THE WEST CHISWICK & GUNNERSBURY SOCIETY

Public Meeting: 26th October 2026
Held at Age Concern Hall, Chiswick W4
At 7.30 pm

MINUTES

In Attendance:	Marie Rabouhans	(Chair)
	Adam O'Neill	(Vice-Chair)
	Charlotte Aldridge	(Treasurer)
	Kate Vicic	(Secretary)
	Jeremy Cuss	(Management Committee)

Together with Andy Slaughter MP, Councillor Joanna Biddolph, Councillor Amy Croft and 9 members and residents.

1. **Apologies and Welcome:**

- The Chair welcomed our MP, members, residents and councillors. Apologies were received from Rob Hare, Paul Hayler, Don Osborne, Felicity Proctor and Jim Frost.

2. **Minutes:**

- The minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Tuesday 10th February 2026 (available on website: www.westchiswickgs.org) were reviewed with no requests for amendment and will be formally adopted at the next AGM.

3. **Matters Arising (not elsewhere on the agenda):**

- There were no matters beyond those on the agenda.

4. **Update on current planning issues:**

The Chair raised the following**:**

- **Chiswick Sainsbury:** Work on the proposed redevelopment of the Sainsbury's supermarket appears to be on hold with the consultation process paused. It was noted that the construction market in general has slowed down and other local projects are on hold, including the redevelopment of the B&Q site.
- **Land at Chiswick Roundabout: "The James":** This 24-storey co-living tower is the 7th proposed scheme since the first planning application for the site. Three of the schemes were approved, including the recent Holly House. It begs the question: if this latest one were to be approved, would it ever be built? Hounslow Council has issued its formal Scoping Opinion setting out an extensive list of technical requirements that the developer must now address before submitting a full planning application.
- **Advertising towers at Chiswick Roundabout:** Wildstone have applied to change the current media screens into similar-sized displays but held by "fake trees"

(P/2026/1536). WCGS comments have emphasised the importance of the green space at the roundabout, especially the trees, particularly since there are now more dwellings in the vicinity. The roundabout is owned by TfL. National Highways, responsible for the M4, have submitted critical comments and requested more information. A similar Wildstone application in Wandsworth has been refused by that council. Members recalled the damage to trees that occurred during the construction by Wildstone of the existing structures in 2012/3. They noted that the lighting provided as part of the so-called public-realm improvements no longer functions. The Chair suggested that members send comments on the environmental aspects of this application.

- **Gunnersbury Park Events:** The revised application (P/2026/3274) for an annual total of 19 events with 115 days for set-up/take-down etc was approved at the September Planning Committee. Ward Councillors held a public meeting to discuss possible future action. https://chiswickcalendar.co.uk/over-40-residents-gathered-to-form-a-new-opposition-group-to-gunnersbury-park-live-events/
  The Chair attended the meeting but did not commit to joining a working action group proposing to consider future action with respect to Gunnersbury Park. She emphasised that the problem of parks being forced to rely on commercial events to fund basic maintenance was a wider issue and suggested that the focus should be on finding a new model for funding the upkeep of London parks. The Chair intends to approach the London Forum and CPRE London with a view to bringing people together to discuss park funding. There are grants available for specific capital projects but nothing for general maintenance. In the discussion it was pointed out that the big local housing developments that don't include adequate green space rely on Gunnersbury Park for their residents. Could a service charge be levied that could go toward the park's maintenance? A member suggested instituting a city-wide tourist tax, collected by hotels as happens in many other countries, that could go towards the parks. MP Andy Slaughter pointed out that there is not only a creeping commercialisation of parks all over London; schools are built with little outdoor space for sports activities and parks are often used instead. A member pointed out that the activities offered by the events in the park are very important for young people all over London as there are so few spaces for them. It was agreed that this was true but that there needed to be a better balance taking full account of the negative impact of events on the quality of life of local residents – loud music, strong bass, mess amongst other things.
- **Brentford Football Stadium Concerts:** WCGS comments had been submitted on proposal to hold up to 6 concerts with a capacity of 22,600 in summer (P/2026/2531). There is concern that they will either overlap with the Gunnersbury Park events, creating a huge number of extra people using public transport etc, or they would be on weekends when there are no park events, thus filling every weekend with noise and crowds. Noise checks were published in the report that accompanied the application, but they focused on the modern flats in the immediate vicinity of the stadium that were designed and constructed as part of the stadium scheme and thus in full knowledge of their vulnerability to stadium activities. As a result, they benefit from good soundproofing unlike the mainly

Victorian houses in the surrounding streets. The recent incident of a rugby ball being kicked from the roof of one of the stadium's residential blocks onto the pitch during a match raises safety concerns. During concerts the pitch would be occupied by high numbers of concert goers (over 13,000). The Chair undertook to raise this safety issue with the Council's planning officers.

- **Local Plan:** The Chair attended several sessions of the Examination in Public in June/July. With respect to the next steps the Main Modification documents is a key document which we will need to respond to. It is expected to be available for a 6-week statutory consultation towards the end of the year. The changes within it will be those considered necessary by the Inspectors in the light of issues identified during the examination to make the plan sound and legally compliant. The document will be prepared by the Council's planners. There may be some changes agreed between Council Planners and Inspectors following this consultation. The Inspectors will provide their report. The Local Plan will be presented to the Council for adoption. The Inspectors emphasised that it needs to be adopted by March 2027, or risk being subject to the new rules.

5. Update on current transport issues:

- **Gunnersbury Station/Chiswick Tower:** It is not clear what the developers are planning. The Legal Agreement with Section 106 requirements for the co-living scheme (P2025/0794) was signed on 17th June 2026. However, applications relating to the consented prior approval fall-back conversion to 181/197 residential units (PAC/2025/0749) have been submitted. The latest (P2026/1575) has not yet been decided. We are seriously concerned that if the developer proceeds with anything other than the co-living scheme, any improvements to the station and any social housing will be lost. Any conversion flats are likely to be of low quality. Keeping the building as an office building is unlikely as it is old and out-dated compared to many new schemes.
- Meanwhile the state of Gunnersbury station was of real concern. The waiting room was boarded up on one side, adding to the problems and safety risk of platform congestion. Train services were frequently disrupted by engineering works and the announcements were often wrong or misleading. It was noted that the office car park was now in use for paid public parking (400 places). It appeared that planning permission had not been sought for this change of use and the Vice-chair undertook to raise this with the Council's enforcement officers.
- **Kew Bridge Station:** At a recent Community Engagement Group meeting Brentford Football Club stated that designs to improve access to Kew Bridge Station under the Access for All programme were expected to be shared with the Club before the end of the year.
- **West London Orbital:** TfL are consulting on proposals for this new rail route with a deadline of 18th November. https://haveyoursay.tfl.gov.uk/west-london-orbital
  The Vice-Chair told the meeting that this new overground service will include 4-6 trains per hour that will use existing freight routes through mostly existing stations. The line will connect regeneration areas of west and north west London. A new station will be needed at Lionel Road for which space has been reserved. This scheme will require one of the two level crossings on Bollo Lane to be closed resulting in closure

of the road to through motor traffic. The increased train frequency together with the close proximity of the level crossings would create serious traffic flow problems and safety issues. TfL's current proposal was to close the level crossing of the Richmond Overground (Mildmay) line. This would avoid alterations to the current 70 bus route. Any closed level crossing would require new infrastructure to permit pedestrians and cyclists to cross. Members were encouraged to respond to the TfL consultation.

6. **Green up Gunnersbury:**

- **Meanwhile Garden:** During the summer we had refreshed the two main planters in the Meanwhile Garden with a range of attractive summer plants. Sadly they, together with the fresh compost in which they were planted, were stolen. The planters have been replanted. Charlotte, Rob and Jeremy removed a damaged planted and tidied up the garden. However, it was at risk of being removed as there was a Prior Approval application (PA/2026/0941) for a 20m Telecom Monopole on behalf of EE and Three that was refused in May 2026 but has gone to appeal. If granted, the monopole and cabinets would require removal of some, or all, of the Meanwhile Garden.
- In addition, BT wish to place an illuminated communications hub just east of the bus stop This is a very busy area that already has a lot of street furniture, bikes and other clutter. We submitted an objection and the application (P/2026/2271 and 227) has been refused.
- **Street Trees:** Committee member Rob Hare, who was not able to attend the meeting, had wanted to draw the attention of members to the plight of young street trees during the drought. He hoped that if the summer is as dry next year, members will be prepared to "adopt" and water their local young trees.
- A member raised the problem of street tree roots that damage and distort local pavements making it hard for small, wheeled vehicles such as wheelchairs and pushchairs. Chiswick Road., an important short cut from Chiswick High Road to Chiswick Park Station and Sainsburys was a particular problem. Build outs were one solution but require the removal of parking spaces which some residents are against. There was often a stalemate when this issue was discussed. Councillor Biddolph said that, as discussed at the Chiswick Area Forum resolving the problem was being looked at borough wide. Councillor Amy Croft pointed out that it is impossible to find a one-size-fits-all solution and that build outs have potential safety issues. There was further discussion of local tree problems including bushes with thorns that have grown too far onto the pavement on Wellesley Road It was noted that Fix-my-street is a good way to contact Hounslow Highways to raise specific issues.
- The Chair drew our attention to **The People's Emergency Briefing,** a film that brings together leading evidence on the climate and nature crisis. . The film was being screened by community groups and MPs were being invited to attend. Andy Slaughter said that he would shortly be attending a screening. The call for a government-backed televised national briefing will be discussed in Parliament on 16th November. A member expressed anxiety at the increase in the pollution from wood smoke from wood burner stoves;. a reference was made to Mums for Lungs https://www.mumsforlungs.org/ an organisation that lobbies against polluting items such as wood burners.

7. **Date of next Public Meeting:** The AGM will take place in February 2027. The date and venue will be notified nearer the time. In the meantime, a social event will be held in the Gunnersbury Pub on Tuesday 8th December 2026 at 7.30pm.

8. **Any other business:**

- A member raised the issue of Heathrow Airport expansion since the Chancellor was in favour of the project in the interest of economic growth. He drew our attention to the problem of interference with landing radar by the increase of wi-fi. The Chair said that the best way for small organisations and individuals to get involved with the campaign against Heathrow expansion was to support HACAN. The WCGS is a member. Andy Slaughter reassured members that he maintained his long-standing opposition to expansion as did other local MPs and the Mayor of London.
- Another member reported that she had been to a local police meeting about traffic. Speed tests on Heathfield Gardens had yielded a number of speeding fines but she suggested that Wellesley Road is worse for speeding vehicles and needed a campaign to check speeding and draw drivers' attention to the 20 mph limit. Councillor Amy Croft said that 3D speed bumps, flat but effective in slowing down traffic, are being looked into. The Chair undertook to raise the issue with the relevant authorities.
- Members thanked Andy Slaughter for his participation in the meeting .and congratulated him on his appointment as Solicitor General for England and Wales by means of a round of applause.

Signed by the Chair: Date: