

The Dulwich Society – Registered Charity No 234192

Trustees' Annual Report 2016

Introduction

The Dulwich Society is an unincorporated association registered as a charity on 1st May 1964 with registered charity number 234192. Its constitution was adopted on 12th March 1964. The constitution was last revised on 25th April 2016.

The aim of the charity is to foster and safeguard the amenities of Dulwich. Dulwich is an area primarily in the London Borough of Southwark and the Society represents all parts of Dulwich – North, South, East and West.

The objects of the Society, which are clearly of public benefit, are:

- (a) to maintain and foster the amenities of Dulwich in the interests of its residents and the wider community of which Dulwich is a part;
- (b) to maintain and improve open spaces and encourage the proper public use thereof;
- (c) to safeguard the trees, gardens, verges, wildlife and other natural endowments;
- (d) to preserve and protect buildings of distinction and promote and encourage a good standard of design and appearance in buildings and streets;
- (e) to increase knowledge and appreciation of the amenities, social activities and history of Dulwich and foster a sense of community among all residents;
- (f) to stimulate public interest and obtain support for the Society's objects by means of meetings, exhibitions, lectures, study groups, publication and co-operation with like-minded individuals and bodies;
- (g) to ensure that the Society's objects are appreciated and taken account of by public authorities and other bodies and individuals concerned with the development of Dulwich;
- (h) to do all such things as may, in the opinion of the Executive Committee, be incidental or conducive to the attainment of any of the above objects.

Organisation Structure

The Dulwich Society is administered by the Executive Committee comprising four officers and 10 other members which meets every two months. The Executive Committee is elected

at the Annual General Meeting by voting members of the Society. Membership of the Society comprised over 1100 households in 2016. Matters of detail are delegated to several sub-committees – Planning and Architecture, Traffic and Transport, Wildlife, Trees, Local History, and Gardens which report to and whose chairs are members of the Executive Committee.

The Trustees of the Dulwich Society are:

Ian McInnes – Chairman

Russell Lloyd – Treasurer

Susan Badman – Secretary

Adrian Hill – Executive Committee Member and immediate past chairman.

These Trustees served throughout 2016 and are all elected members of the Executive Committee. They took on their role as a trustee by becoming one of three main officers of the Society. The immediate past chairman also continued as a trustee after stepping down as Chairman. The Society is currently conducting a review of the role and number of its trustees which will report in 2018.

In addition to the Executive Committee, honorary officers are elected at the Society's Annual General Meeting comprising a President and up to ten Vice-Presidents. During 2016 there were four Vice-Presidents. The Society decided in 2016 that in future it would not replace Vice-Presidents when they retire.

All members of the Executive Committee, Trustees and members of the sub-committees give their time voluntarily and receive no remuneration or other benefits.

Activities and Objectives

The Society comments regularly on Council planning applications and is also a consultee for the Dulwich Estate on all changes to properties within the Estate's Scheme of Management. It encourages change, and welcomes good design appropriate to its setting, but actively defends Dulwich against the pressures of inappropriate development.

The Society publishes a widely read quarterly Journal and a monthly eNewsletter as well as books on local themes. Increasingly the Society undertakes its own projects, the most recent one was an area-wide series of plaques to commemorate those killed by bombing in WW2 – it is also progressing a series of local history information boards, and funding part of the ongoing maintenance in the Sydenham Hill Wood. It has a policy of supporting additional tree planting on streets and in public open spaces, organises regular local history talks and walks, and undertakes many projects in partnership with Southwark Council in their annual Cleaner Greener Safer scheme.

An important focus of the Society is encouraging public engagement in local issues and consultations through public meetings, web site and digital media as well as through its regular newsletters and journals.

Performance and Achievement in 2016 – Review of 2016

The Society through its Planning and Architecture Sub-Committee commented on 212 Dulwich Estate Scheme of Management licence applications - compared with 218 in 2015. Loft conversions, rear and side extensions, the remodelling of front gardens and parking - along with sheds and garden buildings are the more usual applications but there were several requests for replacement houses. Windows and door replacements, and new satellite dishes are steady requests.

Several works on local history have been issued this year written by Society members. The book on “The Pubs of Dulwich and Herne Hill” which was published with the Herne Hill Society has since been reprinted and an exhibition of photographs on the subject displayed in Rosebery Lodge, Dulwich Park.

The 400th anniversary of the consecration of the burial ground in Dulwich Village was commemorated by a leaflet, an information board and further details on the Society’s website. Many visitors came to see the burial ground during the Open House weekend in September 2016 which was arranged by the Society.

The 400th anniversary of the Dulwich Almshouse in September 2016 was marked by a book written by Journal Editor, Brian Green.

The Society is working with Dulwich College Archives on various projects linked to the College’s forthcoming 400th anniversary. These include work on the medieval manor court rolls held there and digitising estate maps from the nineteenth century. Information boards are planned about the windmill which stood on the site of the present College and the pond which lies opposite.

The Society’s Journal continues to be regarded as one of the major benefits of Society membership and around 85% of the copies are still distributed by hand

The popular monthly eNewsletter is now sent to over half (600) the membership - It provides a useful mechanism to keep members up to date on important issues affecting Dulwich (such as planning or transport proposals from Southwark) but also lets people know about events and activities in the area which cannot be included in the quarterly journal.

The Society is active on digital media including a web site and Twitter feed.

The Society works closely with a wide range of stakeholders across Dulwich including residents’ associations (which are increasing in number), Dulwich Picture Gallery, Dulwich Estate, amenity societies such as the Herne Hill Society, sporting venues such as the Herne

Hill Velodrome, local councillors, MP and council officers and the police (Safer Neighbourhood Panels).

The Society Chairman and Chair of Planning and Architecture together with representatives from Dulwich residents' associations drawn from across the Dulwich Estate sit on the Estate Scheme of Management (SOM) Advisory Group which meets three times a year to discuss matters relating to the SOM, and other Estate issues which impact the amenity of Dulwich.

The Society was represented on the Dulwich Safe Routes to School Group, Dulwich and Herne Hill Flood Alleviation Stakeholder Group, the Police Safer Neighbourhood Panel, the Residents' Liaison Group for the Gilkes Development in Dulwich Village and the Dulwich Events Partnership.

The Society has continued to be very active in the promotion of public engagement and consultation on transport, local developments & planning applications. It organised public meetings and responded to consultations on several local issues including:

- Quietway 7 cycle way routing through Dulwich Village;
- New zebra crossings to improve road safety for local children;
- Implementation of double yellow lines at junctions across Dulwich to improve safety;
- New local government ward boundaries;
- Government railway consultations affecting the Dulwich area – station improvements and railway timetables.

The eighth consecutive annual brochure "Dulwich Gardens Open For Charity" was issued with the spring journal. Copies were distributed to all members of the Society and an additional 4,000+ copies to relevant local outlets. The brochure gives details of some 40 local gardens that raise considerable sums for the National Gardens Scheme (supporting cancer, caring and gardening charities), St Christopher's Hospice, Link Age Southwark and other local and national charities.

The Society ran a front gardens competition for all households in the Dulwich area, to encourage homeowners to put effort into their front as much as their back gardens. Fifty entries were received, generally of a high standard with a first prize for the top garden, six gold and six silver prizes and two special prizes awarded.

The Society organised popular garden tours and lectures for members, and a variety of other history talks and walks throughout the year which were very popular and sold out quickly.

Trees are an important facet of Dulwich and the Society acted to protect existing trees - especially veteran oaks threatened by planning applications or allegations of damage to neighbouring buildings (usually much newer than the tree) caused by tree roots -, planted some new young trees and arranged guided walks to spread appreciation of the wonderful trees in Dulwich.

The Society worked in conjunction with London Wildlife Trust, Southwark Council, and the Dulwich Estate, to protect and enhance the valuable green spaces on our doorsteps. It organised expert surveys of living local landscapes. Regular recording of bird, bat, butterfly and plant species revealed a rich tapestry of nature that is practically unique within the Greater London area - all very encouraging, despite the pressures from climate oscillations, building development and the desire to park one's car in the front garden to escape controlled parking zone restrictions.

In 2016 the Society introduced a new grant-making process and awards were made to several local projects in line with the Society's aims and of public benefit including:

- Society Gift to Wheels for Wellbeing: At the end of November 2016 the Dulwich Society Chair presented a cheque for £1000 to Wheels for Wellbeing's Director Isabelle Clement for the purchase of a recumbent tricycle. The charity holds weekly cycling sessions for disabled and older residents at the Herne Hill Velodrome. These sessions are open to members of the public.
- Society Gift to Dulwich Woods: The Society's Executive Committee has agreed to give just over £6000 to the London Wildlife Trust's wide-ranging programme of upgrading works in the Dulwich Woods (Sydenham Hill Wood and Cox's Walk Nature Reserve). The Society will contribute towards the installation of chestnut conservation fencing to an area on the slope at the entrance to Dulwich Woods from Cox's Walk, and assist in funding invasive species removal and treatment. It will also provide financial support for two guided walks in the woods per year for the next three years. The woods are open at all times to the public.

A full report and further details of the Society's activities can be found at www.dulwichsociety.com. The Chair and Sub-Committee reports were presented and approved at the Society's Annual General Meeting on 24th April 2017.

Financial Review

The Statement of Financial Activities and the Independent Examiner's Report is attached at Annex A. This was approved at the Society's Annual General Meeting on 24th April 2017.

The Society does not act as a custodian trustee and is not holding any funds as a custodian trustee.

Society Contact

Mrs Susan Badman, Secretary, Dulwich Society (see public contact details on the Charity Commission entry)

Declaration

The Trustees declare that they have approved the Trustees' Report above.

Signed on behalf of the Executive Committee and Trustees

Susan Badman, Secretary of the Dulwich Society and Trustee

30 October 2017

Annex A: Statement of Financial Activities and the Independent Examiner's