

FRIENDS OF ABBEY GARDENS

Committee meeting | 7 November 2009 Abbey Gardens Minutes

Present

Friends of
Abbey Gardens

Andreas Lang *Chair*
Dasha French *Treasurer*
Lydia Thornley
[Secretary from this AGM]
Louis French
Tim French
Helena Price
Ashley McCormick
Dariusz Petlicki

+ potential new member [name?]

Topics

Infrastructure Louis and Tim

Infrastructure project update document circulated by Louis. Discussion points below expand on / record discussion of items listed in the document.

- | Meeting with English Heritage: happy with tree planting scheme and other runs of pipes. Still specifying gravel surface within ruin.
- | Awaiting price from medium-sized contractor for grassing works.
- | Timing and logistics of grassing and bulb planting: bulbs to be planted after levelling and before grassing; both need to be done as soon as possible. **Helpers will be needed.**
- | Trench digging day for trees: date in december to be agreed. **Helpers will be needed.**
- | Possibility discussed of grassing tree end of site.
- | Gate positions discussed, proposed for Portakabin and station ends of site.
- | Irrigation needs approval from English Heritage re: location of pipes.
- | Tool storage - routed ply shelf structure discussed; security raised. **Dariusz volunteered to make the tool storage.**
- | Solar power: info from Chris re: social enterprise in Hackney which supports community groups in getting solar power. **To be researched.**

- | Possibility of propane stove raised for keeping food warm - **permission to be checked.**
 - | Louis to find out from Council re: getting mains electricity.
 - | Update on beekeeping possibilities following meeting on site with beekeeper: 5 hives optimum to make it viable for beekeeper. Would need to be where compost bins are now, screened. Beekeeper would be happy to do events. Would need enough people prepared to make commitment of several years and who would be interested in training. Discussion re: selling honey / buying from beekeeper depending on number of hives. **Louis and Tim to find out how much interest there is among wider group.**
 - | Query re; how much more work two planting seasons will involve. View from Chris that there will be less work because beds are built and filled and a body of volunteers exists. Harvests will be just before Summer and Autumn.
 - | Another source of Compost found in North London which supplies 16 tons for free.
 - | Station opening discussed. **LT note: should we consider an event or publicity to tie in with the opening of the station or to encourage inclusion in DLR/Serco opening publicity?**
 - | Request from Dasha for figures relating to everything we commit to.
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Publicity and events Lydia

Draft press releases circulated - document available as .pdf. Explained that Nina and Karen would like comments, picture suggestions and local press info,

- | PR: *What will the harvest be?* and adapted press releases circulated. Agreed that each needs a strong story, clear positioning of FOAG as the initiators of the project and information on how to find the garden. **Comments to Lydia by midweek for revised draft by next weekend.**
- | Concern from Andreas that if we use the name Abbey Gardens, we have to go through LB Newham press office. **Lydia to get press office contact if needed.**
- | Clarity needed in communication of relationship between the two projects, both through branding and copy.
- | Cath has contacted Serco and TFL re: possibilities of being included in their publicity.
- | General preference for adding people pictures. Explained that these need to be of people who are, or can be, model-released for publication. **Picture nominations to Lydia by midweek.**
- | Local press discussed. Neighbouring boroughs' local papers, Metro and possibly the Standard discussed, plus media Trust Community Newswire <http://www.mediatrust.org/community-newswire>.

Additional audience information discussed - document available as .pdf.

- | We Are what We Do mentioned as highly successful former local community group to make contact with re: local audiences. <http://www.wearewhatwedo.org>

Print research and costings circulated - document available as .pdf.

- Plan explained to economise on print by producing a number of items from each print run. From board: postcards, press folder, folding card, 'plant labels' **Whole sheet of postcards and die-cut plant labels liked. Lydia to research further.** From paper, per event: A3 poster + fliers. Louis raised possibility of very short runs of inkjet posters
- Idea of calendar still liked. **LT note: audience / likely quantity to be discussed further so that these can inform design brief and production spec.**
- Banner stand discussed; preference from Andrew as for a structure which is less generic and has an honesty stall element or the logo pressed into product / compost. **LT note: this looks like an item needing Public Works input: over to Andreas and Torange for ideas.**
- Bags discussed as item for sale. preference for recycled PP over cotton. Louis mentioned Streetshirts and company which makes bags from recycled parachutes and paragliders **[Louis to email contacts to Lydia]** and strong preference from Andreas for finding and using a locally-made product.
- Paper bags and seed envelopes: rubber stamp discussed. **LT to research rubber stamps, non- soluble ink and special makings of envelopes.** **Blade Rubber in WC1 < <http://www.bladerubberstamps.co.uk/>>** **LT note: I suggest we research readymade products alongside special makings.** **Fenner Paper < <http://www.fennerpaper.co.uk/>>** are sourcing experts for paper and can research for us and **Baddeley Bros in Hackney are best for bespoke: < http://www.baddeleybrothers.com/envelopes/bb_envelopes.htm>**
- Louis and Tim raised possibility of mark on Google Earth via geotagging pics on Flickr and getting on the McDonalds local map.
- More detailed map proposed for local audiences.
- Proposed exhibition at Stratford Library discussed as outreach / opportunity to make contact with funders and potential corporate supporters. Suggestion to involve Cathy Taylor and Bob from Museum of London. Note from Andreas that it needs a strong theme. **LT note: could the flickr pool be a starting point - that a former derelict site has become a place that people want to photograph and the photographs then tell the story of the garden?**
- New Year's exercise resolutions as theme for local publicity.
- Summary copy for local audiences emphasising that the garden is not allotments and that you don't need to know about gardening. **Lydia's [very] draft circulated for comments/suggestions by midweek.**
- Dasha has asked for costings for all items we commit to. Lydia has suggested that we put list together after Nina's requested meeting with Lydia and Cath, which Dasha should attend.

- Planting**
- | Planting scheme circulated at and [in electronic form] after the meeting for comments
 - | Fruit tree scheme circulated for approval
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- Fundraising**
- | Community Spaces milestones and budgeting
 - | STD budget
 - | Garden Club Leader
 - | Toilet
- | Call from Dasha for figures for all items committed to for budgeting
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- Outreach**
- | Cath is researching parents' groups and local community centres.
 - | Discussion of the value of outreach in communicating with elders' groups.
Dasha and Lydia to discuss re; possible talks / visits.
 - | Dasha re: strengthening relationship with local church through providing flowers.
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- Honesty stall**
- | No update as yet
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- Web team**
- | Plans to update FOAG website discussed in outline
 - | Easier access discussed to 'how to find us' information
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AOB
