

**Wimbledon Common West Residents' Association**  
**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting**

Held at Hotel du Vin on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2023 at 8 p.m.

**Introduction from Andrew Durant (Acting Chair)**

Andrew noted with regret the resignation of Clive Hilton as Chair and acknowledged Clive's significant and valuable contribution to WCWRA over many years.

Andrew spoke of the ongoing issue of trying to encourage people to fill roles on the committee and recruiting new members. He asked for some four volunteers to become members of the committee and encouraged people to contact him to express interest. He has assumed the role of Chair for a one year period and if there is no interest by other residents in becoming involved with the WCWRA he suggested it may need to fold in twelve months' time.

Thanks were expressed to Robert Holmes and Company for supporting the WCWRA and to the Hotel du Vin for letting us use its rooms for meetings.

**Minutes of last meeting**

The acceptance of the draft minutes of the last AGM, held on 6th June 2022, was proposed by Michael Hatchard and seconded by John Rink.

**Parklet at the Fox & Grapes**

Andrew reported that the Parklet at the Fox & Grapes is now operational. The council has circulated a flyer about it. Comments in writing have been invited no later than 30<sup>th</sup> November, quoting reference ES/CampRdParklet/2023 by emailing [Traffic.AndHighways@merton.gov.uk](mailto:Traffic.AndHighways@merton.gov.uk) or by sending a letter to Environment and Regeneration Department, future Merton, Merton Civic Centre, London Road, Morden, Surrey, SM4 5DX.

The flyer states that the parklet will be in operation for no more than 18 months before a final decision is made to either remove or retain the parklet structure.

Warren Farm residents (Brain and Mary Hanover) objected because of the narrow pavement and lorry noise and expressed concern that they had not heard anything about the parklet before it was installed.

Treasury report: funds held in the bank account currently amount to £6,298 , and increase of £459 on those held at the timer of last year,'s AGM, as a result of the increase in the annual subscription from £5 to £10 per household in 2022. This represents a fighting fund should resources be needed.

## **Election of the committee**

Andrew Durant Acting Chair; Anna Hatchard Acting Secretary; Carol Andrews, Bryan Barkes, Jenny Deane, Colin Price and Robert Holmes Committee Members.

The re-election of the current committee was proposed by David Jenkins and seconded by Michael Hatchard.

## **Revised Constitution**

Andrew reported that the constitution had been simplified and Colin reported that there were no material changes other than the introduction of a three-year period for officers on the committee with a second term if people agree but no more than 6 years.

Subscriptions had been simplified and the Deputy Chairman role had been dispensed with.

The objects of the Association had been restated and are now: to preserve and improve the character and amenities of the Area and its neighbourhood and to serve and protect the interest of the members in relation thereto.

The constitutional changes were proposed by Lesley Jenkins and seconded by Margaret Murray.

## **Current issues and future of the WCWRA**

Background: the WCWRA constitutes 222 households, covers quite a large area, including the Study School, Wimbledon Common Golf Club and a wide range of housing stock.

The question put to the floor was: Are there any issues in your neighbourhood with which you think the RA may be able to help? Issues raised were:

- More flights coming into Heathrow, causing more noise
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- Potholes on Camp Road
- Parking restrictions – concerns about people having to pay on the Causeway and the fact it is under-used during the day. Changes may have an impact on the Fox and Grapes and the Wimbledon Common Golf Club
- Vegetation on the pathways was also considered to be a problem.

**Action:** An informal invitation to anyone who is interested in becoming involved in the WCWRA was issued. There would be a less formal event in the autumn to give greater context to the work the WCWRA has done in past and to encourage people to become part of the committee. All residents of the area covered by the association will be invited. If we don't fill the positions of Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer by the next AGM the association is likely to be wound up.

## **Stephen Hammond MP**

SH updated the room on the current consultation proposed regarding the AELTC expansion.

A planning application will be submitted after this year's championships. There has been considerable resistance locally to the plans, in particular to the proposal to build on metropolitan open land, which has until now been viewed as sacrosanct, and the excessive number of new courts proposed.

There is an approved plan for the acute services currently at St. Helier to be moved to a new hospital next to the Marsden. All other departments will remain open on the St Helier site. SH suggested that there were a couple of obvious sites in Wimbledon town for more local health care facilities.

Flights – SH said there will be another consultation soon about changing the flight path. When wind is easterly we are getting 30% more planes coming over and the planes are lower.

SH talked about crime, suggesting that Wimbledon is the safest area in the London Borough of Merton and Merton is the third safest borough in London. Crime from vehicles and vehicle theft is on the rise. SH has been talking to the police about their patrolling routines.

SH explained that when the Causeway parking restrictions were introduced Merton was keen that they should apply all day. Limiting them to a two-hour restriction as had been suggested might not have been sufficient to prevent parking by commuters. SH pointed out that footfall in the village had fallen since the introduction of the restrictions.

Traffic – It was mentioned that there appears to be an increasing number of lorries coming through the Village. SH said there was no easy way to stop them. The 20 mph limit on Parkside had helped to reduce the volume of traffic coming through the village.

Parking at the station – Lesley Jenkins asked what can be done for access to the station by people who are elderly or accompanied by young children. The delivery drivers wait in the motorbike parking spaces. The byelaws may be changed to prevent delivery drivers from parking in the designated spaces, which are supposed to provide a drop-off bay. SH said that currently the traffic laws do not allow the council to stop parking in this designated area but there is a move afoot to change this.

Commons Levy - SH informed the room of the need to raise funds to fill the annual deficit of the Commons. The possibilities being considered include expanding the area within which the levy is charged and/or increasing the levy by 25%, which amounts to around £8 per household. SH has a meeting with Diane Mills to look at this. Merton and Wandsworth Councils are opposing the change at a time of inflation. SH takes the view that the benefits to mental health and quality of life offered by the green spaces justify the increase in the levy.

David Jenkins pointed out the issues around ongoing legal challenges and the literal interpretation of "free access" to the common: is it free as in you do not pay for it or does free mean open access?

The Chair thanked Stephen Hammond for his time and for his commitment to the neighbourhood.