

ELL – Minutes of Quarterly Meeting

Friday 3rd May 2013

Present:

Jo, Patrick, Kim, Ro, Poppy, Hannah

Agenda:

1. New management
2. Party
3. Volunteers
4. Training (accredited)
5. Upcoming dates
6. New River Festival update
7. Training (non-accredited)
8. Returns to companies house
9. Strategy

1) New management

The Green Routes site has officially been transferred from the Care and Support division of Metropolitan to the Community Regeneration division. Daniela is likely to be the site manager. This has the potential to be really good for ELL and provide lots of new opportunities, although things are not 100% sorted yet. We are expecting to hold a visioning day with Metropolitan but do not yet know the date.

2) Party

It would be nice to have a party soon, both to celebrate the project and to acknowledge the support we received from other groups during the difficulties before Christmas. This would also function as an open day. We decided to hold it during the week, from late afternoon into the early evening, so that both people coming as part of their job and volunteers who wanted to come after work would be able to attend for at least some of the time. Suggestions included linking up with PACT meals and getting a local band to play. Jo is going to take the idea to Daniela and discuss possible dates.

3) Volunteers

We need more volunteers. We are quite low on numbers compared to the past. We discussed various ways of raising our profile: Saturday opening to attract people who work during the week, although this has been tried in the past and not been successful; training courses (either by introducing people to the site, or if they are volunteering as payment for the courses); recruiting volunteers through PACT (some people have come to the project this way).

4) Training (accredited)

The leaflets for the training courses have been produced and bookings are now being taken. There has been some interest so far.

5) Upcoming dates

- Friday 10th May, PACT meal at ELL, 10.30 to cook, 12.30 to eat
- Sunday 12th May, foraging walk, meet at 2.00 at the gates of the Castle Climbing Centre
- Tuesday 14th March, PACT meal at an old people's home on Newnton Close, 10.30 to cook, 12.30 to eat
- Sunday 2nd June, PACT meal in conjunction with the Big Lunch at St John's Church on Gloucester Drive – also featuring a Wilberforce Gardeners event and plant sale, and a bike maintenance workshop, 10.30 to cook, joined by people coming out of mass at 12, meal served at 1.00
- Wednesday 5th June, PACT 'snacky' meal at Parkwood primary school, 1.00 to cook, 3.30 to eat

6) New River Festival update

Now called the 'Hidden River Festival'. This will be on Sunday 22nd September. It will be multi-sited, to encourage people to travel along the New River and showcase various different activities that are happening in the area. In the park, there will be an event similar to past Well Oiled festivals, with music, stalls offering food, activities, information on local community groups, and activities such as swing-dancing, drumming etc. The warehouse community are organising an 'eco arts trail' and other events, and there will be an art/local history exhibition at the Redmond Community Centre, kayaking, and events at Railway Fields and London Wildlife Trust. Possibly something at the Castle in the evening, tbc. TFP will pay for a foraging walk. Things are a little behind where previous events have been at this stage, but we have a good working group and things are really moving now.

7) Training (non-accredited)

In previous years, Jo and Gemma have done informal training on taxonomy, plant identification, grafting. Jo is now focused on the accredited training. Gemma has run some excellent 'plant chats' but these have been poorly attended. If we want to run informal training this year, alongside the accredited training, Jo is happy to be a tutor but needs other people to make it happen, e.g. by setting up dates, promoting the training on Facebook and email etc, and handling bookings. Gemma would probably also be happy to be a tutor. The

infrastructure should all be in place from last year. Hannah and Ro volunteered to help set up some training dates. Poppy volunteered to help with marketing.

8) Returns to Companies House

Poppy wants to get involved with this, as secretary. Both HMRC and Companies House want accounts once a year. There are two deadlines, one for financial information and one for administrative information. The former is due this month and the latter is due in September. Our financial year runs from 1st September to 31st August. We are now registered for corporation tax because we are trading, and we have an accountant. Jo is meeting with the accountant in a few days; Poppy is going along to observe and learn about what needs doing.

9) Strategy

We had a discussion about strategy. The decision was taken not to minute this so that we could have a more fluid discussion.