



THE WEST CHISWICK & GUNNERSBURY SOCIETY

www.westchiswickgs.org.uk

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Monday 22nd February, 2021

Held on Zoom starting at 8pm

MINUTES

(subject to formal adoption at AGM in 2022)

In Attendance:	Marie Rabouhans	Chairman
	Adam O'Neill	Vice Chairman
	Kate Vicic	Secretary
	Charlotte Aldridge	Treasurer
	Robert Hare	Webmaster
	Terry Thorn	Management Committee
	Sarah Thorn	Management committee
	Don Osborne	Management Committee

Together with 18 other Members and residents

Also in attendance: Councillors Joanna Biddolph, Ranjit Gill and Ron Mushisho

1. Welcome and Apologies

Marie Rabouhans from the Chair welcomed Members and commented on the unusual format for the meeting. The modalities of the meeting for voting and commenting were explained by Robert Hare.

2. Minutes

The Minutes of the previous AGM on 10th February, 2020 were accepted as a true record and adopted, subject to one minor amendment.

3. Matters Arising (not dealt with elsewhere on the Agenda)

It was noted that most issues had been updated in the Newsletter and the Annual Report.

4. Annual Report and Accounts

The Chairman thanked the Secretary and the Treasurer for preparing the reports. In this unusual year the activities of the Society were necessarily limited. However the Society responded to the situation by sending out messages to members including information about the Pandemic and links to the Council and other useful websites.

Our own website could not be updated for a while due to a member of the committee succumbing early to Covid 19 and being ill for some time. We are now attending to it and posting up-to-date information.

We have continued to respond to planning applications and consultations. The quantity of applications has not been reduced significantly by the Pandemic.

The Treasurer presented the financial report to Members. Income was largely from membership subscriptions as, since the AGM in 2020, there had been no meetings at which donations could be made. Despite having agreed at the 2020 AGM to increase subscriptions, the Committee decided that, due to the exceptional circumstances of the pandemic, we would keep them at the previous rate for this year.

On the debit side our expenses had been minimal as we didn't have to meet hall rent and other expenses for public meetings. In the light of these savings the Society made two donations to local good causes: one to Visors for Frontline Medical Staff in Hounslow; one to the Gunnersbury Park appeal following the suspected arson attack that burnt the café down.

The Treasurer commented on the need to recruit more members in general and younger members in particular. A recruitment drive would be carried out when circumstances permitted.

The Treasurer thanked WCGS members Richard Vinter and Chris Jenks for checking the Society's accounts in accordance with our Constitution.

Veronica Hunt-Lewis proposed adoption of the Annual Report and Terry Thorn seconded the proposition. The Annual Report for 2020 was duly adopted.

5. Matters Arising from the Annual Report 2020

- Green up Gunnersbury

The Chairman thanked the people who gave up their time to water the Meanwhile Garden on Chiswick High Road during the hot summer months and the Chiswick Business Park which has been giving us plants when they update their displays. The shops and stalls that had been keen to help us keep the Meanwhile Garden watered were mostly shut due to the Pandemic so Members and others carried water, often some distance, to keep these plants alive.

- TFL Bollo Lane

This extensive planning application has been approved by London Borough of Ealing Planning Committee subject to approval by the Mayor of London/GLA. It is likely to go ahead with buildings up to 25 storeys high. There is no third party right of appeal. Councillor Biddolph suggested that the Society might write to the Secretary of State requesting that he call it in. The Chairman felt that correspondence from a Hounslow resident group would probably not carry much weight even if the development was on the Borough boundary. She suggested that a letter from local Councillors might carry more weight. It was noted that residents of the Gunnersbury Park Garden Estate were intending to write. Terry Thorn thought that the plan would not go ahead due to changing needs in post-Pandemic London. The Chairman, however, pointed out that this is a mainly residential project with housing in short supply in London and that TfL was keen to capitalise on its land holdings. She also drew the meeting's attention to the fact that this is a hybrid application; the buildings with full planning permission were at each end of the scheme (including the 25-storey tower) and would be built in Phase 1. The middle buildings for which there was only outline permission would be in later phases and delivery of the public-realm improvements to Bollo Lane might therefore be delayed for many years.

- 2 Thorney Hedge Road

An application to build on garden land to the rear of this house was refused and the subsequent appeal had now been dismissed. The Chairman noted the

importance of this dismissal as, had it been accepted, it would have provide an unwelcome context for development on garden land, possibly encouraging the selling off of back gardens. The Society put in a strong case against this development and is delighted with the outcome.

- **Empire House**

The Chairman has been in dialogue with the developers. They have yet to appoint a construction company but, once this is done, a time-line for the construction will, we hope, be made available. We will keep Members informed.

6. Election of Officers and Committee

All four honorary officers were willing to stand for re-election:

Chairman	Marie Rabouhans	(Silver Crescent)
Vice-Chairman	Adam O'Neill	(Cambridge Road North)
Treasurer	Charlotte Aldridge	(Thorney Hedge Road)
Secretary	Kate Vicic	(Grosvenor Road)

Their joint re-election was proposed by Anna Rumian, seconded by Terry Thorn and they were duly re-elected.

All members of the Management Committee except Sally Thorn were willing to stand for re-election:

Webmaster	Robert Hare	(Grosvenor Road)
Management Committee	Terry Thorn	(Thorney Hedge Road)
Management Committee	Don Osborne	(Arlington Gardens)

Their re-elction was proposed by Anna Rumian, seconded by Veronica Hunt-Lewis and they were duly re-elected.

The Chairman thanked Sally Thorn, an active member since the beginning of the Society, who was Social Secretary in the early days and had remained on the committee ever since.

7. Development and Planning Policy

- **Holly House**

The Zoom organiser showed us an artist's impression of this potential development on the site of the refused Chiswick Curve. Some considered the image to be deceptive in that with all the greenery it included the number of storeys is hard to establish visually. Starbones, the developers, are due to hold virtual Q&A sessions to present this project. The Chairman encouraged members to sign up to take part in this and to put as many questions about the project as possible. The photo also showed the 4th Mile project (on the B&Q site), for which a planning application was in progress.. The Chairman, who spoke at the public enquiry for the the Chiswick Curve, suggested that the developer would be attempting to overcome the reasons why the Curve had been refused permission.. In consequence, we would need to consider the proposals in detail, not only the outward look of the building as exemplified by this image.

Councillor Ron Mushisho thanked the Chairman for her continuing work on projects for this site. He suggested that the new White Paper from the Secretary of State would enable smaller groups to be part of the decision making in future. The Chairman replied that in our response to the White Paper we had concluded that,

on the contrary, it would significantly reduce the ability of communities to respond to, or have an influence on, specific developments proposed for their area. The proposed reliance on Design Codes meant that, once these were decided, individual development proposals might be granted permission without the need for public consultation or scrutiny by the Local Planning Authority.

Terry Thorn pointed out that the site being between the M4 and the North Circular is particularly vulnerable to air- and noise-pollution, both very much in the news. The latter road will carry much of the polluting traffic that would be charged for going further towards the centre of London and its design, glass-clad, means it will heat up rapidly and opening windows will be necessary letting in the pollution from outside.

The draft Local Review of the Great West Corridor states that residential buildings should be sensitively located away from the A4/M4 and North Circular roads. This project is sited on both.

Adam O'Neill revealed that the Council had written recently to say that a further application with amended plans for the B&Q site, just behind the Holly House site, had been submitted. Members were encouraged to examine these documents and raise any issues.

Robert Hare, with his experience as a professional gardener, pointed out that the artists's impression was strictly 'green glossing'. To plant trees that extend up several storeys but that must necessarily grow at an angle was not realistic. Jan Hewlett added that the dust and lack of light would not encourage growth, either.

General point: planning applications Adam O'Neill said that a recent legal case had resulted in the Descriptions provided for applications containing fewer details so that schemes could be more easily varied at a later stage. If fixed numbers for details such as the number of floors or car-parking spaces were included within the Description it was harder to vary a scheme at a later date. In consequence developpers were now including as little as possible in the Description for applications. Full details would, of course, need to be included in the submissions. In future, therefore, it would be necessary to consult the application documents to get an idea of the nature of the development proposed.

- **Stadium Parking**

There is an application for parking in the Chiswick Business Park by spectators attending matches. Up to 500 vehicles would be able to park there on match days. As spectators are required to travel with at least two people in a vehicle the implication is that more than 1000 people could be making their way to and from the Business Park at the same time and in the same direction as those using Gunnersbury Station. There are safety and local impact issues to be considered. The Chairman is putting together comments and invited the members to consider the issue and do the same. The planning application number (00248/D/P63) and final date for comments – 10th March – were noted and a reminder that the latest news about sports events means that matches with spectators might be taking place again within months.

Councillor Biddolph asked whether the consultation on the West Chiswick CPZ would be revived. The Strand on the Green and Stilehall gardens CPZ consultations had a good response and there will be a formal consultation as a result but the West Chiswick one did not elicit much of a response. The Chairman

undertook to write to the Transport Officers concerning the need to carry out the formal consultations and requesting that the West Chiswick CPZ one be revisited. In the meantime it is important to get the message out to residents so that there is a better response to any future consultation. It should be recognised that, even if the stadium seems to be a distance from parts of the West Chiswick CPZ, fans are prepared to walk a long way if the parking is free as it is at weekends and after 6pm. It was pointed out that a map of the parking zones in the area is published in the Local Area Management Plan.

Councillor Mushisho said that residents around Turnham Green are also concerned about this and that he would put this in his regular blog to get residents' attention. Councillor Gill agreed that the Councillors would highlight this issue in their blogs.

8. AOB

- **20th Anniversary of the WC&GS**

As Terry Thorn had pointed out earlier in the meeting this year is the 20th anniversary of the Society. The Chairman suggested that celebration is in order and that as the Pandemic recedes and things open up, a social event in December might be possible. We could put together an anniversary publication with information about the Society's achievements and changes in our area over the period. This could include, for example, our role in the creation of local conservation areas. Members were invited to contribute suggestions for what to include. Such a publication could assist in a recruitment drive.

- **Stirling Road Recycling Centre**

This useful local resource is under threat of closure by the London Borough of Ealing. There are two petitions in circulation, as reported on the W4 website. It was noted that because of its location it is probably used as much by Chiswick residents within LB Hounslow as by those within LB Ealing. Councillor Biddolph also pointed out that the West London Waste Authority allows access to centres in other boroughs but that there is not one nearby and that the new residents of the Bollo Road development will also need to recycle.

- **Consultation**

We were asked to look at the Chiswick Town Centre proposal and to respond.

https://haveyoursay.hounslow.gov.uk/bids-and-funding/town-centres-draft-visions-engagement/supporting_documents/210217_Chiswick_FINAL.pdf

9. Closing remarks

The Chairman thanked the Members for attending the Zoom AGM. She praised the success of the technical side of the meeting and thanked our technical help, Richard Hare, who had lent his Zoom account for the occasion and helped to set it all up.

On a personal note, Marie expressed her pleasure at having received her first dose of a coronavirus vaccine. Having spent her career at the British Pharmacopeia and the World Health Organization she was an enthusiast for vaccines. She urged Members and their friends and families to be vaccinated as soon as invited by the NHS.

Signed by the Chairman:

Date: