

Wandsworth Society AGM Thursday 9th March 2023

Good evening ladies and gentlemen, thank you all for coming this evening to the 52nd AGM of the Society.

I would like to explain the reason for my chairing this meeting. Some of you may not be aware that shortly after the last AGM, Margaret Romanski, who was re-elected as chair, advised the Executive that due to ill health, she felt unable to continue to chair the Society for the foreseeable future. Margaret asked the Executive to agree an acting chair, so here I am! Thanks to the other members of the Executive for their support over the last twelve months.

The Society has continued to explore new ways to fulfil the objectives of an active amenity society. Inevitably environmental issues have dominated the news during the last twelve months, with the exception of the war in Ukraine.

The Executive has met on six occasions during the past year in March, May, July, October, November and last month. On each occasion most of the Executive members were present, thus a quorum was formed. The Treasurer, who will present his report shortly, has kept an eagle eye on the numbers which I am pleased to say are satisfactory. As a charity we have some funds available for charitable purposes, so if you have any ideas of a worthy recipient please let a member of the Executive know.

I will ask the Executive members to identify themselves, if I may, by standing John Dawson, Richard Pook, Iain Gray, Gill Gray our membership secretary, and Bruce St J Bown. David Kirk last elected as Vice chair has been unable to attend meetings during the year. If any member wishes to be co opted to assist the Executive we would be most grateful.

I am very pleased to report that the events committee has organised meetings throughout the year, thanks to Jenny Massey, Gill, Caroline Pook and all on this group. The diversity of these meetings is tremendous, which is a great credit to the group for finding such interesting speakers. We have not been able to revitalise the “soirees” but these have not been forgotten. It may be possible to organise walks, which have proven popular in the past, but age and infirm hips/knees do not help our guiders!!! If anyone has suggestions for new adventures, visits to interesting gardens/ buildings or anything else, please let one of the events group know.

Membership The membership numbers remain very much as before, around 450 households **but and this is a big but** we seem to be unable to attract younger members of the community to the Society. I am aware that this is not an uncommon problem , with busy lives but it seems a shame that more interest is not shown by the “younger generation”. Please let us know if you have any “bright ideas” as to extending the image and appeal of the Society.

One point I would wish to add at this stage is that we do not have anything like a full email address list of the membership. This makes communication difficult for up to date information and stresses the need for this information. Please, please, let any of the

Executive have your up to date email address. We will not misuse this but it is impossible to give a good service to our members without this information. There is a sheet at the drinks table which you can complete, legibly please!

Turning now to the other groups, **The Environment group** which was set up last year by Bruce has met on three occasions and Bruce has attended meetings organised by the Council to further the Council's objectives to assist the improvement of the general environment in the Borough. Bruce would appreciate support for this group from the membership, if you are interested please speak to Bruce.

The Roads and Transport group, which is chaired by John Dawson, has met on at least three occasions during the year and has been fortunate to have the council Cabinet member, Cllr Clare Fraser attend on at least one occasion. Traffic continues to be the main topic of concern. A recent public consultation of alterations and improvements to Burntwood Lane was considered by the group, with comments on the proposals submitted. We await the outcome of the consultations. Improvements continue to be made to walking and cycling as means of transport but not all agree to some of the proposals, especially those who have not been on a bicycle for many years!

Planning. I chair the planning group who have met only twice during the year, but thanks to Tony Taylor and Peter Farrow who is on the WCCCA, monitoring applications in Conservation Areas, we are aware of all applications which are relevant to our area. The main reason for the few number of meetings is that there have been far fewer applications of significance to consider. Many of the sites of importance have been consented and implemented or are awaiting an improvement in the market. **The Local Plan** which will take the Borough up to 2035 has gone through the first two stages of consideration and revision and will hopefully go forward to The Inspectorate for endorsement later this year. As members may be aware there are yet more changes proposed to planning legislation by Central Government with less of an emphasis on "top down" dictate, we await further information.

One significant application which we have dealt with very recently is the application for the former gasworks site on Swandon Way, Armoury Way. The site is heavily contaminated, apparently not from the former use as a gas storage facility but from the infilling of a former canal crossing the site. This was undertaken in the 1970's when control of such filling was very much less policed. The application a "Hybrid" application, part detailed and part outline is for predominately residential use. A 30 storey tower is proposed close to the River Wandle at the north western corner of the site, together with other tall and high density buildings. This flies in the face of the Masterplan for the area. A detailed objection has been made which I hope is now on the website.

Another application of which members may be aware is the AELTC application for the former Wimbledon Park golf course. We made objection to the original proposals, which have been added to and amended since. If anyone is interested in making objection please let me know and I will forward the details.

Numerous applications for side and rear extensions to houses continue to be received by the Council, we have assisted three or four residents in making representation, particularly in respect of objection during the year.

Enough from me, just to lastly thank all those who have helped with the administration of the Society during the past year including John Crossland without whom the recording of meetings would not be possible and for the enthusiasm of those who attend our meetings and contribute in any way.

Thank you.

I will now ask Richard Pook to present the accounts.

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Draft 2

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