

Lewisham Biodiversity Group

Full Partnership meeting

Date and time: 20 April 2021, 16:00-18:00

Location: MS Teams

Purpose: Strategically plan, share, support, monitor and promote biodiversity protection/enhancement and nature conservation volunteering in Lewisham

ATTENDEES			
AM	Alison Murphy - Christ The King Sixth Forms	MF	Mathew Frith – London Wildlife Trust
AS	Alona Sheridan - F/O Mayow Park	ML	Maggie Leharne – F/O Chinbrook Community Orchard
DF	David Ford - Lee Forum, London National Park City Rangers	MM	Monika Mitchell - F/O Sydenham Wells Park
EWD	Eszter Wainwright-Deri – LBL Ecological Regeneration Manager	NL	Nick Lee – F/O Garthorne Road NR
FR	Frances Rowe – Albion Millennium Green (AMG)	PM	Peter Maynard – LBL Parks Contracts and Allotments Officer
GT	Geoffrey Thurley – F/O Brockley and Ladywell Cemetery (BLC)	RG	Richard Glassborow - LBKA
JK	Jessica Kyle – LBL Conservation Officer	RM	Rory McNally – F/O Mountsfield Park
JW	Judith Watling – Glendale Conservation Officer	SS	Simon Saville - LBKA
LM	Lucy Mitchell – LBL Beckenham Place Park (BPP) Project Officer		

ACTIONS:

1. **PM to connect RG to London Allotment Officers Association**
2. **All to remember to send stats and sightings to JK/EWD so we can have an accurate record on what is happening in the Borough**
3. **Projects that received funding from 2020 KW award: To send photos of projects**
4. **All who is interested in attending the first aid training: To let JK/EWD know so we can see numbers and organise the training.**

Discussion:

1. Welcome/Introductions/Apologies

- a. Apologies: Anna-Maria Cahalane, Jo Hatton, Donna Davis

2. 'Bees and Flowers go Together' – presentation by Richard Glassborow, London Beekeepers Association

Richard gave the Partnership a presentation about the status of the honey bees in London and the challenges and opportunities of the 'Save the bees!' message. He also introduced LBKA's new 'Bees and Flowers go Together' project that aims to raise awareness of the importance of protecting and creating foraging habitats for all pollinators and promoting sustainable beekeeping in London. Link to presentation slides to follow.

Q&A:

- a. Q: Is there competition with wild bees?
A: Yes, honeybees can present a competition to wild pollinators and will fly farther and start collecting earlier in season.
- b. Q: LWT's policy is to focus on wild pollinators and once beekeepers are not maintaining hives on their LWT sites they are removed
A: There are no issues with removing honeybees from nature reserves the concern is if there are sudden changes and people moving away from bees entirely (not just honey bees) that is why the 'Save the bees!' message needs influencing.
- c. Comment: The observation hive at Chinbrook Allotment Community Orchard is an amazing education resource
- d. Q: TFL and other site and road managers cutting down verges which could provide habitat for pollinators
A: The details of management is important (e.g. when it is cut) but also need to remember that pollution is higher at road sides and the risk of collision. There is a lot of work being done by Butterfly Conservation on road verges in collaboration with Local Authorities, TFL etc. Further information on this can be found here: <https://butterfly-conservation.org/our-work/conservation-projects/building-sites-for-butterflies>.
Recordings of talks on verges and other butterfly and pollinator related topics can be found here: <https://butterfly-conservation.org/in-your-area/surrey-and-sw-london-branch/zoom-talks>
- e. Q: Is the data detailed enough to be able to use it for decision-making (e.g. where can hives go)?
A: On-the-ground conditions could be different than the data shows especially as some data is quite old. Also this issue needs a London-wide approach.

Action: PM to connect RG to London Allotment Officers Association

3. **Minutes and matters arising** – All actions completed from last meeting, updates provided below

4. Biodiversity Partnership Summary Report and Highlights (EWD/JK)

- a. Covid had significant negative impact on events and engagements but biodiversity improvements and surveys were comparable, and as everything moved online website visits increased.
- b. No a lot of activities in Jan-March but the Partnership still delivered 40 events and 26 surveys

Action: All to remember to send stats and sightings to us so we can have an accurate record on what is happening in the Borough! Thank you!

- c. Wildlife sightings:
 - i. Red kite, 2 Little Egrets, 3 Great Spotted Woodpeckers – Ladywell
 - ii. Pied wagtail, blackcaps - Hilly Fields
 - iii. Sparrowhawk spotted 8 times over 3 months in Buckthorne Road
 - iv. Tawny owl heard in Buckthorne Road and Grove Park
 - v. Hedgehog captured on camera in Dacres Wood
 - vi. Palmate newts found in Beckenham Place Park

5. Lewisham updates

a. JK updates:

- i. Nature's Gym volunteering restarted in April, reduced capacity until next quarterly programme starts in July
- ii. 3 Rivers Clean Up will take place in May and June, smaller event than usual
- iii. Kenneth White award items picked up by members, call for new round of applications will be sent out soon

Action: Projects that received funding from KW award in 2020 to send photos of projects.

- iv. Forest School/Education Policy now in place and Licences have been issued.

b. JW updates:

- i. Action from last meeting – mulch for Chinbrook Community Orchard is available.
- ii. Rivers and People and NG volunteering restarted – Cornmill Gardens today; Ladywell next week
- iii. Glendale's contract to manage Lewisham Parks and Open spaces got extended until 2023 which means everything will continue as currently.

c. LM updates (BPP):

- i. BPP volunteering sessions restarted, number of volunteers will go up to 10 in mid-May (following government guidance)
- ii. Straw bales were deconstructed and found a frog in them
- iii. BPP Flower show is back this year – please see attached flyer and get flowers growing!

d. EWD updates:

- i. Draft Lewisham BAP circulated for comments – deadline is **24th May**
 1. Swift, hedgehog and common toad added as priority species
 2. Text updated and aligned with Parks and Open Spaces Strategy and Climate Emergency Action Plan
- ii. Local plan consultation closed on 11th April – Regulation 19 version is planned for autumn 2021
- iii. New Greening Fund opens soon, key themes: Access, Biodiversity and Play/Young People
- iv. GiGL Summary stats for Friends groups for free – please see example in presentation

6. Partner updates

a. DF (Lee Forum, London National Park city rangers)

- i. Pond in the wildlife area at Northbrook Park is dry, maybe consider relocating it to the wet area nearby – **Action: JW to look into this**
- ii. Peacock butterfly at River Pool Linear Park, the park is used more than usual and as a result could use some TLC – **Action: DF to send JK details about issues at River Pool Linear Walk**

b. MM (Sydenham Wells Park)

- i. Lost a lot of trees, would like new trees to be planted
- ii. Pond issues – looking at greening fund, crowdfunding

- iii. Park is busy but looking great many coots, moorhens, mallards and other birds around
- c. **ML (Chinbrook Community Orchard)**
 - i. Looking into creating a Friends group
 - ii. Plans to do more biodiversity surveys
- d. **GT (F/O BLC):**
 - i. Ladywell road gate has been opened to allow access
 - ii. Peacock butterflies seen
 - iii. Work day on 18th April to cut back turkey oak and sycamore saplings
 - iv. Open day planned for 11th July, Tom Moulton will lead a nature walk
 - v. Nature walk on 5th June as part of Brockley Max – up to 30 people
 - vi. Next work session in June, TBC
 - vii. AGM is being organised in June or July
- e. **FR (AMG):**
 - i. Quiet at AMG but well used
 - ii. Forest Schools have not restarted sessions
 - iii. New website: <http://albionmillenniumgreen.online/>
 - iv. Thanks to Lewisham Homes the asbestos issue is solved
 - v. Received application for an exercise class instructor – the group welcomes advice on this
- f. **NL (F/O GRNR):**
 - i. First open day 17th April, successful event still with booking system, no booking system will be in place from May
 - ii. Meeting tonight about improvement plan for the reserve
- g. **JH (Horniman Museum, sent in writing):**
 - i. No events in Jan-March
 - ii. Developing various digital Environment based events for family engagement through the launch of the new Environment Champions Club aimed at mobilising families to take positive action for the environment. Details here: <https://www.horniman.ac.uk/about-the-horniman/climate-and-ecology/environment-champions-club/>
- h. **AS (Mayow Park)**
 - i. Long tailed tits, mistle thrushes breed near busy paths
 - ii. Bug hotel was destroyed, considering rebuilding it
 - iii. Sydenham Garden – no plant surveys of green roof as Garden closed to all but essential staff, plans to restart Nature Walks with a focus on invertebrates
- i. **MF (LWT)**
 - i. Great North Wood project is finishing in June and this week is the last week of Great North Wood online festival: <https://www.wildlondon.org.uk/festival-great-north-wood>
 - ii. Installing new gate and railings at New Cross Gate Cutting is ongoing
 - iii. Worked with SINC evidence base for Lewisham Local Plan
 - iv. [London Urban Forest plan](#) published – relevant actions for Lewisham included in the report, also working on
 - 1. expanding the Ancient Woodland Inventory to include Hillcrest Estate despite being under 2ha

- 2. working with GiGL on getting finer resolution data (e.g. Courtrai Road wood)
- v. Working on London Woodland Condition Assessment following the [State of the UK's Woods and Trees report](#) as London woodlands are different and have more amenity pressure, safety and security and other considerations
- vi. Prepared the [London Biodiversity Design Planning Guide](#) which is a guidance for planners on how to use the Urban Greening Factor to maximise benefits for biodiversity
- j. **PM (LBL)**
 - i. Collaboration with nature conservation team on allotments and parks to enhance biodiversity
 - ii. Report issues with parks via the lewisham@glendale-services.co.uk email
- k. **AM (Christ The King Sixth Forms)**
 - i. working on a number of projects to increase biodiversity within the school grounds (wildflower meadows, bug hotels, bird and bat boxes, green roof, community garden)
 - ii. signed up for Schools Green Flag

7. AOB

- a. JK: Looking into organising an outdoor first aid course (delivered by [React First](#), two day training, 12 people, provides certificate). The cost is £100/person but we might be able to subsidise it somewhat if needed. Plans to organise it for late June.
Action: Everyone who is interested please let us know so we can see numbers and organise the training.
- b. EWD: proposed to have every second Partnership meeting virtually OR summer months in person and Oct/Jan online. No objections received.

8. Next meeting: 14th July 2021, 4pm (in person, location TBC)