

LONDON BOROUGH OF BROMLEY
ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC PROTECTION

Parks, Green Space and Countryside Stakeholder Panel Agenda

Date and Time: Wednesday 27th of July 2022
19:00 - 21:00.

Location: Online Teams Meeting

1. Welcome and Apologies,
2. Previous minutes V3 (24/01/2022) – agreement,
3. Review of actions in ‘Action Update Document’ (03/05/2022),
4. idverde Update,
5. LBB Update,
6. Feedback from Stakeholders,
7. AOB,
8. Date of future meeting - January 2023

Attendees

London Borough of Bromley (LBB)

- **Peter McCready (PMc)** - Assistant Director of Environment (Chairman),
- **James Hilsden (JH)** - Parks & Greenspaces Borough Manager
- **Hugh Chapman (HC)** – Arboricultural Services Manager,
- **Paul Mellor (PM)** – Principal Planner,
- **Helen Stickling (HS)** – Arboricultural Support Officer,

idverde

- **Martyn Bradley (MB)** - Operations Director,
- **Susan Holland** – Conservation & Education Manager,
- **Andrew Hodgson (AH)** – Operations Manager,
- **Amy Rogers (AR)** – Fundraising Manager,

Stakeholders

- **Dr Judith John (JJ)** – Orpington Field Club (OFC),
- **Larry Herbert (LH)** - Friends Forum, Chairman
- **Peter Woodward (PW)** - Chislehurst and St Paul's Cray Commons,
- **Janet Clayton (JC)** - Orpington and District Archaeological Society (ODAS),
- **Clive Chapman (CC)** - Bromley Council Bowling Club Association (BCBCA)

Apologies

- **Councillor Aisha Cuthbert (Cllr AC)** - Portfolio Holder for Environment and Community Services,
- **Councillor Will Rowlands (Cllr WR)** - Chairman, Environment and Community Services Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee,
- **Hannah Jackson (HJ)** - Assistant Director of Carbon Management & Green Space,

Other Non-Attendance

- **Clive Randell (CR)** - Chairman of the Leisure Garden and Allotment Federation.
- **Jamie Fletcher (JF)** - Bromley Biodiversity Partnership (BBP),

Agenda Items	Owner	Target Date
<p>Welcome and Apologies PMC said welcome to everyone and thanked them for their partnership and time. PMC formally apologised for the fact that the new Cllrs were not in attendance. PMC explained that to his dismay after the elections, the invite was mistakenly not extended to the new Cllrs. PMC asked the attendees to please accept his apologies. PMC said that he knows how important it is, he has contacted them, and they are keen to work with the Stakeholders so will be part of the future meetings. HS also apologised to the attendees for not realising as well. PMC explained that a copy of the minutes will be forwarded to the new Cllrs. PMC said that he has weekly updates with Cllr AC and he will be raising any updates with them.</p>		
<p>Previous minutes V3 (24/01/2022) LH said that he would prefer it if the action reference numbers did not change as closed actions are deleted as this is confusing. LH would like all actions (from the 1st stakeholder meeting) recorded and uniquely identified and prefer actions not to be renumbered at each new meeting. This will allow the panel to have a historic record of proceedings and allow them to refer back without confusion as to which action is being discussed. HS said that is fine and she can do it like that from now on.</p>		
<p>Action Log Review Attendees reviewed the action update document (dated 03/05/2022) which had been circulated prior to the meeting and contained updates for each action.</p> <p>Action 01 – RSPB Partnership - JH said that the article will be published in August which JH will circulate.</p> <p>Action 02 – Tree Management Strategy – HC said that it had been pushed back to the November committee. HC said that he has not been through the consultation stage yet but will circulate it to stakeholders when ready.</p> <p>Action 03 – Nature Friendly Verges – PMC said that he has updated Cllr AC and it now needs to be debated further at the September PDS committee. JJ requested that they are not called unmown verges. JJ said that they are to be managed as hay cut, not just left. PMC said that he will take that comment away. HS changed the name to Nature Friendly Verges.</p> <p>Action 04 – Friends Forum Funding – JH said that they have received confirmation and agreement, in relation to the tool provision (action 17 on Friends Forum meeting). JH said it has taken some time to review the inventory and idverde had input. JH said that they have looked closer at what they are expecting the Friend groups to be using. JH said that they are agreed, and they will send an update to stakeholders hopefully by the end of the week</p> <p>Friends Annual Formal Grant – JH said that they agreed it would increase to £7000 and they needed to identify where that budget would come from. JH said that the admin would be done by idverde and the document will outline what the funding can be allocated for. LH said that is fantastic.</p> <p>Action 05 – Open Space Strategy – PMC said he did arrange it to be circulated through a colleague named David Braybrook. JC said she doesn't think she received it but located it on the website. PW said he had seen it. LH said it was sent to the Forum and then he forwarded it on. CC and JJ said they had not received it. PMC said he would reissue it.</p>		

<p>Action 06 – Tree Planting Locations – HC said that the location list returned from Glendale was riddled with errors, so they are still sorting this out. HC said that the watering Service Provider brought in a separate QR code system but there are also issues with the presentation of that data. HC said despite this, LBB are confident the trees are being watered as they have completed a lot of sample checks and can see the QR codes on the stakes.</p> <p>Action 07 – Tree restocking at Cudham Lane – HC said the best he has got out of Planning is like for like, so any trees felled would be replaced by the same. JJ said that sounds fine if they do.</p> <p>Action 08 – Council Restructure – PMC said that he explained in January that the Council were conducting an internal restructure. PMC said that the new structure is now in place and after 1 year he will be consulting colleagues to receive feedback. PMC said that he will circulate the structure chart and apologised for the delay.</p> <p>PMC said that the service realigned is the one he has been responsible for since 2019 and he has been the Authorised Officer for the contracts for the services. PMC said that from the 1st of August, Hannah Jackson (HJ) will become the new Authorised Officer for the 'Parks Management & Grounds Maintenance' and the 'Arboricultural Services' contracts. PMC said that HJ was an internal appointment who has been with the Council for over a decade and was involved in the parks department when she first started. PMC said that HJ has a background in Planning and contract management. PMC said that originally the post was offered to Sarah Foster but she found another job and left the Council. PMC said that subsequently HJ was appointed in March but was working on an important project so could not start in her new role immediately. PMC informed the attendees that this would be the last of the stakeholder meetings that he would attend. PMC said that HJ will be taking over and introducing herself to the stakeholders and will be chairing the next meeting in 6 months' time. PMC explained that JH and HC will report directly to HJ moving forwards. PMC said that he is staying with the Council and will support HJ with background information, but HJ will be the point of contact going forward.</p> <p>Action 09 – Areas of Archaeological Significance - JC said that she couldn't find anyone that was dealing with this. JC was advised that she should write to the head of Planning. JC said that the issue with the new priority areas is because they changed the plans in the local plan. JC said that they raised an oral question at the Executive committee whether there was to be any consultation and they were told there was already a consultation by Historic England which is not correct. JC said that they eventually established that the Council has anticipated advice from Historic England and there will be an opportunity to comment on the maps.</p> <p>JC said that there are new proposals relating to planning and archaeological significance and it's important that people dealing with parks and greenspace are aware of them since the whole of the Borough is now graded into three tiers of significance (and a fourth of 'no significance'). JC said that these gradings governs what can be done in those areas. JC said that there will be an opportunity to comment on the gradings given to specific areas when the Local Plan is next circulated for comment. JC advised that it's worth checking the detail of how one's local area/park etc is affected (since though generally the proposals look sensible, there may be issues to sort out at the margins).</p> <p>JC said that it is a good document with a lot of useful information, and she advocates that people with involvement in parks have a look at the document</p>		
--	--	--

<p>and understand what the priority areas are. JC said that it took a long time to get the answer but that is where we are.</p> <p>JC said that people need to be aware and consider if they are happy with what is proposed. JC said she is sure that in most areas it will be fine. JC suggested that HS include a link in the minutes. MB said thank you for the update and the alertness. MB said that he looks forward to reading the document when he receives the minutes.</p> <p>ACTION: HS to put a link in the minutes (please see below).</p> <p>There is a useful section on the revamped LBB website under 'Archaeology in Bromley': https://www.bromley.gov.uk/local-history-heritage/archaeology-bromley. Within the text it includes the following link to the report on the new Archaeological Priority Areas, which now replace the Areas of Archaeological Significance. Microsoft Word - Bromley Archaeological Priority Area Review Final Draft 06-7-2020.docx</p> <p>PM said that he put information in an email to say that the Council does have a Conservation Officer (Simon Went) who will be leading on this and who will be the best port of call on the Council side.</p> <p>Terms of Reference – LH said that the document contains some italicised writing. PMC said that will likely be tracked changes and proposed that they are confirmed and LBB circulate the final version.</p> <p>Action 10 – Bowls Water Bills - CC confirmed that the non-payment of Poverest Recreation Grounds water bills was resolved before the bowling season started. However, CC said that the same club is at threat of being disconnected from electricity supply due to not paying bills which JH has been pursuing on their behalf. CC said that they tracked 2 clubs, that don't appear anywhere on Zak Ajia's (ZA) (LBB Utilities Manager) records. CC said that he hopes that JH is trying to trace these details so they can be added to the schedule and ensure the bills are paid. CC said that the three club, not currently responsible for their electricity supply, are agreeable to take these over from an agreed date and once the accounts are fully paid up to date. CC said that the other clubs in the group do that already so it's an anomaly that 3 of the clubs don't. JH said that ZA was to go through and identify cost savings and bring all utility bills with the cost-efficient suppliers. CC mentioned that the property suppliers was Cushman & Wakefield and they have been updating leases. JH said that the projects weren't joining up and some properties weren't taken into consideration. JH said that CC and Mike have been really helpful as it's their eyes on the ground. JH said that information is being updated and that it is at the top of their list.</p>		
<p>idverde Update</p> <p>Scadbury Moated Manor - AR shared some photographs on her screen of the repair works completed at Scadbury Moated Manor. AR said that the repair works were funded through a £92,000 Historic England grant and Bromley Council subsidised £150,000. AR said that hopefully this will safeguard the historic site going forward and they won't lose any wall into the moat. AR pointed out the large cellar which she explained had to be completely drained out during the repair. AR pointed out the fences that were used to prevent great crested newts getting into the site during the repair. AR said that there were a few bits and pieces found on site which were of archaeological interest. AR said that the staircase had been propped to make sure it's safe.</p>		

<p>AR said that collectively it was a really good outcome and protected the archaeological of the site. AR said thank you to ODAS on record for all the many hours JC and Michael Meekums contributed. AR explained that they were on site pretty much every day overseeing the archaeological side of things and that their input was invaluable. AR said thank you for their support throughout the project.</p> <p>BMX track at Hobblingwell – AR said that the track is now complete and that there was an official celebration in June which was attended by some professional riders and school kids. AR said that there is a site activator who works for Access Sport who is developing the participation in the track. AR said that representatives also attended, from Clarion, London Marathon Charitable Trust, Bromley Council, Sport England, the MET Police and a couple of others. AR said that there are containers on site with bikes so that people can borrow bikes. AR said that Clark & Kent (the builders) and Bromley’s Mayor opened the track in June.</p> <p>Bandstand – AR said that it is affectionately referred to as the Bowie bandstand. AR said that they have been working with Purcell as architects for the conservation. AR said that they have been working with Friends Groups and the Heritage of London Trust. AR said that part of the project involves considering the materials they are using. AR said that they had a paint historian on site and an investigation was conducted to discover the original paint colours used, and to all their surprise it was a brown colour. AR pointed out the microscopic layers of paint in the image. AR said that the plans have gone in and are waiting to be validated. AR said that they will be in touch with stakeholders as and when there is an update. AR said that they will be tending for the works and will get a build date. AR said that they are hoping early in the new year.</p> <p>AR mentioned other projects including a Queens Mead project, a MUGAs (Multi Use Game Area) project and noted that several allotment projects are taking place. AR mentioned a project with Amber who support families who have been through miscarriages and help to get funding for memorials.</p> <p>Countryside - SH said that she is taking over from John Pemberton who has been promoted to a National Biodiversity Manager role. SH said that he is still in idverde so he will still have some dealings with Bromley. SH said idverde recruited Charlotte Eley last January as idverde’s Conservation Ranger replacing Angela Wood who was promoted to Community Manager within the Bromley Team. SH reported that Charlotte has settled in well and has shown good potential and willingness to gain more skills in the conservation industry. SH said that Donna Cook has left as she had to return to Portsmouth. SH said they are now recruiting for a Countryside Manager which they are hoping will be filled by the end of August. SH said that they are doing a bit more restructuring of the Countryside team and they will have another senior ranger. SH said that the post had been offered to someone but not accepted yet.</p> <p>SH said that idverde are conducting surveys to find out the species in the habitats so they can do the appropriate work in the winter.</p> <p>Community volunteers – SH said that there had been 6026 hours already this year, so the hours are building since covid. SH said that there were 352 hours in July and 205 sessions in 2022.</p> <p>Education – SH said that Helen Cassidy (Environmental Educational Manager) will be leaving on the 11th of August so they will be recruiting. SH said that they have 2 instructors who are doing a brilliant job building numbers. SH said that</p>		
---	--	--

<p>they have a few sessions in June and July and hopefully by September they will be starting a new structure.</p> <p>Green Flag Awards – AH said that yesterday the Green Flag awards were announced, and they were pleased that they were successful in all the applications. AH said that they wanted to record how much they appreciate the Friends Groups for all the help. AH said that there were 8 successful sites.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biggin Hill Recreation Ground, • Chislehurst and St Pauls Cray Commons, • Chislehurst Recreation Ground, • Keston Common, • Darrick & Newstead Woods, • Hayes Common, • Queens Gardens, • South Hill Wood, <p>AH said that there is a ceremony in Lambeth the next day and hopefully they will see some people there. AH said that it was a real team effort and noted that the idverde team is quite new team and they should be proud to achieve what they have in the short amount of time.</p> <p>AH said that it hasn't rained in 6 weeks, so they don't have to cut the grass so much. AH said that it has been harder to keep the bedding alive. AH said that they are looking at bringing some works forward which they never do. AH said that they are looking at utilising the grass cutters in a different way for example for the hedge programme.</p> <p>AH said that the events program is quite manic. AH said that they got through the jubilee event very well which was mostly run by volunteers, but it took a long time to assist. AH said that the next big event is the music festival Priory Live.</p> <p>MB said thank you to all for their contributions. MB said that they are seeing the impacts of global warming and the devastation that BBQs can cause which is bringing additional pressures that they don't normally have. MB said thank you to all for their vigilance. MB said let's hope they can get through the next few months without damage.</p> <p>PMC said that one of the purposes of the novation of contracts was to establish a fully managed parks contract. PMC said that the updates clearly demonstrates that the model does fit and is leading the way of what has been achieve.</p>		
<p>LBB update</p> <p><u>Arboricultural Services (Lot 5) Update</u></p> <p>HC said that it has been a busy time and they have been doing lots of work on contracts and that works are getting done in timely manner.</p> <p>Tree planting – HC said that in the planting season of 2021-22, 1468 trees were planted around the borough which is a vast increase on previous years. HC said that the sustained hot weather has led to difficulties in getting the newly planted trees to survive which has been a real focus for the team. HC said that they stepped in early in the season to get a Service Provider (Lloyds) to water the new trees which they have utilised the new specification for. HC said that every tree planted in the last winter is receiving a minimum of 50 litres of water per week. HC said that with no rain for 6 weeks they are fast approaching a full drought and the Council is calling on Friends Groups to get out and help the new</p>		

<p>trees. HC said that LBB have been working on Communications to encourage people to help. HC said that they have been developing letters, flyers and printing our tags to hang on struggling trees. HC said that the trees cannot be overwatered. HC said that it does not have to be fresh water out the tap and that wastewater can be used from washing up, the bath or rainwater. HC said that if the stakeholders can pass on the message, that would be appreciated. HC said that he suggests putting the water in the watering bag as it is designed to release the water slowly on to the root ball and prevents run-off.</p> <p>HC said that they are in the process of letting a new contract for Tree Planting and Establishment. HC explained that LBB took the decision to separate this element from the Arboricultural Services contract that Glendale delivers, and it will be live shortly. HC said that they will be welcoming all bidders for the 4-year (+ 2-year potential extension) to essentially plant and water new trees. HC said that it is an exciting opportunity, and they are doing all they can to support SMEs. HC said that they will be utilising the new specification which is a significant improvement than what was in the Arboricultural Services contract. HC said that they are moving away from the single stake, rubber tie and cage method as they previously caused problems. HC said that they have got rid of that and are now following a 2 stakes and hessian ties method. HC said that the hessian ties will naturally break down which is better for the environment and should a tree get missed off from the young tree equipment removal, they won't come to any harm.</p> <p>HC said that the young tree maintenance is being changed from 1 year to 3 years. HC said that this means every new planted tree will receive 3 years of watering which he is confident will see a marked improvement in mortality rates which is the most important thing. HC said that they are in the final steps of updating the Tree Friends toolkit and creating an instructional video.</p> <p><u>Parks Management and Grounds Maintenance (Lot 4) Update</u> JH said that he would like to refer to what MB and AH spoke about regarding the successful Green Flag awards. JH said that this along with having an Open Space Strategy (OSS), the volunteer hours, and the success of events, all contributes to their Parks for London scoring and the success of their funding applications. JH said that they are really good initiatives that go towards enhancing Bromley's green spaces.</p> <p><u>Contract Update</u> – JH said that the monthly Service Operation Board (SOB) meetings continue and idverde have been performing successfully. JH said that they are in the fifth week of an internal central parks audit, and they are doing their draft report. JH said that they have been given some suggestions for improvement and thanked idverde for their assistance.</p> <p>JH said that Nicola Musto (NM) and Debbie Howard (DH) were appointed as Parks Contract Monitoring Officers as part of the realignment. JH said that they sent the Friends Forum the mapping situation which involves NM doing the east of the borough and DH doing the west.</p> <p><u>Infrastructure</u> – JH discussed obtaining additional sums of money so they can deal with some of the issues from the backlog from the previous property facilitators Amey which is predominantly potholes and health & safety items. JH said that there is a large sum of money for 2 consecutive years which is good.</p> <p><u>Planning Update</u> PM said that nationally planning policy can be slow moving at the best of times, but the recent political upheaval has ground things to a halt. PM mentioned a white paper to do with planning reforms. PM said that since Boris Johnson</p>		
---	--	--

<p>resigned as Prime Minister there has been no news coming out of central Government. PM said this is unfortunate timing and frustrating.</p> <p>PM said that in the meantime, they are scoping the early stages of the coal plan review. PM said that part of that work is relevant to outside spaces in that there will be a partial or complete review of SINC sites. PM said that this will likely be external, but they would like to invite comment from stakeholders where there may be new sites. PM mentioned that the first stage of a local plan review will be issued. PMC said that the public will be asked to comment on the key issues identified. PM said that things are made more uncertain by the recent government reforms and the change on a national level. PM said that they hope to adopt in early 2025.</p> <p>PM said that in regard to the Bromley Team, he understands that there is a backlog in decision making. PM said that most plans are validated in 3-5 days now, but it might be longer for a decision to be made. PM said that they are trying to recruit new Planners.</p> <p>Platinum Jubilee Fund MB said that there is a form on the Bromley website for Platinum Jubilee Fund applications. PMC said that the Council has £1 million of additional funding which is available for Friends Groups and other organisations for projects geared towards local and green spaces.</p> <p>Applications welcome to the Parks Platinum Jubilee Fund – London Borough of Bromley</p> <p>PMC had temporary technical issues and dropped out the call.</p>		
<p><u>Bromley Council Bowling Club Association (BCBCA) - (Clive Chapman)</u> CC said that the transfer from Amey to the in-house property service has been an improvement. CC said that they have good dialogue and things have been included in programmes of work.</p> <p>CC said that the utilities that were discussed earlier in the meeting is a major concern for them. CC said that if the electricity is shut off, the irrigation system fails and the bowling green will die which means that they will not be able to play CC said that this outcome is only days away if the electricity is cut off.</p>		
<p><u>Bromley Biodiversity Partnership Species & Habitats sub-group & Orpington Field Club (Dr Judith John)</u> JJ's microphone was not working so she was unable to verbally provide an update but did make the below updates via the Team's chat. After the meeting HS asked JJ if she had any contributions she would like included in the minutes. Please see Appendix 01 at the bottom of the minutes for the full update.</p> <p>Via the Team's chat, JJ said that she would like to ask everyone if they know of any small old woods that may need to be added to the Ancient Woodland Inventory. This is currently being updated for Greater London by GiGL following Natural England wishing to add woods 0.25-2ha in extent. Previously only woods more than 2ha in extent were eligible. BBPartnership have surveyed about 18 this spring but still need to look at south & east of borough and have a few others to check too. JJ said they would be grateful to hear of any that are missing. JJ said she could provide a web link so people can check current ancient woods in LBB. HC said please do as his team and himself would be eager to input.</p> <p>ACTION: Attendees to let the JJ / Bromley Biodiversity Partnership know of any small old woods that may need to be added to the Ancient Woodland Inventory.</p>	All	31/01/23

<p>Via the Team's chat, JJ asked PM if there is any news re London Nature Recovery Strategy & Nature recovery Networks. PM said that they await confirmation from DEFRA that the GLA will be appointed the Responsible Body for London for the local LNRS, but until such time there is no update on how they progress.</p>		
<p><u>Orpington and District Archaeological Society (ODAS) – (Janet Clayton)</u></p> <p>JC discussed an open weekend at Scadbury on the 10th and 11th of September. JC said that the Scadbury Moated Manor project has rescued the brickwork. JC said that the great crested newts are back in the cellar, and they will be continuing on with the next stage of the project.</p> <p>HS had technical issues and temporarily dropped out of the call during JC's update.</p>		
<p><u>Friends Forum - (Larry Herbert)</u></p> <p>LH said that they are between phases in regards to the new Councillors and LBB realignment. LH said he had had a one to one meeting with Cllr AC but was yet to meet HJ. He looked forward to working with both of them. LH said that in the past he has made a lot of comment about communications and about getting the right communications. LH said that they had a partnership meeting in June which has a long action list. LH mentioned that they hoped to agree certain dates and he would like to get those back on track with the new structure. LH said he was happy to hear about the funding and tools and said that the sooner that can be organised, the better.</p> <p>LH said that at the Friends Forum meeting last week, they didn't have a great number of Friend groups represented. LH said that roughly 12 groups attended out of 54. LH said that he would like to make a plea to idverde to ask Community Managers to ask them to get more involved with the Friends Forum. LH said that he would like to find out what they would like and how they can get more Friends Groups involved. LH said that he sends out things constantly but there are certain groups that don't seem to want to get involved with the Friends Forum. LH said that if idverde could help then that would be great. LH mentioned that discussions with LBB about signage and water fountains has been going on for a long time now and it would be good to reach some conclusion and explain the outcome to Friends Groups.</p> <p>LH said that he has received comments that events are taking place in parks that the Friends Group are not notified about. LH said that if idverde receive an event application in a park with a Freinds Group, please can they notify the Friends Group prior to the event so it does not come as a surprise. LH said that then the Friends Group can make comment about the application. LH said that the same request goes regarding works taking place in the parks.</p> <p>PW and SH had a discussion about training courses. They discussed training scheduled for 14th September, and another one in October, November and December. PW said that he presumes idverde will use the booking system on their website and SH said yes that sounds good.</p> <p>Platinum Jubilee Grant Process – LH asked if it was possible that if a Friend Group applies can they let the Friends Forum know so they can keep a record of what is being asked for. LH said that if two Friend Groups want to achieve similar goals then they can help them work together. PMC said that this is a really good point. LH said that they will request that the Friends Groups keep them informed however he cannot guarantee that they will.</p>		

<p>ACTION: LBB to inform LH if a Friends Group applies for the Platinum Jubilee Grant.</p> <p>MB said that one of the benefits of the jubilee is all about uniting the Friends Group. One of the hopes is that this will be a catalyst to encourage that level of engagement. MB said that sometimes the level of engagement can depend on the time of year. MB said that Covid is also still out there in the communities so they must be sympathetic and mindful of that but that is not to say they shouldn't be communicating. MB said that the Community Mangers are a conduit to help encourage people to support the quest.</p> <p>JH mentioned that Pond 3 at Keston Common is having its banks reinforced and said thank you very much to those involved.</p>	<p>JH</p>	<p>31/01/23</p>
<p><u>Chislehurst and St Paul's Cray Commons – (Peter Woodward)</u></p> <p>PW said that he attended the Friends Forum meeting and was delighted to hear there would be some courses provided that they would be interested in. PW said that they do struggle a little bit regarding a procedure on safeguarding themselves. PW said that they would like to be part of any courses that give them a chance to train volunteers with skills in leading other people. PW said that it was a very good Friends Forum meeting, and it was nice to be back in person.</p> <p>PW said that in celebration of the Green Flag award of Chislehurst Commons he would like to read out the comments from the judge. PW said that they were very much supported throughout the process, and it really emphasises what the judge found out about the organisation and how they work. PW read out something along the lines of the following “the trustee’s staff, volunteers, idverde and the Council work together to manage the Common. Carry on with the great partnership you are doing. There feels a true partnership between trustees, volunteers, idverde and the Council with everyone doing their part. It was a privilege to visit”. PW agreed that it is quite a remarkable partnership, and he thinks it would apply to many of them.</p> <p>MB said that he knows the judge Chris, who contacted him to say what a fantastic time he had at Chislehurst. MB said that Chris is a guru of green flag judging so they should be very proud to receive the award. PMC gave a heartfelt thank you to all involved.</p>		
<p>AOB</p> <p>Drought & Water – LH said that due to the drought, a lot of the ponds are drying up and asked if anything is being done about this. JH agreed that they are. JH said that there is the element of hosepipe bans. JH said that they had suspended grass cutting for a number of days due to dust and they replaced that with 3 teams with bowsers who are out routinely watering the baskets. LH said that the pedestrianised planters look dead. JH said that idverde have been struggling with maintaining the raised planters as they are like an oven. JH thanked LH for the feedback and noted that idverde have been doing their best. JH said that he is sure SH will be looking at the impact of drought.</p> <p>Hedgehogs - Via the Team’s chat, JJ asked attendees to please check that all ponds have sloping sides or planks so if hedgehogs fall, they are able to escape e.g. Scadbury Moated Manor. JJ said that hedgehogs get very dehydrated in hot weather and will be searching for water.</p>		

<p><u>Next Meeting</u></p> <p>January 2023.</p> <p>PMC said that he thinks it has been a successful gathering and thanked all for the feedback. PMC said that he is keen to ensure they continue on with the bedding in with the contract which should lead them on with continued improvement. PMC noted that Covid hit them all hard, and this put the services under pressure. PMC said thank you to all the attendees for their contributions and support.</p>		
---	--	--

*Scroll down to see Appendix 1.

Appendix 01

Please see below for Dr Judith John's update which she could not provide at the meeting verbally due to microphone issues.

Under Action Log

Action 3: Please can the term 'Unmown Verges' be replaced with 'Verges managed by hay cuts' as the verges will still require management and would not be just left.

Under Feedback from Stakeholders

Bromley Biodiversity Partnership/Orpington Field Club

Citizen science surveys of hedgehog, toad, white admiral and purple emperor butterflies continuing. Reports will be available in Jan 2023. Bromley Local RSPB Group (part of the Partnership) include swift champions who continue to monitor planning applications & request the inclusion of swift bricks in new builds in areas where swifts are known to nest. Their records all go to the RSPB swiftmapper website where you can see if there are swifts near you.

Ancient Woods This spring members have been surveying small woods to see if they might qualify for inclusion in Natural England's Ancient Woodland Inventory.

Natural England are now accepting woods 0.25-2ha in extent onto the Ancient Woodland Inventory- previously woods on the inventory had to be 2ha or more in extent. GiGL have employed a project officer to oversee this. In order to qualify, woods have to have ancient woodland indicator species, good links wherever possible to other old woods and map evidence going back about 400 years. We have sent a list of possible small woods for inclusion to GiGL and plan to survey further small woods in spring 2023. We have not covered much of the south & east of the borough yet. If you know of small woods you think may qualify please get in touch. To find out if woods are already on the ancient woodland inventory see <https://naturalengland-defra.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/ancient-woodland-england>

Letter sent to Tim Horseman, Assistant Director (Planning) regarding the need for LBB to employ an ecologist as the London Nature Recovery Strategy and formation of Nature Recovery Networks develop, following the passing into law of the Environment Bill. Letter available on request.

Under AOB

Any waterbodies which only have straight sides (eg possibly Scadbury moat) are a risk to hedgehogs as although they can swim, hedgehogs are unable to escape from steep sided water bodies and therefore drown. As they easily become dehydrated they are particularly vulnerable in summer, so if you know of steep sided ponds please make a slope on one side eg using stones, marginal /emergent planting or a plank of wood.