AGM | 3 October 2009
Salvation Army Hall, Paul Street, London E15
Minutes

Present

Friends of Abbey Gardens
Andreas Lang Chair
Dasha French Treasurer
Lydia Thornley
[Secretary from this AGM]
Louis French
Tim French
Catherine French
Torange Khonsari
Gordon Joly
Helena Price
Sonya Frearson
Ashley McCormick
Tim Olden
Nick Hanover
Charles Seber [Charlie]
Jason Lennon
Elisabette Andrews
Gary Andrews
Eliza Petlicka
Dariusz Petlicki
Joan Keating

Somewhere
Nina Pope
Karen Guthrie
Chris Cavalier, Garden Club Leader

LB Newham
Liz Shearer, Engagement Officer

Topics

Introduction
Andreas
Introductions to friends’ group, established 2006, now big push to extend and involve more people
[Question from Gordon: structure of Friends of Abbey Gardens; answer that it is a body governed by a constitution]

Minutes of last meeting
Dasha
Explanation that with no secretary at last AGM, there were no official minutes so rundown given of event, where Somewhere’s vision for the garden was set out

History
Andreas
Unltd grant applied-for and received. A number of events followed, held in the street while the site was not yet accessible

DLR contacted re: connecting arts commission on station with garden. Money given towards new commission. Steering group formed: English Heritage, Urban Design team LB Newham, Friends of Abbey Gardens and art consultants Modus Operandi. Four artists were shortlisted, Somewhere chosen unanimously. Somewhere had proposed a holistic garden rather than a single piece of art; this gave focus and momentum to the garden.
Following the commission, delivery money still not available. Fundraising followed [LB Newham and Somewhere]. Due to Somewhere coming on board quite late, aim was to move ahead for one growing season instead of two.

**Somewhere**
- The site is owned by LB Newham parks; our contact is Liz.
- The idea was to grow in a different way from allotments: the community could grow together and harvest together.
- The design was based on the historic local protest garden grown by the Plaistow Landgrabbers.
- The site had to be remediated; raised beds made that process easier.
- This year, there was a rush to get on-site and a decision made to go ahead and use this growing season. Credit given to all who grew from seed, which helped us to get ahead.
- Provisional proposals were put in for a permanent garden, using the harvest garden as a test to inform the long-term design of the garden.
- Somewhere employed Chris as garden club leader. This helped, along with the events, in realising the vision for the garden.

**Funding**
- Majority S106 funding: a percentage of development money has to go into a pot for community projects. This covered remediation.
- Arts Council covered Somewhere’s time.
- LB Newham Local Fund - a note made that the Council were very supportive.
- LB Newham Parks, for the Harvest Festival event.
- Community Spaces funding will secure activity for next year.

**Stakeholders**
- Site owned by Newham Parks. Friends of Abbey gardens has 5-year licence for peppercorn rent. Liz, Engagement Officer, is our contact.
- Somewhere - involved to project completion and beyond.
- Modus operandi - question mark over ongoing involvement.
- Urban Design - involvement coming to completion.
- English Heritage continues to be involved because of the scheduled ancient monument status of the site. Permission needed for elements such as trees.
- Friends’ group taking charge.

*Action: Friends’ group to be more hands-on over the next year.*
Access and events
Nina and Karen
Andreas
Chris

As of last month site open dawn to dusk.
[Question from Charlie: potential for vandalism in cul-de-sac. Answer from Andreas that site had also been notorious for fly-tipping but vandalism has decreased. Garden well-received and will be secondary station entrance]

Two small undocumented events, both successful: wildflower event with botanist and seed distribution. Sponsorship from Chiltern Seeds.

Information given about Seed Swap, Soup and Social event.
[Comment from Charlie re: flyers: postcard or slightly bigger than business card format might be more useful]

Harvest Festival event attracted over 150 people. Sam Clarke from Moro was a big draw, garden tour, flower show - feedback was good and a high standard of production raised the bar.

Action: Plan to run the event again next year.

Flowers-4-U, lower-arranging event. Low-key event by Margot from NAFAS.

We took part in The Big Lunch, part of a national event. Well-attended, though hampered by bad weather.

[Discussion re: honesty stall principles - suggestion from Charlie of harvest and donate system and aim expressed to avoid harvesting by people who don’t garden]

Planting day in June was main kick-off for project.

Action: capacity for next year’s growing to start earlier, in April, with events which can attract the widest possible cross-section of people.

Potential for evening events and events as marketing for the project.

Somewhere offered their events flyer as a template for use by events teams.

Consensus that events have been good and successful in attracting people.

Continue building events around gardening.

Orange Rock Corps work was a success - potential to build corporate / CR involvement.

Site used on Tuesdays by Mind for gardening sessions for its clients.

Local school activity, setting up garden clubs - Chris setting one up next week with Manor School.

Discussion of events next year. Different people to take a lead in different events. [Orange] Small-scale events are possible for anyone daunted by the idea of running a big event.

[Ideas from Joan Keating: The Big Draw - Nina suggested that Tim O’s brother could run - or Carrom championship for kids].

[Tim] Creation of mailing lists - using email much more to publicise events. [Andreas] Currently one large mailing list - establish new list for core group, separating out different mailouts.
Funding from Community Spaces covers:
- Grass at front of site
- Fence and moving of entrance
- One big event
- Honesty stall
- Rainwater harvesting
- Planting fruit trees along back wall
- Replacing apple tree

Key to fundraise for garden club supervisor post. Call for ideas. Query re: Local Fund. Liz suggested talking to councillors.

Thanks given to Nina and Karen for fundraising.

Note that Friends of Abbey Gardens now holds funds - more onus on us. Enables us to apply for maintenance grant.

Apologies for councillors not being able to come; thanks noted for how supportive councillors have been.

Possibility to apply for Go For It grant of £1000-1500.

Funding needed for toilet and for electricity on site.

Call for additional fundraisers, for division of labour.

[Question from Helena: option to apply to foundations and trusts; note from Nina that there are relevant funding pots such as Esmée Fairbairn Food Scheme].

Action: Helena to help with Go For It grant application, with Elisabette and Tim.

Clearer picture of funding needs and activity for coming year.

Teams to take on various areas of activity:
- **Infrastructure:** Louis French, Torange Khonsari, Dariusz Petlicki, Gordon Joly
- **Events:** Ashley McCormick, Lydia Thornley, Dasha French, Sonya Frearson
- **Marketing:** Lydia Thornley, Cath French
- **Outreach:** Gordon Joly, Ashley McCormick, Dasha French, Elisabetta Andrews
- **Web:** Gordon Joly, Louis French, Andreas Lang, Nina Pope
- **Planting 2010 season:** Dariusz Petlicki, Eliza Petlicka, Gary Andrews, Nina Pope, Karen Guthrie, Chris Cavalier
- **Fundraising:** Tim French, Helena Price, Elisabetta Andrews
- **Honesty Stall:** Andreas Lang, Nina Pope, Karen Guthrie
- (Compost: Charlie Seber is interested - has lots of comfrey)

Actions: Contact councillors - Funding team
- Bees - find local apiary - Tim/Karen - Liz for written approval - Romford Honey?

Chair - Tim proposed Andreas - seconded by Louis
Treasurer - Dasha proposed by Andreas Nomited, seconded by Torange
Secretary - Lydia proposed by Elisabetta, Seconded by Andreas

Regular meetings:
- Saturdays 2PM - First Saturday of every - 7th November

[Gordon] Feast festival: Hillary Powell - proposal for feast on Greenway with local food producers - we are willing to contribute

Bunting