



THE DULWICH SOCIETY

MINUTES of the 59th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Society held on 9th May 2022 at The Crown and Greyhound, 73 Dulwich Village, London, SE21 7BJ

Present: 46 members, 1 non-member and two Southwark Councillors.

1. Introduction by the Chair and apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Brian Green, Ian McInnes, Penny Stern and Chris Langdon.

The President, Kenneth Wolfe, welcomed everyone to the first in-person AGM since 2019. He anticipated there would be more sharing, encounter and rapport at this meeting held in person. He thanked all those who had worked so hard during the year to achieve results, keep the show on the road and protect the Dulwich character, especially the new Chairman, James Thompson, new Secretary, Heather Stubbs, and the new Vice Chair, Sue Badman as well as the man at the till, Russell Lloyd. He also praised the devoted work undertaken by all of the sub-committee chairs and other members of the Executive Committee and the Internal Examiner, Sally-Ann Jeffries.

The Chair passed to James Thompson, who announced that the meeting had been duly called and was quorate. JT took the meeting through the agenda and said there would be 7 votes. He reminded those present that there was one vote per household. The scrutineers for the votes will be the Secretary and Membership Secretary. JT urged everyone to sign the attendance list so that eligibility to vote can be checked.

2. Approve Minutes of the 58th AGM held on 14 September 2021 and Minutes of the Special General Meeting on 28 June 2021

JT said the Minutes of the 2021 AGM and the 2021 SGM had been approved by the Executive Committee, are available for inspection on the website and hard copies are available at the meeting.

The Minutes of the 58th AGM held on 14 September 2021 were approved by a show of hands as follows:

For 21; Against 0; Abstentions 4

The Minutes of the Special General Meeting on 28 June 2021 were approved as follows:

For 23; Against 0; Abstentions 4

3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

4. Chairman's Report and Review of the Year

The Chairman noted that his report was included along with the accounts and was available on the website and copies are available at the meeting. The Chairman presented a slideshow illustrating some of the activities and achievements of the Society during the year, illustrated with photographs of Dulwich, some taken by Andrew Waugh. The presentation included the following information:

- Mission statement
- Roles of the members of the Executive Committee
- Membership details
- Donations in the year
- Media and communications achievements
- Sub-committee achievements:
 - Local history
 - Gardens
 - Travel and environment
 - Planning and architecture
 - Wildlife
 - Trees
 - Licensing
- Other notable achievements of the Society

5. Approval of Accounts for the year ended 31st December 2021

The Treasurer spoke to a slide summarising the Accounts for the year ended 31st December 2021. The full Annual Report and Accounts are available on the website and copies were available at the meeting.

The Treasurer made the following commentary on the 2021 Accounts:

“As you will see from the summary of the figures on screen and page 2 of the printed accounts, overall, the audited accounts of The Society show a surplus in the net movement of funds for the year of £1,798, compared to the previous year's deficit, 2020's, of £(978), so an overall improvement between the two years of £2,776.

The main differences between the two years generally relate to the reduction in the effects of COVID, which resulted in higher total income in 2021, but also higher operating expenditure, donations and grants, all of which we will now consider in more detail.

If we look more closely at the Statement of Financial Activities on page 2 - firstly "Income" – overall, there has been an increase between the two years of £9,391, i.e. £25,859 in total for 2021 against £16,468 for 2020. Income from subscriptions and gift aid were similar for both years. The main increases were more advertising income, i.e. £7,319 together with more "other income" from the activities of The Society starting up again, for example from talks.

Turning to "Expenditure", there was an increase of £3,455 between the two years, because of the polishing and re-waxing of the Edward Alleyn statue and the installation of the listening post, located by the statue. This cost has been capitalised and depreciated in the accounts over 5 years, in line with the Society's accounting policies.

Further, in 2021 we made no new provisions for future expenditure as shown on page 2.

You will see on page 2 that we made Donations and Grants totalling £4,350 in 2021 against £1,500 in 2020, i.e. an increase of £2,850 and the detailed amounts are shown in note 5, on page 5 of the accounts.

We were bequeathed £10,104 by Mary Boast several years ago and of that original sum we currently have a balance remaining of £4,571 within our overall reserves figure. The monies spent to date include the digitising of maps and court rolls and local information signage.

If we turn to the balance sheet on page 3, an important item is the total of our overall net bank account balances and the consolidated balances were £46,798 in 2021 compared to £45,510 in 2020 so an increase of £1,288. Overall, net assets were £45,406 at the end of 2021 vs £43,608 for 2020."

The Treasurer thanked all those who pay by standing order which saves the Society money and reduces the administrative burden on the Membership Secretary. He also thanked the Independent Examiner, Sally-Anne Jeffries, for her support for the Society and for the auditing and accounts preparation services she provides.

The Treasurer invited questions about the 2021 Accounts.

Charles Cary-Elwes asked where the Society's balance was held. The Treasurer replied that the funds were held with Barclays Bank for normal transactions, i.e. a balance of approximately £7,000 and additional monies, circa £40,000 were held on deposit with COIF, a charities bank, although the interest rate on this account was low, so a new deposit account had recently been opened with the Monmouthshire Building Society and the intention was to move any surplus funds there.

David Cianfarani asked whether the Society had considered reviewing the membership fee in the light of the significant reserves held. The Chair said that as the Society currently has reserves in excess of its policy it is open to making grants in line with its objectives.

The Chair said that the Accounts for the year ended 31st December 2020 had been prepared by the Treasurer, approved by the Trustees and by the Independent Examiner. On behalf of the Executive Committee he proposed the motion to approve the Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2021.

The motion to approve the Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2021 was passed as follows:

For 35; Against 0; Abstentions 0

6. Re-appointment of the Independent Examiner: Sally-Anne Jeffries, Chartered Accountant

The motion to re-appoint Sally-Anne Jeffries as Independent Examiner for 2021 was proposed by James Thompson on behalf of the Executive Committee. The motion was approved as follows:

For 38; Against 0; Abstentions 0

Sally-Anne Jeffries was duly appointed as Independent Examiner for 2022.

7. Appointment of President – Dr Kenneth Wolfe

Kenneth Wolfe is standing again as President. Kenneth is well-known locally and is the only candidate. He was proposed by James Thompson and seconded by Sue Badman.

The motion to appoint Kenneth Wolfe as President was passed as follows:

For 39; Against 0; Abstentions 0

Kenneth Wolfe was duly elected as President

8. Elections for 2022-2023 –Officers and Members of the Executive Committee

The Chair put up a slide with the names of the nominated officers together with their proposer and seconder:

Chair: James Thompson (Ian McInnes; Susan Badman)

Vice Chair: Sue Badman (Timothy Havenhand; Janet Gates)

Honorary Treasurer: Russell Lloyd (Andrew Gould; Gardner Thompson)

Honorary Secretary: Heather Stubbs (Sharon O'Connor; Ian McInnes)

He said the Secretary had checked that all Officers had consented to serve and the Membership Secretary had checked that all proposers and seconders are members of the Dulwich Society. No post was contested.

The re-election of the Officers named above was approved as follows:

For 35; Against 0; Abstentions 0

Elections for 2022-2023 – Members of the Executive Committee

The proposed Executive Committee Members, (with Proposer and Secunder in brackets) are:

- Membership Secretary - Diana McInnes (John Dyke; Jeremy Gilliard)
- Journal Editor – Brian Green (Rita Green, Judith Ward)
- Local History - Ian McInnes (John Dyke; Ursula Allen)
- Gardens – Jeremy Prescott (Ann Rutherford; Katherine Kirk)
- Planning & Architecture – Penny Stern (Michael Coupe; Peter Hogarth)
- Licensing – Patsy Bramble (Sharon O'Connor; Catrin Waugh)
- Travel & Environment – Harry Winter (James Thompson; Sue Badman)
- Trees – David Beamish (Glynis Williams; Diana McInnes)
- Wildlife – Peter Roseveare (Andrew Fletcher; Tyrrell Evans)

The Chair said that no position was contested. He noted that Peter Roseveare had been co-opted to the Executive Committee in October 2021 as Chair of the Wildlife sub-committee.

Sharon O'Connor is not seeking re-election to the Executive Committee but will continue her work on media and communications and on the Local History sub-committee. The Chair said that the Executive Committee, at its last meeting, had thanked Sharon for her excellent contribution to communications and local history both before and during her time as an Executive Committee member. He said Sharon was an absolute star, leading on the development and upgrade of the website, the introduction of the new logo and ensuring that eNews and Twitter accounts go from strength to strength. The meeting recorded its gratitude to Sharon O'Connor for her contribution to the Dulwich Society.

The appointment of the Committee Members was put to the vote and all were re-elected as follows:

For 35; Against 1; Abstentions 2

9. Any Other Business/Questions

a) Grove Tavern

Barbara Richardson raised a point of interest from the floor. In response to an earlier reference to the lease on the Grove Tavern coming to an end she reported the end date of the lease with the pub company.

b) Rules Review

The Chair said that a review of the Society's Rules is in progress. The Objects will not change but the Rules will be modernised to reflect increasing accountability and transparency particularly in relation to committees and minutes in line with the recommendations of the 2021 SGM. The revised Rules will reflect best practice in governance. A draft will be published soon and an SGM to approve the new rules will be announced in the next Journal, due out in early June.

c) Bridget Furst asked how many Dulwich Society members live in Dulwich postcodes. The Vice Chair and Membership Secretary replied that the majority of members live in SE21, SE22 and SE24 with some further afield and even international. The Membership Secretary agreed to provide Bridget with a breakdown.

d) Maggie Brown asked whether the Society is monitoring local railways and the lack of lifts at stations. This affects both older residents and parents with buggies. She recommended urgency on this issue. The Vice Chair said that the Society had contributed to improvements in facilities at West Dulwich and North Dulwich in the past but at North Dulwich the infrastructure is not conducive to the installation of a lift. Harry Winter, Chair of the Travel and Environment sub-committee, said the Travel and Environment committee has this issue on its agenda and is keen to take this forward as an issue, along with the reduced frequency of trains.

Barry Coker, a member of the Travel and Environment sub-committee, said that the Society has achieved a lot at North Dulwich in terms of seating and toilets, but the installation of a lift would entail moving the signals which would raise objections from Network Rail. The station is also protected by English Heritage. North Dulwich has a lower footfall than some other stations which are competing for funds for lifts.

Councillor Simmons reported that Southwark put in bids for lifts and other improvements and Helen Hayes MP is working with local Councillors on future bids, but most funding goes to red wall seats. However, Peckham Rye will get lifts as part of a £5-10million redevelopment. The Council will continue to press for more funding.

- e) Gay Walker asked whether the pavements in Dulwich were being considered. As a conservation area, pavements should have special paving, not tarmac. The Chair said the Society is urging the council to retain the granite kerbstones.
- f) Terry Wesson-Wilmot noted that the Councillors who had introduced traffic restrictions in Dulwich Village had been re-elected and asked if further restrictions could be expected. Harry Winter said that the next step would be the co-design of the public realm which would be about making the area look nicer rather than any change to existing traffic arrangements.
- g) David Way asked when the red and white blocks in Dulwich Village would be removed now that there are cameras in place. Andy Simmons said it was the intention to remove them as part of the co-design process.
- h) Jean Cary-Elwes asked what action was being taken about access for emergency vehicles to Court Lane where 800+ households are affected. She has seen fire engines and ambulances turned away and considered this was to do with poor signage, saying "cycles only", which makes it look like a dead end. She cited an instance of someone collapsed following a wasp sting in the Crown and Greyhound for whom the ambulance had taken a long time to arrive. The Chair noted the concerns and replied that since this incident the road has been made accessible to emergency vehicles, and parked cars had contributed to the fire engine incident. Double yellow lines had been painted along the stretch of Court Lane near to the junction to prevent a recurrence.
- i) David Cianfarani proposed that the 201 bus be diverted from its present route to connect with Dulwich Village. This would improve the connections between Dulwich Village and Herne Hill. He has raised this with Helen Hayes and Councillors but has been informed that there are insufficient single-decker buses. He recommended lobbying as this could transform the lives of local families. The Chair thanked David for this interesting point.

The Chair ended the meeting with a photo of the Edward Alleyn statue which was commissioned by the Dulwich Society and made by a local sculptor, Louise Simson. The Society has cleansed and waxed the statue so it looks particularly beautiful in the Old College Gardens. It is insured and will soon be digitally recorded with a 3D scan.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending.

The meeting ended at 21.35pm

Heather Stubbs, Secretary, 11th July 2022

J C Thompson, Chair, 24th April 2023