

Dulwich Society Executive 532nd Meeting Monday 9th November 2020 at 7.30pm via Zoom videoconference

Attendees:

Officers

Ian McInnes – Chairman
Kenneth Wolfe – Vice-Chairman
Sue Badman – Secretary
Russell Lloyd – Treasurer
Diana McInnes – Membership Secretary

Sub-Committee Chairs:

David Beamish – Trees
Patsy Bramble – Licensing
Bernard Nurse – Local History
Jeremy Prescott – Gardens
David Roberts – Planning and Architecture
Harry Winter – Travel and Environment
Angela Wilkes – Wildlife

Committee Members:

Brian Green – Journal Editor
Adrian Hill – Committee Member

Apologies:

Colin Niven - President

Declarations of Interest

See Appendix 1.

Minutes of Previous Meeting: The Minutes were distributed just before the meeting and they will be reviewed and approved online later.

Matters Arising not covered elsewhere:

1. Matters arising from the September meeting will be discussed at the next Executive Meeting.
2. Searching for Executive minutes on the Society website does not work. POST-MEETING NOTE: The website search engine is set up for documents saved as “articles” (the full content appears directly on the web page and you do not have to click on a link to a PDF or another web site or page). The AGM Minutes are saved as articles so if you type “AGM minutes” into the search engine, you get a list of AGM minutes by year. However, the Executive Committee Minutes are not saved as articles and are accessible only as PDF files from the “About the Dulwich Society” web page where they are listed in date order. When you search “Executive Committee Minutes” from the Search box on the website Home Page you get 40 search results and none of them appear to be Executive minutes. From the Full

Search page when you type in “Executive Committee Minutes” with the Exact Phrase filter you get 1 result i.e. the About page on which all the Executive Committee Minutes are listed as PDF files. The webmaster advises that it might be possible to change the default search options but could cause problems elsewhere. We could save all the Executive Minutes as separate “articles” but we would lose the Word/PDF formatting. We could put a notice on the home page informing readers to look on the About page for the Executive minutes. If the Committee view this as unsatisfactory we should review the search process when we next conduct a review of the website.

Dulwich Estate – Future of the Scheme of Management Advisory Group

IMCl outlined the proposed refreshed SOM Advisory Group (AG) which has been agreed with the Chair of Trustees, Andreas Köttering:

- Four members of the Advisory Group; two nominated by the Dulwich Society, ideally from the Executive Committee and two others from Residents’ Associations on the Estate. The AG members will be drawn from different geographical areas of the Estate. Two out of the four will serve for two years (one RA and one Society); and the other two for one year. The positions will be rotated to encourage fresh ideas and widen representation from across the Estate.
- The refreshed Group will meet for the first time in March 2021; the process including the financials and agenda will remain the same with three meetings a year.
- Existing members of the AG will stand down and have been informed of this and the new process.
- The Estate has received four applications from RAs across the Estate; IMCl has identified two potential Executive members for the AG and two others came forward in the meeting as possible future members.
- The new members of the AG will be named in early 2021.
- Only SOM issues will be covered at the AG; non-SOM issues such as commercial properties and sports grounds will be covered at surgery meetings which IMCl and SB attend every two months.

Other points:

1. The Society’s Planning & Architecture role will continue as now. AG members will receive weekly updates with lists of licence applications and SOM Committee decisions (but no detail). The P&A sub-committee will continue to receive copies of licence applications and drawings, and review them monthly with comments being sent to the SOM office. The AG members will not be party to the detail and following the implementation of GDPR, the SOM and Trustees have been reluctant to discuss the details of individual licence applications at AG meetings or have them recorded in the Agenda and minutes. The SOM Office have advised the Society that breaches and other matters can be raised with the SOM Office for investigation but these matters are not for discussion at AG meetings.
2. PB raised a concern about the inability of the AG to see and discuss the detail of individual applications and wondered whether this was preventing the AG from fulfilling its function as

outlined in the SOM guidelines. PB mentioned a specific case in the south of the Estate where temporary hoarding at one property had been allowed to remain in place for five years which was unsatisfactory. The developer was not being challenged and recently there had been a serious incident on the site involving police intervention. **Action: IMCl. It was agreed that the issue about individual applications would be raised at the next AG meeting.**

DS Matters

AGM reactions and feedback – next steps

Questions arose at the AGM that the Society had failed in its remit by taking a decision to support Phase 1 of the traffic measures without consulting members and that we should conduct membership surveys on contentious issues. SB has reviewed the rules which date from 1964 in consultation with HW and PB. SB found there was no requirement to canvas members. Powers are vested in the Executive Committee and we were not acting outside our remit. The Executive Committee could choose to conduct a survey into traffic issues as best practice but we are not obliged to do so. Both HW and PB agreed we are not operating outside our remit and there is no obligation to conduct a survey, but there is a need to tweak and modernise the rules. We had made minor changes over the years in relation to membership and subscriptions but we had not updated the rules to clarify the position on resolutions and how we take decisions. We promised to go back to the membership after our review, and the recommendation going forward is to review and modernise the rules. SB also recommended there was no requirement to conduct a survey on the current traffic measures as it would not achieve anything at this stage and a full council consultation is due soon.

Discussion:

HW – as a charitable organisation we should operate in the best interests of the community ('the public benefit') and be careful not to commit ourselves to anything which binds us to actions not in the public interest.

SB – confirmed that the process was to review the rules, confirm changes and agree them at the Executive. The old and new rules should be published online and we should notify members in the AGM notice that the new rules would be submitted for approval. This should happen at the next AGM and not at an SGM.

PB – recommended that we should not rewrite the rules but tweak and modernise them. PB agreed with the proposal to put forward a revised constitution at the next AGM.

DMCl – we should be clear in the rules what we are offering members. We are not the same as a large medical charity; we are a membership organisation and members have a right to know what they receive for their membership.

PB – we should be clear about the aims and the powers vested in us to achieve the aims. The powers are not clear in the current rules. We are not for example a lobby group but some members believe we are. This needs clarifying.

JP – is against conducting a survey as we risk ignoring the wider community who have been equally disadvantaged by the traffic changes.

Actions: The conclusions of SB/PB/HW's review were agreed and the rules should be updated and modernised. SB, PB and AH will form a working party to review the rules and put forward a revision to the Executive. IMCI will include an update on Society actions in the next Chairman's Comment in the Journal and an update in the enewsletter. Ideally the revision will be presented at the next AGM, which currently is due in April 2021. It was agreed we will not conduct a survey on the traffic changes and our position remains as presented on the Society website.

Complaint

The Society has received a formal complaint from a member relating to the terms of reference of the Travel & Environment (T&E) Sub-Committee. Details of the complaint have been circulated to the Executive Committee and the Chair has sent a response to the complainant in line with the Society's complaints policy. It has been agreed that the precise remit of the T&E sub-committee will be reviewed and a draft revised remit will be discussed at the January 2021 T&E meeting and then presented to the January Executive Committee meeting for sign off. **Action: HW**

Attendance of councillors at sub-committee meetings

This primarily concerns the Travel & Environment (T&E) sub-committee. At present the two Dulwich Village Ward councillors attend the T&E sub-committee meetings as guests. Although they have no voting rights, they do participate in the discussions. Concerns have been raised about their attendance by Society members especially in relation to the current traffic proposals. HW pointed out that councillors were able to focus the committee on proposals that were more likely to be delivered so time was not wasted on non-starters; they provide an active line of communication on council progress; their attendance improves relations with the council; and it also aided our standing in the community.

Discussion – there was a divergence of views:

- councillor attendance could be interpreted as political interference and is inappropriate;
- other wards are not represented and particularly when the current traffic proposals are targeted on Dulwich Village and supported by the councillors and when criticisms have been made at and after our AGM about bias, the attendance of councillors has compounded the problem;
- HW could organise separate briefing meetings with councillors;
- councillors' presence could influence the discussion at meetings;
- the Executive should not presume to dictate to the T&E sub-committee but HW could produce a statement clarifying the nature of the arrangement;
- we should respect HW's view that it useful to have councillors in attendance;
- the Society has always had observers and guests at meetings, usually without taking part in the discussions, and it is not unreasonable.

Action: No decision was taken. It was agreed that HW would consult his fellow T&E sub-committee members and review the position with them at their January meeting with a view to further discussions at the January Executive meeting.

Declarations of interest of sub-committee members

The Society has a conflict of interest policy on the “About the Dulwich Society” web page, and the Secretary keeps a record of all interests declared by Executive Committee Members/Trustees. This should also apply to members of sub-committees – potentially all sub-committees could encounter a conflict of interest and for consistency chairs of the sub-committees should routinely ask their members to declare any interests affecting topics of discussion. The issue has also been raised after the AGM. **Action: it was agreed that Chairs of the sub-committees should make members aware of the conflict of interest policy and check that any interests are declared at meetings and documented in sub-committee minutes. All declarations of interests will be kept privately and not published on the web site.**

Publication of sub-committee members’ names on DS web site

After discussion, it was agreed that publishing the sub-committee Chair’s name, email address and telephone number on the sub-committee web page and in the journal was sufficient for most purposes. Any member who wants to know more about a sub-committee and its membership can contact the sub-committee Chair. We are anyhow precluded from publishing personal details of members due to data protection legislation and all queries about members should be directed to the Membership Secretary.

Society online talks

Two garden talks have been arranged in November and December. Further talks are planned but we need to avoid date conflicts with other groups. In future we will work with Bell House and use their marketing promotion networks. We also need to look at recording facilities. **Action: IMCI with sub-committee Chairs and BG. SB is happy to look at the recording issue with Bell House**

Charity Commission Annual Return – completed 31/10/2020

SB submitted the Charity Commission Annual Return and accounts by the deadline. SB has also updated trustee and other charity details, and circulated the latest Charity Commission newsletter to fellow trustees.

Burial Ground works

KW reported that Simon Hoare of the Dulwich Estate has a plan to restore the memorials in the Village burial ground so that they are more visible from the roadway. There is no timescale yet as the plan has to be approved by the appropriate DE committee but SH has promised to keep KW informed of progress. **Action: KW**

Future of the Post Cart

The pressing issue is to decide where to relocate the post cart which is currently secured at Rosebery Lodge in Dulwich Park. The cart needs restoration which could be paid for by the Society. There is

an option to hand it over to the Post Office Museum but the likelihood is that it would be kept in industrial storage and no longer accessible. A potential alternative is to locate it at the Sorting Office at Alleyn Park SE21 where there is some space. A shelter or cover is required, and the design for the shelter at the Old Grammar School is an option. **Action: It was agreed that the Local History Sub-Committee should examine and take forward the proposal for Alleyn Park, and look at what restoration is needed.**

Litter picking

We have not established a regular litter pick schedule but if there is a demand, we will organise another litter picking exercise.

Treasurer's Report and Grants

RL presented the latest budget statement and accounts (year to date) for FY2020.

- FY2019 accounts – signed off and sent to the Charity Commission
- The bank summary shows £48k in our accounts. RL asked that those depositing money into the account should provide identifying payment detail.
- Receipts are £18.7k YTD and payments £23.3k YTD. Payments are now virtually all made online. Surplus is around £2k.
- We did not charge for Journal adverts for two quarters but adverts are now being paid for. The key point is that no advertising has been lost.
- DR requested details of professional indemnity insurance thinking particularly of sub-committee members who are commenting on Estate licence applications. The Society has trustee management and organisation charity liability insurance, each for £1m but has no professional indemnity cover. The organisation liability insurance will cover the activities of the sub-committees. **Action: SB will circulate details of the insurance cover**

Full details in RL's Executive Report.

Licensing and events

PB reported there were two event proposals at Crystal Palace Park. The hearing for the larger event (several weekends in July for three years) is on 23rd November. The main concern is about the capacity and mechanics of the proposed festival. There is a second set of events with an attendance of 10,000-15,000 at the Bowl run by the same festival organiser as Winterville on Clapham Common. The application has not yet been submitted.

There were complaints about the SiOn Club by West Dulwich station. The police attended but at present no further action on social distancing is planned. If anyone has a complaint about the venue, they should contact Licensing or Environmental Health. There is no further action on our part.

GI Express Supermarket on Norwood Road - The Society objected as the proposed hours were well in excess of the local code. They have since been reduced so the objection has been withdrawn but councillors and residents have expressed concern and there will be a licensing hearing on Thursday 12 November.

Full details in PB's Executive report.

Society Grants

We have agreed to support the proposed renovation of the raised flowerbeds on Court Lane. An application is being made for CGS funds and the Society's contribution would be £750.

Consultations and Planning

Lydenhurst – redevelopment of the back site on Red Post Hill. There is now a licence application to the Estate which the P&A Committee will review shortly. The main issue is that there is single access to the site via a 4-foot door which gives directly on to Red Post Hill – no access is permitted from the back area (Pond Mead).

Gilkes – McCulloch's have confirmed that the current planning proposal is no longer viable, and they are seeking approval for an alternative apartment-based scheme. This now presents an opportunity for the social housing on the site to be used for the Dulwich Almshouse. We will be pressing the Estate and the Almshouse to consider the site as an option. **Action: IMcl**

Herne Hill Velodrome (note declaration of interest at Appendix 1)

DR asked for a status report. SB reported that Burbage residents have raised concerns about a new Forest-style nursery part of which abuts their back fences. The Dulwich Estate conducted a consultation and has now reported back that they have agreed conditions with the Velodrome owner. The nursery must be moved away from the residents' fences, planning consent must be sought and the Velodrome management must refresh communication links with Burbage Road RA. The residents are grateful for the intervention of the Society and the constructive response from the Estate.

Metropolitan Open Land (MOL)

BG asked whether the Velodrome nursery was on MOL which it is although none of the current structures are permanent. MOL will be an issue for the planning application and there will be an opportunity to comment. BG is concerned about the proliferation of applications from sports clubs to host nurseries on their sites, nibbling away at MOL, and feels the Society should take a strong line on the issue (view supported by AW and HW). He will be writing about this in the next journal.

Action: SB agreed to ask BRRRA and ward councillors about progress with the planning application.

BG went on to say that the Society should be totally opposed to any further building on MOL land and will campaign on this vigorously. The pandemic has shown the importance of retaining green space for exercise and health.

T&E Sub-Committee

Phase 2 of the traffic measures commence next Monday and funding for further measures is now available though there are no details about next steps. There is little progress on the air pollution monitor and IMcl has asked for this to be a priority. **Action: HW to progress**

Can the length of time of the filter at East Dulwich Grove/Dulwich Village junction be tweaked to allow more cars through? This is a TfL action. **Action: HW to establish how we can put more pressure on for action.**

Other Dulwich Issues and Any Other Business

- a. Alleyn's Statue patina restoration – SB has contacted the Foundry and is awaiting a response. **Action: SB**
- b. Gardens Brochure for 2021 – given continuing uncertainties, JP proposes to produce a smaller brochure in 2021 which will cost £1100, 80% of which will be covered by advertising leaving the Society with a bill of up to £300. If as in 2020 restrictions continue, the maximum loss will be £1100. If we have to pull the printing at the end of January, there will be some cost. **Action: This approach was agreed. Action with JP**
- c. Letter from Cllr Rose concerning the Phase 2 traffic changes – this was circulated by the council, but it seems not everyone has seen it though those in affected roads have received it. SB will recirculate to Executive Members and has posted this on the Society Twitter feed for wider circulation.
- d. Cox's Walk Footbridge – the web site needs updating **Action: IMcI**
- e. 5G mast – The planning application has been rejected by Southwark but Cllr Simmons has advised that the government is pursuing liberalisation of the law on planning which it is reported would allow applications like this to go ahead without requiring permission from the council. Something to watch out for.

Date of next meeting – 18 January 2021 – Zoom meeting, details to be confirmed.

Sue Badman, Secretary – The Dulwich Society

2021 Meetings - 2021 Meeting Dates: 18 January, 15 March, 10 May, 12 July, 13 September, 15 November 2021 (on Zoom until further notice)

2021 AGM – Monday 26 April 2021 (no venue booked yet)

Appendix 1

Executive Committee - Declarations of Interest (November 2020)

Ian McInnes – Friends of Dulwich Picture Gallery (Chairman); Member of Dulwich Village and Dulwich Wood Ward Safer Neighbourhood Panels; Son Tim McInnes is Chair of the Herne Hill Velodrome Trust.

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

Sue Badman - Dulwich Events Partnership (DS rep); Safe Routes to School Group (Attendee).

David Roberts – Volunteer at the Village Orchard in Dulwich Village.

David Beamish – Parish of St Barnabas, Dulwich (Deputy Churchwarden); Dulwich Deanery Synod (Hon. Secretary); Southwark Diocesan Synod (Member); Friends of Dulwich Picture Gallery (Committee Member); Member of the Southwark Diocesan Council of Trustees and Vice-Chair of the Diocesan Board of Finance; Volunteer at Dulwich Picture Gallery; Dulwich & District U3A Committee Member; Volunteer at Dulwich Village Infants School.

Adrian Hill – Camberwell & District Allotment Society; Stradella and Springfield Residents' Association (Committee Member); Friends of Crystal Palace Subway (DS rep); Abbeyfield Dulwich Society Ltd (Trustee and Executive Committee Member).

Harry Winter – Vice-Chair, Herne Hill Forum; Member of “Mums for Lungs”