Dulwich Society Executive 552nd Meeting Monday 11th March 2024 at 7.30pm at Bell House

Attendees:

Officers
James Thompson – Chair
Sue Badman - Vice-Chair
Russell Lloyd - Treasurer
Heather Stubbs– Secretary

Sub-Committee Chairs
David Beamish - Trees
Patsy Bramble - Licensing
Laurie Johnston - Environment
Ian McInnes - Local History and Journal Co-Editor
Jeremy Prescott - Gardens
Claire Richards - Journal Co-Editor
Peter Roseveare – Wildlife
Penny Stern - Planning and Architecture
Richard Wingfield - Development

1. Apologies
   Kenneth Wolfe – President
   Diana McInnes – Membership Secretary

2. Register of Interests

   None to declare in addition to Appendix 1

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting

   The Minutes of 15th January 2024 were approved and signed by JT.

   Action: HS to post the Minutes on the website.

4. Matters Arising not covered elsewhere

   None

5. Request for a Special General Meeting

   A request has been received from 33 members to convene a Special General Meeting to consider 4 Motions, mainly relating to the Constitution. The Chair has asked the petitioners to consider bringing the Motions to the AGM scheduled for 20th May, because of difficulties in scheduling an SGM within 28 days and to save the cost of having two meetings.

A reply has been received from the petitioners rejecting the proposal to consider their motions at the AGM on procedural grounds, querying the additional cost of an SGM and helpfully offering flexibility on the timing of an SGM and assistance in organising one. It was the petitioners' understanding that Rule 13.1 requires Executive Committee to issue notice of an SGM requested by members within 28 days rather than to hold one within 28 days. Following discussion, Executive Committee agreed that an informal meeting should be offered to the petitioners on 14th March to endeavour to agree a way forward on constitutional issues. If an agreement cannot be reached at an informal meeting, an SGM will be convened. The Notice could be delivered by Journal deliverers, although a combination of email and first class post was also deemed acceptable.

Action: JT to invite all the petitioners to an informal meeting on Thursday 14th March (early evening) at Bell House and to identify a neutral Chair for this meeting. JT, SB, JP, PS, DB (if available) to attend on behalf of the Executive Committee and DB to minute. The agenda to be restricted to governance issues and consideration of the petitioners 4 Motions. (Post meeting note: The petitioners declined the invitation to an informal meeting).

6. DS Matters

a) Chair's Report

The Chair's Report was received.

Streets for People: JT said there is a meeting of the Dulwich Square Public Realm Delivery Committee next week. It was noted that due to the large number of services running beneath the Square, it is only possible to plant 2 new trees. It was noted that the planned continuous footways will be good for pedestrians. The barriers will not protect pedestrians but the pavement is wide and the barriers will prevent them from stepping into the road.

Action: members were encouraged to send comments on the samples of York stone to be used in the Square to the Design Committee. The samples are available for inspection in Dulwich Village (near HG Hair Salon). DB to comment on the most appropriate species of tree.

Dulwich Village CPZ: JT said the reduced Dulwich Village CPZ proposals have been published. It was noted that the consultation had been better conducted on this occasion.

Editorial Committee/Journal: CR reported cost savings in Journal production, so that advertising revenue now covers printing costs, but not distribution. JT said that a third estate agent has agreed the increased advertising costs.

Dulwich Estate Advisory Committee on SoM: PS said the committee is still reviewing the new guidelines and she understands some of the P&A sub-committee comments have been taken on board.

Finance Review: JT spoke to his paper on the Society's medium-term financial review, which was undertaken in response to inflationary increases in costs and a relatively static membership. Base case projections show that costs will exceed income by 2027 if we do nothing. Moving from standing orders to direct debit and increasing the membership fee would trigger an initial loss due to members leaving but would leave the Society in a much stronger financial position in the medium and long-term enabling us to continue our programme of charitable grants. The aim is to pass on a financially healthy society to future trustees.

Action: The Medium-Term Finance Review will be discussed at a forthcoming strategy day along with the development strategy and a possible member survey.

Membership Secretary Post: Following DMcI's decision not to stand for re-election at the AGM, the post of Membership Secretary has been advertised in the Journal and eNews, and interest has been expressed in the post. JT met with a suitably experienced candidate on 4th March and the first handover meeting with DMcI took place earlier today. DB said he would be happy to assist the new appointee after the handover. RL queried whether new membership software was required. JT had looked at three free packages, but with 1200 members we would need to pay for software.

Action: JT to consider available membership software packages.

b) Vice Chair's Report

The Vice Chair's report was received.

Stocks Stone: Aquinna plans to relocate this to the burial ground in May/June.

Edward Alleyn Statue: The statue has been revalued from £70,000 to £90,000 based on replacement value. Insurance invoices for the current and two previous years have been received from DE and paid. SB will now prioritise security of the statue.

Dulwich Estate: A number of live issues are being pursued with the Dulwich Estate at surgery meetings. IMcI said fallen white posts had been down for a long time.

Action: SB to raise the issue of fallen white posts with DE.

Dulwich Village Safer Neighbourhood Panel: Local police are spread very thinly due to difficulties in recruitment and covering protests.

c) Streets for People - Phase 3

This was dealt with under the Chair's Report

d) Streets for People – Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs)

This was dealt with under the Chair's Report

e) Streets for People East Dulwich: HS reported that a consultation on final designs for the Streetspace in East Dulwich closes on 18 March.

f) Rules Review

This was covered under item 5.

g) Development Paper

RW said he had met DMcI who had provided helpful suggestions.

Action: RW to further develop ideas on strategy, increasing membership and a possible member survey with a view to trailing these at the AGM and following up after the AGM.

h) Preparation for AGM

(i) Nominations for Executive Committee

Actions: Members to submit their completed Nomination Forms for election to the Executive Committee by 6th May if they wish to stand for re-election.

(ii) Annual Report

The draft Annual Report had been circulated before the meeting and was approved. Members were thanked for submitting their sections of the report on time.

Action: HS to add more images and post the Annual Report to the website once the Financial Statement has been approved by the Internal Examiner

(iii) Voting procedure at AGM

It was agreed that the voting procedure for Officers and Committee members at the AGM will be on an individual rather than block basis, by a show of hands (one vote per household) in each case. There will be a ballot if any position is contested. All nominees will be asked to prepare a short biography for posting on the website prior to the AGM. The biography should include background, experience, links to Dulwich, and what the individual can offer in the role.

It was noted that the current Rules will apply to the conduct of the whole of the AGM, regardless of whether the new Rules are adopted at item 6 of the AGM agenda.

Action: Those members wishing to stand for re-election should send a short biography to HS.

i) Society Events

A number of local history talks and garden visits are planned.

j) Membership

The Membership Report was received.

Membership stood at 1210 on 20th February, with leavers at a similar rate to the previous year. A number of new members have joined recently from a wide geographical spread. It was noted that the current membership system on the website does not enable us to find out how new members hear about the Society.

k) Editorial Committee/Journal

CR reported that she and IMcI have now edited four editions of the Journal. IMcI is now stepping down as Co-editor and CR will be the sole Editor. CR has achieved savings of £200 on the latest Journal and advertising costs now cover print costs. The Spring Journal contained an article on Sue Badman's work as Vice Chair. CR plans to focus in future editions on the work of sub-committees, starting with Planning and Architecture. She also hopes for another article on an environmental topic. The Summer Journal will be issued on 1st June with a copy deadline of 25th April. An article on engagement with members/possible member survey was suggested. CR is working on improving the way in which Journal articles appear on the website. CR and IMcI were congratulated on their work and JP was congratulated on his photograph for the cover of the recent Journal.

l) Review of Safeguarding Policy

SB had circulated a second draft of the Safeguarding Policy taking on board comments from the Committee. It was reduced to three pages. The Safeguarding Policy was approved. SB agreed to be the Safeguarding Lead for DS. She has relevant experience and training and can refer others to suitable training organised by Southwark.

Action: HS to post the Safeguarding Policy on the website and inform members via eNews. SB to develop a Safeguarding Procedure.

m) Review of Privacy Policy

SB is seeking further guidance on various points. This item was deferred to a later meeting.

7. Communications and Media Report

The Communications and Media Report from Sharon O'Connor was received.

8. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer's Reports were received.

RL said the Society currently has funds of approximately £50,000 in Barclay's Bank, Monmouthshire Building Society and the COIF account. Money is being transferred from the Monmouthshire Building Society to COIF as the interest rate is better, but this is a slow process because of legal regulations. He confirmed that the invoices for insurance of the Edward Alleyn statue have all now been paid and accrued as appropriate.

a) Draft 2023 Accounts

It was noted that reserves should constitute 9 months normal expenditure following agreement of a revised Reserves Policy in September. RL said that £2,670 agreed for Dulwich Park Friends had not been called upon but would be left in the Accounts. The 2023 Accounts were agreed subject to any minor comments members may send to the Treasurer in the next few days.

Action: All members to let RL have any comments on the 2023 Accounts in the next few days. RL to finalise the accounts and send to the Independent Examiner for approval.

b) Investment Policy Review

It was agreed that there was no requirement to change the existing Investment Policy.

Action: HS to update the date and the sum of the Society's assets on the Investment Policy and post on the website.

9. Consideration of Applications for Society Grants

The Grants List for YTD March 2024 was received.

Southwark has agreed that a tree in Dulwich Village can be identified as a memorial to Bill Higman, former Chair of the Dulwich Society, who died recently. The Society will install a plaque.

Action: JP to work with LBS to identify a tree and install a plaque to Bill Higman.

The Phoenix Players have applied for £900 for a keyboard and amplifier for use in their rehearsals and performances and £150 for tuning of the piano in Emmanuel Church Hall where they rehearse. Following discussion, £450 was agreed as a contribution to the keyboard.

Action: HS to notify the Phoenix Players of their grant and RL to arrange payment.

The Wildlife Sub-committee has bid for funding of up to £761 to install up to 30 swift boxes in houses in East Dulwich (the last remaining stronghold of breeding swifts). The Sub-committee has identified a builder who will donate a day's labour to install up to 30 boxes. The Sub-committee will publicise the availability of boxes through door-knocking, eNews and the Journal. The Committee agreed expenditure of £506 plus VAT for up to 20 swift boxes.

Action: PR and the Wildlife Sub-committee to progress the swift box project. CR to promote the initiative in the Journal.

10. Other Dulwich Issues and Points from Sub-committee Reports

Reports were received from Planning & Architecture, Local History, Gardens, Wildlife, Licensing, & Events, Environment and Trees.

Planning and Architecture: PS reported on a presentation she had attended on a development of 360 units of student accommodation and 53 affordable homes at the railway sidings in East Dulwich.

Action: Wildlife Sub-committee to comment on the likely impact of the East Dulwich development on biodiversity.

SB said the proposed planning application from Peckham Town Football Club (PTFC) may be withdrawn. There has been no meeting with neighbours as required by DE.

Action: PS to continue to monitor the PTFC application.

JAGS development: PS and others have been consulted but may not be asked to comment by DE as it is not a residential development.

Brightlands has re-submitted its application having taken account of points raised by the P&A Sub-committee.

Trees: DB informed the Committee that after 6 years in the Chair of the Trees Sub-committee, he will not be putting himself forward for re-election at the AGM. He said he would continue to support the Society by writing for and delivering the Journal and assisting the Membership Secretary as necessary. The Executive Committee thanked DB for everything he has done for the Society and said there would be an opportunity to thank him properly at the next meeting.

Gardens: JP reported that he had planted 500 bulbs in the Old Burial Ground which have been partly destroyed by a contractor of DE mowing the area, despite his meeting with relevant managers and gardeners to inform them in advance of the planting. The Committee expressed their disappointment at this turn of events.

Environment: LJ reported the 2nd meeting of the group will take place shortly. The group is still in the warm up phase resolving governance issues, etc. LJ has met with PS, DE, Verco, among others, and information on public transport and Community Roadwatch has been circulated in the group. The group is also assessing the Streets for People changes and Southwark's policy on walking and cycling. There is concern about the impact on pedestrian safety of the proposed changes at the Red Post Hill Junction. Given the Society's neutral stance on traffic issues, the

Environment Sub-committee has not responded as a group to the Streets for People consultation.

Licensing: PB reported that there are no controversial licence applications at present. A problem with Southwark's licensing software means that it is difficult to access data.

Local History: IMcI reported that Dulwich College is introducing a picture retrieval system and has offered to digitise DS's images and give us access to them for £500p.a. DS has a huge collection of postcards which are spread around at present. Currently only 10% of the available local history material is shared in the Journal. The website is limited to one picture per article. The hit rate on the Local History Twitter account has reduced as we do not access the paid service. IMcI recommended paying a one-off fee of £500 from the Mary Boast Fund for access to the picture retrieval system to be reviewed after the first year.

Action: It was agreed that DS will pay Dulwich College £500 from the Mary Boast fund in the first instance to access their picture retrieval software. IMcI to progress this and explore the possibility of a Dulwich History eNews using pictures from the digital store and offered free to interested members.

Wildlife: PR is preparing an article on the swift boxes for the Journal. Observations and sightings notified to the group indicate a gradual reduction in wildlife in the Dulwich area, largely outside our control.

11. Dulwich Estate

    This had been covered under other items.

12. AOB

    Bernard Nurse, former Chair of the Local History Group sadly died earlier this year. SB provided details of his memorial service on 18th March and asked members to let Bernard's wife, Judith, know if they wished to attend.

13. Date of Next Meeting:

    Monday 13th May 2024 at 7.30pm. **Note the Macandrew Room is not available for this meeting. (Post Meeting Note: St Barnabas Church Library has been booked for the meeting. Enter via St Barnabas Centre).**

The meeting ended at 9.55pm

Heather Stubbs, Secretary

Signed: ***James Thompson*** **Date:** 13th May 2024

(James Thompson, Chair)

Appendix 1: Executive Committee - Register of Interests (as of 11 March 2024)

Kenneth Wolfe (President) – Member of the Friends of Dulwich Square

James Thompson (Chair) - Dulwich Society nominated member of the Advisory Committee of the Scheme of Management of The Dulwich Estate; Member of the Safer Neighbourhood Panel of Dulwich Village; Chairman of the committee of the Stradella and Springfield Residents Association (Stradella and Winterbrook Roads and parts of Burbage Road and Half Moon Lane); Honorary Independent Examiner of the Dulwich Festival; Anne, my spouse, is the Bursar of Herne Hill School

Sue Badman (Vice Chair) - Safeguarding Officer and Member of Parochial Church Council, St Simon Zelotes, Chelsea, SW3; also member of Chelsea Safeguarding Group; Teacher of English as a Second Language (Chelsea – part of All Souls Church Free English group); Member of "Re-imagining Herne Hill" working group (Part of the Herne Hill Forum); Member/Attendee of Dulwich Village Ward Safer Neighbourhood Panel.

Heather Stubbs (Secretary) – Member of Dulwich Picture Gallery Friends Advisory Panel and organiser of Walks and Tours for Friends of Dulwich Picture Gallery

Ian McInnes – Son Tim McInnes is Chair of the Herne Hill Velodrome Trust.

Diana McInnes - Son Tim McInnes is Chair of the Herne Hill Velodrome Trust.

David Beamish – Parish of St Barnabas, Dulwich, Vice-Chair of the Parochial Church Council; Dulwich Deanery Synod (Member); Southwark Diocesan Synod (Member); Member of the Southwark Diocesan Council of Trustees and Chair of the Diocesan Board of Finance; Volunteer at Dulwich Picture Gallery; Volunteer at Dulwich Village Infants School.

Patsy Bramble – Member of Sydenham Hill Ridge Neighbourhood Forum

Peter Roseveare is a member of the Burbage Road Residents Association.

Penny Stern – Chair of Frank Dixon Way & Close RA; Dulwich Society-nominated member of the Advisory Committee of the Scheme of Management of the Dulwich Estate

Jeremy Prescott - Wife is a committee member of the Dulwich Park Friends.

Claire Richards - Chair of Lambeth Wind Orchestra and a member of Dulwich Symphony Orchestra.

Laurie Johnston - Volunteer Chair of Southwark Living Streets, the Southwark branch of the national charity Living Streets which campaigns for everyday walking and wheeling.

Richard Wingfield is Chair of Southwark Liberal Democrats.

For Information

The Dulwich Society is a member of the London Forum. The Trees Sub-Committee has membership of The Woodland Trust and Dulwich Park Friends. The Dulwich Society through the Gardens Sub-committee has affiliated society membership of the Royal Horticultural Society