

HAM AND PETERSHAM ASSOCIATION

MINUTES FROM ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

April 20 2015 at 7.30pm at St Thomas Aquinas Hall, Ham Common

1. OPENING MEETING

President Stephen Jakobi introduced HPA Vice Chair Geoff Bond, who thanked everyone for coming and introduced the meeting.

Geoff asked the committee to introduce themselves: John Asbridge, Alison Graham, Linda Holland, David Jowers, Pauline Gizejewski, Jo Chambers, Anne Powell and Charles Doe.

Geoff said Anne Powell was the HPA representative on the Neighbourhood Forum.

Geoff introduced the work of the HPA in general and announced that this year's summer party would be held on July 5 in conjunction with the Ham and Petersham Cricket Club, which is celebrating its bicentenary this year.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF 2014 AGM

Jo Chambers proposed acceptance of the minutes and Anne Powell seconded.

3. APPROVAL OF ACCOUNTS

Mary Seager proposed that the Accounts be accepted as a fair record of the financial position of the HPA.

4. ELECTION OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Ros Kingerby proposed the confirmation of **Linda Holland** as committee member. Tricia Hughes seconded. Mary Seager proposed the election to the committee of **Sir David Williams**; seconded by John Asbridge.

5. HIGHLIGHTS OF 2013-14

Geoff gave a summary of the main activities the HPA has been involved in this year. He also called for suggestions for other projects and ideas for the association to become involved in.

5.1 Ham and Petersham magazine

This has been relaunched as a quarterly publication by Sarah Sinclair and Sarah Perret. Three pages in each issue are devoted to the HPA. Anne Powell is the committee representative. The latest issue goes to print next week. Geoff appealed for more help with delivering copies.

5.2 Avenues

The HPA undertakes regular pruning and litter pick ups. In June the HPA is teaming up with the National Trust, Thames Landscape Strategy and Petersham Environmental Trust to bring in heavy horses to cut the grass on the avenues leading down to the river. There will be a party afterwards for all helpers. The car park at the Ham Common end of the avenues has now been resurfaced, with help from Jean Loveland. The white gates need replacing and the HPA is making a donation to the council for this.

5.3 Ham Pond:

Vanessa Fison from the Ham Pond Group thanked the volunteers who have helped to keep the pond in a good state. She particularly mentioned the late Terry Willis who would be

greatly missed. Vanessa also thanked David and Patricia Yates for their contribution over the years and their knowledge of plants and wildlife.

A professional swan upper lives close and has good relations with the swan sanctuary have helped save the lives of several swans over the years. Vanessa appealed for people to keep dogs under control, since swans have built their nests on the western edge of the pond and laid six eggs. She asked that people not feed the swans with bread, which encourages foxes that endanger wildfowl. Swan feed is available from the hardware shop in Ham.

5.4 Ham Open Gardens – May 16

Rachel Lipscomb, the organizer of this year's HOG, said it would include over 18 gardens – formal, traditional, contemporary and large and small. Some have not been open before.

Students from Greycourt School will again be involved on the day and one of them has designed the poster. Tickets will be available from the church hall and Cassell Hospital.

Teas are again being organized by the Shooting Star charity. This is a great opportunity to raise money for the HPA and last time brought in £4,000. More stewards are still needed to assist.

5.5 Tow Path Clean up

Geoff Bond congratulated the 50 people who turned out on a freezing day for the cleanup, including students from Marymount International School and Petersham Sea Scouts. HPA provided litter pickers.

5.6 Latchmere Brook

April Gutensohn, who has run Tree House Leaning in Ham Common Woods for the last 4-5 years explained the activities she and the HPA have worked together on in helping to reinvigorate woodlands around Latchmere Brook, by Ham Gate. These include laying paths and trails and building two loggeries for stag beetles; clearing brambles and planting bulbs and water plants. April explained that the thinking was to give young children an understanding of the natural environment to reduce the incidence of vandalism.

A wooden bench has now been installed by the brook. Helen Frankenburg explained the bench was in memory of her father, who was secretary of the residents' association.

5.7 Ham Common Woods

Tasha Hunter, Richmond Council Ecology Policy and Planning Officer, gave an update on progress on the management of Ham Common Woods. She explained that the area was home to rare acid grassland and that Richmond borough had half of all such grassland in the country.

Tasha explained the five-year woodland management plan which includes clearing areas of the woodland to give space for new trees to grow; to allow light and warmth to the herbaceous level on ground; and to produce decaying wood for invertebrates.

She said there would be a review of the plan over the summer to see if any changes were needed, taking into account public comments.

6. **PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS**

Stephen Jakobi spoke on the need for preserving amenities central to community life. He welcomed the reopening of the post office in Ham and noted the contribution the German

community had made through bakeries, a delicatessen and beauty parlour. He warned of the increasing pressure on car parking places, especially with people parking in the area to go to Richmond and referred to the possible imposition of parking charges in Ham Street and in Richmond Park. He celebrated the return of frogs and toads to the area and the welcome reappearance of newts in in Richmond Park and in garden ponds in the borough.

Stephen moved a vote of thanks to the committee for their work and to Anne Powell and Geoff Bond.

7. SENSITIVE LOCAL SITES

Geoff Bond gave an update on sites of development:

Sainsbury's on Ham Parade.

Planning permission has been agreed. The HPA is encouraging use of heritage-style branding for the store and is in favour of installation of a cash machine.

St Michael's Convent

Negotiations are continuing with a potential buyer. The plan is for the convent to move Gerrard's Cross.

Ham Close

New consultants have been appointed. A forum for residents is proposed for July or August and details and updates will be conveyed to members by email.

Latchmere Prison site

An application from Berkeley Homes is with the planning inspectorate in Bristol who are due to make a decision in May.

Star & Garter

The rebuilding is expected to be completed in three years. A concern is the extra traffic the scheme will generate.

Grey Court School

Redevelopment at the school includes a sixth form extension; proposal for a barn and for a hydrotherapy pool; and extension to teaching rooms and dining area. It is proving difficult to obtain an overall view of the projected changes. It is important to note that the school straddles the avenues, which are Metropolitan Open Land.

Russell School

The project to rebuild the school involves making it from a one-form to two-form entry. A planning consultant has been hired to enable a through response to proposal. The overriding ambition is for a school that is the best it can be bearing in mind the needs of the environment.

Cassell Hospital

The hospital is still partly in use. It will come under pressure for development. The extensive gardens are under protection. Geoff spoke at a planning meeting against plans to convert it into a school conversion into school, since children from Richmond would be going through Petersham.

General

There was a discussion of the general policy of the HPA over planning. Geoff said the association was not opposed to all development, but sought to preserve the environmental and architectural heritage of the area.

Sir David Williams spoke on the illegal mooring by Teddington Lock, which Reclaim Our Riverbank succeeded in having removed after a ten-year campaign. A police raid had produced drugs, illegal immigrant and firearms. Most of the boats had now been removed.

8. Neighbourhood Forum Update

Anne Powell, representative on the Neighbourhood committee, thanked Geoff and the committee for taking over while she took leave of absence as chair.

Anne said that while the HPA reacts to planning, the NF actively plans the future of the neighbourhood. The aim is to reach local consensus on a draft plan for sites and individual projects – eg, housing, bridges, cycling routes – which would go to the council for approval and then be put to local referendum in May 2016. Further details were available on the HPA website.

Anne agreed with a comment from the floor on the need for the NF to be accountable and not pushing a particular agenda. Geoff pointed out that there were written terms of reference for the team drafting the plan and each had to declare any interests.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Geoff thanked Julia Bailey for auditing the accounts.

A member asked about designing a clearer HPA logo. Geoff said an updated logo may be commissioned.

A member asked about progress on bringing BT infinity broadband to the area. Councillor Jean Loveland said councillors were pressuring BT to install a connection. Geoff said the HPA supported this.

GB thanked everyone for coming and concluded meeting at 21.00.