

FRIENDS OF ABBEY GARDENS

AGM | 3 October 2009

Salvation Army Hall, Paul Street, London E15

Minutes

Present

Friends of Abbey Gardens	Andreas Lang <i>Chair</i> Dasha French <i>Treasurer</i> Lydia Thornley <i>[Secretary from this AGM]</i> 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, <i>Garden Club Leader</i>	
LB Newham	Liz Shearer, <i>Engagement Officer</i>	

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

Nina
+ Andreas

- | 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

Nina
+ Andreas

- | 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. [Torange] 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.

**Finance and funding:
looking ahead**
Andreas

- I 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
- I Key to fundraise for garden club supervisor post. Call for ideas. Query re: Local Fund. Liz suggested talking to councillors.
- I Thanks given to Nina and Karen for fundraising.
- I Note that Friends of Abbey Gardens now holds funds - more onus on us. Enables us to apply for maintenance grant.
- I Apologies for councillors not being able to come; thanks noted for how supportive councillors have been.
- I Possibility to apply for Go For It grant of £1000-1500.
- I Funding needed for toilet and for electricity on site.
- I 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 Elisabethette and Tim.

- I Clearer picture of funding needs and activity for coming year.

Planning for 2010
Andreas

- I Collaboration so that FOAG learns the ropes from Nina and Karen.
- I 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, Dahsa French, Elisabethette 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, Elisabethette 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?

Structure

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

Regular meetings:

Saturdays 2PM - First Saturday of every - 7th November

Any other business

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

Bunting