

WALWORTH SOCIETY MEETING

Wednesday 7pm 16th March 2022 (by Zoom)

Welcome, apologies and introductions

Jeremy welcomed everyone to the meeting

Present: Jeremy Leach (Chair), John Whelan, Neil Crossfield, Tracy Crossfield, Manisha Patel (for item 3), Amanda Sewell, Norma Lawrence, Shelagh Kavanagh (mins), Jim Beedell, Diana Cochrane, Vincent Brown, Tyrone Landau, Roger Batchelor, Aaron Burton, Naima Ali, Liba Hoskin, Tom Wedell, James Hatts, Steve Lancashire and Darret Tomlin.

Apologies: Peta Steel, Richard Galpin, Lise Magnollay, Robert Hadfield, Kevin Williamson.

1. Minutes of our February 2022 meeting and matters arising

- a. Minutes of the February meeting were agreed as a correct record.
- b. Matters arising
 - i. Info on the use of cargo bikes for businesses was distributed in the Walworth Society newsletter of 7th March.
 - ii. JL agreed to provide a list of questions related to s106 agreement on Walworth Town Hall.
 - iii. JB reported he has spoken to Councillors Martin Seaton and Darren Merrill about the s106 money and DM reported that some of the money has already been spent.

2. Walworth Town Hall Community Space

- a. Manisha Patel – Chair of the Walworth Town Hall Community Space Management Board was welcomed to the meeting by JL. Manisha briefly described her background working in the NHS for 20 years in south London delivering services in the community.
- b. In addition to Manisha, the Board consists of two councillors, currently Cllr Martin Seaton and Cllr Darren Merrill (both represent North Walworth ward), two representatives of General Projects, and two more community representatives, Lyndon and Nadine. Two youth representatives are still to be selected.
- c. The Management Board has a 3-year remit, and one of their jobs will be to choose an operator to manage the community space. The Board acts in an advisory role only.
- d. Manisha wants the community space to be truly for all residents, long-standing and new, and wants it to be in use every day.

Q&A

- e. AS asked if the space could be used for free by the local police to hold ward panel meetings; JL added the question of whether there will be some supported community groups who could use the space for free.
 - i. MP replied that these questions will be decided by the community space operator when selected.
- f. NL reported that access to Wansey Street from the Walworth Road has been closed by the contractors with no warning or information. Lendlease had always given prior information to local residents about street changes.
 - i. MP replied though she was not connected to the contractor, but would raise the issue with General Projects.
- g. DC asked if the Board members are volunteers or are being paid.
 - i. MP replied that there will be some remuneration for their time and that there are currently negotiations in train for that to be at the London Living Wage.
- h. DC informed MP of the two Walworth History Festivals that the WS had held in the library and offered to show MP photos and give more details. MP said she would look forward to hearing more about the festivals.
 - i. DC commented that the Town Hall/Library complex is very special, not just because of history but because of its location directly on the Walworth Road. DC said that she is concerned about the decisions of the Management Board being made behind closed doors. Lendlease had originally said that (one of) their community spaces would be free to some community groups, but an operator will want to make a profit. General Projects had promised before planning that they would pay for costs like electricity and give free access. There are alternatives involving community management such as the community space in Nunhead, and it is vital that the decision on whether access is free or not must be made before an operator can be selected.
 - ii. MP said there will be free days during the year and they would like the community space to be used every day. But she stressed that these are matters still to be decided during the process of choosing a managing operator. The board will be responsible for monitoring any agreement.
- i. DC asked if the operator of the community space will be the same as the operator of the café.
 - i. MP replied that that will not be the case, they will be separate.
- j. JL said that there are detailed notes of Walworth Society meetings if MP wants to familiarise herself with issues raised in the past.
- k. JB expressed his view that he does not see the community space happening, and is concerned that the Management Board is not voluntary, and believes the community members will be outvoted by the council and GP members.

While he is fully pro-youth, he is also sceptical of the engagement of the youth members as he has seen them not being confident when serving on other boards.

- i. MP assured the meeting that she will ensure that the youth members will be confident to participate.

- l. JL thanked MP for attending and invited her to return again.

3. Urban Elephant Project (John Whelan)

- a. The Urban Elephant project is a 3-day arts festival from 29th to 31st July linking green spaces from Bagshot Street (by Burgess Park) up to Elephant Arcade, and will featuring many activities from both new and traditional communities. It is funded from the High Street Recovery Fund and also from the Elephant and Castle Business Forum.
- b. The project is looking for people to help in stewarding and giving out tote bags with maps of the festival locations. Anyone who wants to be involved can contact John on 07747 647691 or email: whelanjohnwalworth@gmail.com
- c. TL asked if there is a website – JW said that there will be.
- d. AS asked if the Safer Neighbourhoods local teams could leaflet at the festival and invited JW to the next meeting in May.

4. Walworth HAZ/Walworth Stories update.

- a. DC and NC have had monthly meetings with Historic England. NC is busy with research and the easing of Covid restrictions will mean further progress.

5. Local Elections 2022 – Walworth Hustings.

- a. VB reported that the likely venue will be St Peter's Church, the date is to be confirmed, but will be after Easter. The WS committee will discuss inviting the candidates.
- b. VB and JL will look at the feasibility of a hybrid event where some can attend on Zoom. If that is not possible, the event can be recorded.

6. Planning Matters

- a. JL has been in contact with Jerry Flynn who came to our Nov 2021 meeting to raise issues on plans for the Lendlease H1 building in Elephant Park. This application is likely to go to planning committee after the local elections.

7. Other current issues

- a. JB asked for update on East St Baptist Church. DC said it had been rejected by Historic England for listing, but it is now in the Walworth Road Conservation Area so could be included on any Local List.

8. AOB

- a. AS reported that the next meeting of Walworth Panel is at Walworth Police Station on 11th May
- b. DC announced that there will be a plant swap on Saturday May 21st from 11 to 1pm in St Peter's Gardens, so please plant extra seeds and bring along.

Date of next meeting: Wednesday 18th May 2022 7pm on Zoom. April meeting will be replaced by the hustings.