

## WALWORTH SOCIETY MEETING

Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> October 2022 by Zoom

(Key notes and action points)

1. The chair, JL, welcomed people to the meeting
2. **Present:** Abby Burton Crisostomo, Aaron Burton Crisostomo, Amanda Sewell, Christine Tan, Darret Tomlin, Jim Beedell, Jeremy Leach (Chair), Liba Hoskin, Nick Wolff (Southwark Council), Neil Crossfield, Norma Lawrence, Vince Brown, Bridget Bell, Cllr Martin Seaton, David, Diana Cochrane, Duncan McNaughton, Inge Laursen, Richard Galpin, Isobel, Izzy Rogers, James Pockson, Jane Rogoskaya, Lucy Moore, Matt Rolfe (Southwark Council), Cllr Naima Ali, Stephen Lancashire, Tracy Crossfield.
3. **Apologies:** Peta Steel, Tyrone Landau, Frank Purdy, Shelagh Kavanagh, Roger Batchelor, Ellie Cook (Southwark Council), Cllr Natasha Ennin.
4. **Minutes and matters arising**
  - a. Minutes of the July meeting were agreed as a correct record.
  - b. Matters arising:
    - i. A Walworth Town Hall Community board update appeared in the most recent WS newsletter; Chair Manisha Patel will speak at our November meeting.
5. **Cllr Martin Seaton: Future of the Walworth Road**
  - a. Southwark Council officer NW provided an overview of Southwark Council's draft Economic Strategy 2022-2030 which is currently open for comments, which aims to achieve a fairer, greener, more resilient economy for Southwark.
  - b. The strategy is informed by an external evaluation of current economy carried out by PRD: the report available on website.
  - c. Deadline for comments is 30th Nov. More details at [www.southwark.gov.uk/economic-strategy-2022](http://www.southwark.gov.uk/economic-strategy-2022). Comments to [localeconomy@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:localeconomy@southwark.gov.uk)
  - d. CllrMS gave a detailed overview of the economic challenges and opportunities of the Walworth Road and Elephant & Castle areas, asking in particular if either a local resident local partnership board would be helpful or designating a formal Business Improvement District (BID) for the area.
  - e. Points raised in response included:
    - i. Noting the importance of the Walworth Road as distinct from the Elephant & Castle: its distinct heritage; its smaller, human scale, many attractive buildings, but mainly for local people, not a destination from outside, the lost sense of the village centre (jn Penrose St (West La)/ East St which needs to be re-established.

- ii. The need for a greater variety of business, the need for more support for small local business to get started.
  - iii. Lack of a leisure, entertainment and culture offer.
  - iv. No low-cost/affordable public meeting hall space for local groups.
  - v. The remaining 4-lane sections of the Walworth Road inhibit footfall and increase pedestrian danger; need to reduce to two lanes and expand pedestrian areas to encourage people to amble south.
  - vi. Many local traders are still not adequately rehoused following E&C redevelopment and they should not be overlooked.
  - vii. Still a problem of large amount of rubbish dumped by local business, and puddles in the road,
  - viii. Late night economy has changed and the road seems more threatening after dark.
  - ix. Walworth Road in very poor state for cyclists.
  - x. Large litter problem in the Walworth Rd.
  - xi. Big problem with graffiti.
  - xii. Poor quality shop frontages.
  - xiii. Begging, mugging and drug abuse a big problem.
  - xiv. Feels unsafe particularly for young women.
  - xv. Lack of local noticeboards.
  - xvi. Plenty of groups on the ground ready expand involvement in food system, but need support and access to buildings/property.
  - xvii. Problem of terms of late licenses not being enforced by Southwark which means night clubs and late-night shops selling alcohol are causing great social nuisance. This is a problem for not just on the Walworth Road but also in late licenses being granted in residential areas.
  - xviii. Noise & Nuisance Team officers not attending local Safer Neighbourhood Team meetings.
- f. In response to points raised CllrMS:
- i. Agreed to pursue late night licensing issues concerning E&C, Walworth/Camberwell Rd, and residential areas and will come back with proposed actions.
  - ii. Noted possible connections between drug and alcohol abuse in parks and late-night licenses for selling alcohol and will investigate issue and report back, but stressed need to take clinical rather criminal response to drug abuse. He asked that residents report such problems/incidents not just to police but also to local councillors.
  - iii. Agreed to look at the rubbish problem on W Rd, which has got worse recently; will take actions to improve situation/report back.
  - iv. Noted Walworth has been targeted by graffiti and he is currently working with officers to pursue culprits.
  - v. Noted that in order to bring together stakeholders in the area a 'characterisation' study might be useful, and offered to provide the WS with a recent study of Camberwell.

- vi. Raised the question of renaming the 'Elephant & Castle and Walworth' area with something shorter that would be beneficial to help people and businesses 'way find' and identify with the area.
  - vii. Will organise a further 'partnership meeting' to discuss these issues further.
  - viii. Announced that there will be a 'big stakeholders' meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> Nov to present their vision for the area.
- g. The chair thanked CllrMS and offered to publicise any future meetings called on the issue. And given the extensive nature of the issues covered CllrMS was invited by the chair to come back to discuss these matters further.

## **6. Kennedys**

- a. JP, from local architects IDK, gave an update on the partly HAZ-funded refurbishment of Kennedys. The work is going well, the interior is essentially complete, subject to building control sign off; but level of care being taken and how the HAZ funding is structured has meant that the rest of the work is not likely to be finished this year.
- b. JP would be happy to discuss possibility of finding community spaces within other historic assets in Walworth.
- c. Chair thanked JP and offered to carry an update on the work in the next WS newsletter.

## **7. Walworth Stories**

- a. Planning underway for a concert in March next year.

## **8. Planning matters**

- a. H1 office block application rejected unanimously at a recent committee.
- b. Rodney Road Hotel application has been deferred.
- c. Amelia St student accommodation application: will continue to monitor.
- d. Victory Park: local voices not been listened to; will examine closely expected planning proposals when they come forward.

## **9. AOB**

- a. The chair announced that, as part of Black History Month, Southwark Black Parents Forum is presenting 'A Seat at the Table - Black Representation in British Politics' a two-day exhibit highlighting the historical and active involvement of African and Caribbean communities in political and civic engagement, pre and post the Windrush era. The exhibition runs from 29<sup>th</sup> Oct at 231 Old Kent Road SE1 5LU – Sat 29<sup>th</sup> Oct (12pm to 5pm), Sun 30<sup>th</sup> Oct (12pm to 4pm).
- b. WeWalworth Burgess Park BBQ project video available, WS to circulate link.

**Next meeting 7pm Weds 16<sup>th</sup> November on Zoom.**