kyle (Lewisham Conservation)

## Work on the gates

The work to clean and paint the gates have been commissioned and will be undertaken later in the year - hopefully in the first half of December.

The committee will check with the Council to see what will be happening to the barb wire across the top of the fence. It is an eyesore though may serve an important security function in terms of dissuading intruders.

## Forest schools

There was some discussion around forest schools and whether the groups who are currently allowed onto the reserve are using it regularly. The concern was that other groups may be unfairly denied the opportunity to use the reserve.

It has been suggested that we could consider charging groups a subscription rate to use the reserve. The committee were uneasy with the notion of using this as a fundraising channel, but are interested in groups having to regularly confirm their on-going commitment to using the site.

Ben will raise the issue with Jess Kyle and Nick Pond at Lewisham.

## Invasive species

Some invasive species are affecting houses along Beadnell Road, particularly Giant Hogweed.

It has been established that the affected areas are beyond the borders of the reserve so are the responsibility of Network Rail rather than Lewisham Council. No progress has been made in trying to track down somebody in Network Rail to liaise with.

Ernie has offered to speak to Devonshire Road and Nick Pond at Lewisham to see how other reserves have dealt with invasive species just beyond the borders.

## Funding

The committee considered a short paper prepared by Ben Morris around our options for applying for a small amount of funding to make it easier to open the reserve. It was agreed that we should seek to prepare an application to the Big Lottery Fund's "Awards for All" scheme by the end of the year.

As a first step, Ben will prepare and circulate a draft application based on a list of spending items that should include the following:

- Cleaning out the inside of the entrance shed - i.e. removing the debris, cladding the walls and adding shelves and hooks for storage
- A set of tools for working on the site, e.g. a hand scythe, bow saws, loppers, axes, sledgehammers and mallets
- Lockable containers to keep tools stowed away from children who may use the shed.
- A lockable noticeboard for the front gates
- Designing and printing a guide to the site - similar to the folded A3 guide used by Devonshire Road
- Printing leaflets to advertise "special" open days such as the "family afternoon" held last summer
- Materials to help encourage the diversity of species found on the site, e.g. bug hotels in the entrance area and a hedgehog tunnel.

## Next meeting

The next committee meeting will be on **Wednesday 14th March 2018** at the Honor Oak Pub from 8pm.

The focus of the meeting will be on organising opening the site over the spring and summer.