



**THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
**ST Thomas Aquinas Church Hall, Ham Common**  
**7.30pm Wednesday, 24th April, 2019**

1. **Welcome & introductions:** The Chair, Geoff Bond welcomed members. He introduced the packed agenda and hall and hoped to finish on time. It has been exceptional weather and displayed The Avenues to their full beauty.
2. **Election of the officers:** Re-election of Geoff Bond as Chairman - proposed by David Williams, seconded by Chris Hough. Members were in favour. Committee members rotate every 3 years and election will be en-block: Jo Chambers; Pauline Gizejewski, Treasurer; Claire McKenzie, Planning in Petersham; Ann Powell (sent apologies). Geoff Bond invited new members to the Committee saying the work was not onerous.
3. **Minutes of the 2018 AGM and Statement of Accounts for 2018:** These were emailed out to members and presented in a slightly different format with thanks to Julia Bailey. HPA is in a strange cyclical state of its 2 year cycle with our big event, Ham Open Gardens taking place in May. Minutes and Accounts approved by Members
4. **Introduction of Chris Rhodes:** New Head at Grey Court. He is very proud to stand before you. Chris hails from Manchester and joined GC in September 2006 slightly before Ms Bailey in Jan 2007. It has been a delight to be part of an outstanding, internationally recognised teaching school. His interview gave him the opportunity to express his vision and choose a picture of students in 2018. He chose the one with students beating the 'party popper' record (which has since been broken). His big regret is that no-one from the community was present. GC is the biggest employer in the area. It is his job to change that and looks forward to serving the community.
5. **Review of 2018/19**
  - a. **Phenomenal year.** Geoff said that 2018 had been a phenomenal year. Litter picks have been great fun. The Travellers had only stayed for 24hrs thanks to HPA members being astute in reporting which helped, particularly as the next day was Britain in Bloom judging!
  - b. **Ham Pond:** Vanessa Fison reported that following last year's work on green algae she was hoping to not have it return this year. Warm weather will have an impact so we have to fingers crossed. Huge thanks to Saturday volunteers along with those donning waders. Finally very sorry to hear David Yates passed away. Along with his wife Patricia, they started work on the planting. He will be sorely missed.

- c. **Past members:** In addition to David Yates, the Committee remembered 3 other members: Mike Holwill, the driving force behind Ham Fair; Russell Hart, a previous councillor; and Sir James Batten, who lived on Ham Common, who protected the Avenues and also the view from Richmond Park. We hope his legacy lives on.
- d. **Ham Common Woods:** Geoff said that we are lucky to have our environment officer Tasha Hunter. Geoff said that we have not got the results yet on toads, but the toad ponds have improved the area hugely. We have identified another site for a pond. Woodland management is being carried out with more sensitivity this time. Latchmere Brook is now looking beautiful thanks to HPA members. Also the Council have carried out a vertical trim of the Ham House Avenues, which makes for a beautiful vista.
- e. **Petersham Open Gardens 2018:** Jo Chambers reported that the 12 gardens raised over £27k. Proceeds going to Petersham Environment Trust, Vineyard Project and H&PA. If anyone in Petersham would like to open their garden in 2020, please see Jo.
- f. **Petersham Common:** Jo said that the bluebells are out and our part-time Woodland Manager, Ken's work is bearing fruit. Schools have been bulb planting. Litter is a big problem; HPA helps. Issue with teenagers on BMX bikes. The making of bike tracks is detrimental and dangerous. Some fencing has been put up to discourage cycling. Important to remember we are restoring the woodland for future generations.
- g. **Petersham Meadows:** Jo noted that the cows are not returning until mid-May. Thistle growth from last year has resulted in the need to spray before they return. The National Trust will keep them as long as they can but is weather dependent. There are 2 campers and we are working with Council to move them on.
- h. **Neighbourhood Plan** – David Williams said it has been agreed. This is a planning control document. It gives proper recognition in the planning process to the large open space / protect and enhance. Different in that we have no tube or rail and are dependent on buses. Borough's Local Plan: we consult on that. Key is that we can find ways to support or object. Makes it easier to protect space if clearly noted in these 2 plans. Lots of comments re the new plumbing shops' colours. Next time to include more detail.
- i. **No.1 Upper Ham Road.** Builder applied to have it demolished, was refused. "Inadvertently hit by skip lorry" over a weekend. Council is taking builder to court who has asked for trial by jury. With help from Richard Woolf we have provided historical evidence. It is a great loss of a historical building and also the soul.
- j. **St Michael's Convent:** Local Plan helped with trying to constrain the developers. Garden is large untouched space great for wildlife. David Yates recorded the wildlife and flora. Council designated it as an OOLTI. The planning application variants are coming thick and fast. Landscape plans being put forward are formal, but historically they were informal.

More gates being proposed, extra housing etc. A picture was shown of the actual site whereas the planning application shows a photo with a large straight path.

- k. **Remembrance events:** HPA was delighted to support numerous commemorative events from bulb planting, a booklet on the 41 men who died and the German School peace concert,
6. **Guest speaker - Gordon Elsdon:** Ham & Petersham, The Untold Story. Saxon influence was strong. Explained about tithings and how each home had more space. Example, from Thames Ditton to Kew was deemed to house 100 families! Link to Campbell clan - Red John. 13000 years ago hunter gathers camped at Thames Young Mariners, hunting fox, boar and bears. They harvested fruit and nuts.  
Memories were exceptional which brings an interesting perspective - we would consider them illiterate as they could not read and write, but they would consider us illiterate on the environment. Museum of London is full of artefacts from Ham so worth a visit. The catastrophic ice age resulted in the landscape we have today - it carved out the new Thames path and created Ham & Petersham. Pembroke terrace was the ridge formed during the 3<sup>rd</sup> ice age 25000rs ago. Much has changed landscape from 100,000yrs ago when the land was an African landscape.
7. **President's address:** Rachel Lipscomb thanked Gordon for his 100000 years in 25 minutes. Volunteers are required for Ham Open Garden on 19th May. Teas are in St Thomas Aquinas and a BBQ at Sea Scots including a wonderful quartet. July 8 is London in Bloom so help with tidying up etc. to ensure we look at our best. Ham & Petersham are nominated as finalists again. 13 July is Britain in Bloom; as it is bin day please take them in sharpish. Lots of additional improvements have happened since last year. Your Committee work tirelessly on your behalf. Help if you can and is a great way to meet new people.
8. **Looking forward**
  - a. **The Cassel Hospital Garden:** is hoping to allow access once a month. HPA is replacing the gate and working with them. Great for staff and patients.
  - b. **Duchess of Teck Fountain:** Not the prettiest monument but we are planning a small scale spruce up.
  - c. **Graffiti:** A great way to help is report it.
  - d. **Thames bridge consultation:** Hope you managed to give your views.
  - e. **Ham Close:** Expect a planning application next year for 450 homes. Appreciate some homes are not in a good state, but we want to ensure good homes, medical & transport facilities, youth and schools are provided.
  - f. **Tree planting:** Ham Copse wood chip path has been laid. Ham Common trees being felled and replacements planted over the next 2-3 years. Look to work on the paths for Petersham Environment.

- g. **German School:** We want to support good schools. New Planning Application has been made. It will affect Meadlands Drive residents. They plan doing more infill. It is for Petersham residents to decide how.
  - h. **Ham Polo:** We are proud of it but we need to ensure their planning applications are in keeping with the area.
  - i. **Cycling and 20mph:** We support moving people out of cars and new cycle route. Important to ensure we do not become too urbanised.
  - j. **Summer Party:** 7h30 at Elm Lodge 8th June and delighted to have Grey Court jazz band supplying the music. Enter through Dickens Close – tickets cost £20.
  - k. **Other Local Organizations:** Work with as many groups as possible. HPA would like to broaden joint working
9. **Amalgamation with Ham Amenities Group:** HAG does great things: Ham Fair, the Gatehouse Garden and interesting talks. The committees are exploring how the 2 groups could work together. There is the potential broaden out. We would need to form a new organisation structure. HAG is a Charity. Geoff then invited questions from members.
- a. **Q:** Crossover – I worry about workload.  
**A:** Amalgamation would stop duplicating roles.
  - b. **Q:** What about financials? Does HAG run a surplus? How will the financials work?  
**A:** We will work through issues over finance but HAG is a constituted charity and so needs to present accounts accordingly.
  - c. **Q:** what would the new organisation be called? ‘Amenities’ sounds like a utility company.  
**A:** Various suggestions have been made but the name needs to be clear to local people what the organisation is.
- We are proposing a **MOTION** to work towards HAG / HPA amalgamating. Commend the amalgamation for clarity and also strength in working together.  
**Motion carried.**
10. **Any Other Business**
- a. Policing was raised.
  - b. Mowing contract, can we have input? They have blitzed the cow parsley. We are planning a re-seeding cow parsley party.
  - c. Ham Village Green, are the wild flowers being replanted? Yes.
  - d. Community Conversation on 7th May.
  - e. Ham Fair is on June 8th.
  - f. Speeding motorbikes. Has anyone else been disturbed? Email HPA with where and time of the day.
11. **Meeting Closed** at 9h20 followed by drinks.