



**THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
(Held using Zoom)
7.30pm Wednesday, 2 December 2020**

1. **Welcome & introductions:** The President, Rachel Lipscomb, welcomed members to the first virtual AGM held using Zoom. Chairman Geoff Bond, Treasurer Pauline Gizejewski and Membership Secretary David Jowers were participating.
2. **Minutes of the 2019 AGM:** These were approved by both Members' ballots and the Members attending the meeting.
3. **Statement of Accounts for 2018:** These were approved by both Members' ballots and the Members attending the meeting.
4. **Election of the officers:** The re-appointment of John Asbridge and David Jowers to the committee was approved by both Members' ballots and the Members attending the meeting.
The Chairman, Geoff Bond, noted that two committee members had resigned since the last AGM: he thanked Claire McKenzie for her work on Planning in Petersham, and his predecessor as Chairman, Anne Powell, for her many years of service to the Association.
Geoff Bond invited new members to join the Committee saying the work was not onerous and very rewarding.
5. **Review of 2019/20 by the Chairman**
 - a. **Ham & Petersham Gold at London In Bloom:** GB congratulated Jean and her team (Zoe, Friends of HVG, Petersham Nurseries, PHS, HUG, Ham Pond, Ken) to name a few, on again winning Gold at London in Bloom. He added that a new organiser was needed to manage the 2021 entry.
 - b. **Ham Avenues, Ham Pond:** GB welcomed the provision by LBRuT Council of replacement gates on the Avenue after they were vandalised even if it took a lot of chasing. However, work was needed on the Avenues' trees particularly those on Melancholy Walk.
Ham Pond has needed a lot of work, particularly by Bill Millard. TCV have cut back the pond island and reduced the reed spread to retain views. GB also thanked the fantastic work by volunteers on the first Saturday of the month litter picks. He also commended the litter picking undertaken by young persons as part of the Duke of Edinburgh scheme has been much appreciated and encouraged by lending equipment.

- c. **Toads and Ham Common Woods, Latchmere Brook:** GB reported that new toad ponds had been dug by Frog Life and LBRuT in Ham Common Woods, and that a member had plans to start a Friends of Ham Common Woods group.
He added that Latchmere Brook would get much needed work when we are allowed to run events again.
- d. **St Michael's Convent, 1 Upper Ham Road:** GB noted that the developer, Beechcroft, had submitted two applications – for balconies on the original building, and for pedestrian gates onto Martingales Close - that were refused by LBRuT, but the rejection of the gates on Martingales was granted on appeal to the Planning Inspectorate. He added that it was frustrating that Beechcroft keep adding features that they did not originally ask for.
LBRuT were prosecuting the owner of 1 Upper Ham Road for demolishing without consent a Building of Townscape Merit within a Conservation Area. Unfortunately the court case had been postponed until 2021.
- e. **Ham Parade, St Richard's Square, Fox & Duck and Hand & Flower:**
GB said that Ham Parade had seen many changes and will keep on seeing them – he applauded the organization of Ham Parade market, wished the Tannas, who had run the Pharmacy for 40 years, a long and happy retirement, and welcomed the Parade's End bookshop.
GB praised Jean Loveland for her work on beautifying St Richard's Square, including the planting of bulbs and shrubs in the raised bed.
GB was concerned about the changes made to the Hand and Flower – these had been rejected by LBRuT and members were monitoring their removal in accordance with LBRuT's enforcement action. However, he praised Petersham Environment Trust for making the Fox and Duck an Asset of Community Value, and welcomed the changes to make it a more welcoming family pub. The New Inn was going strong, but there was concern for the future of the Brewery Tap.
- f. **Travellers, Graffiti:** GB was concerned that Travellers had twice visited Ham, adding that we need to be vigilant, and LBRuT needs to stay responsive and to ensure that the various agencies - Park guards, Metropolitan Police, LBRuT Legal team, etc) - work together.
All graffiti needs to be reported to the land owner or LBRuT and on occasion to Grey Court where they may be able to help.

6. Looking forward to 2021 by the Chairman

- a. **Richmond Park:** GB stated that there was much local concern about the changes to vehicle access to Richmond Park, and the proposed introduction of parking charges. The likely effect of these changes was more congestion on Petersham Road and car parking on Ham Gate Avenue and Church Road by visitors unwilling to pay for car parking. The Association has also expressed concern for those less mobile who may not have a blue badge and now will have reduced access to the park.

- b. New Planning Rules:** GB was very concerning that the new planning rules would give far less power for local people to influence planning applications.
- c. Ham Fair:** GB was looking forward to the return next year of Ham Fair.
- d. Tree planting on Ham Common and Petersham Road:** GB reported that, after repeated calls for action, LBRuT had agreed the following tree plantings.
 - i. Ham Common (replacing lost trees):**
 - 2 x Quercus robur
 - 3 x Aesculus indica
 - 3 x Prunus Tai Haku or avium
 - 1 x Liriodendron tulipifera
 - ii. Petersham Road mini arboretum (on the wide grass verge between the New Inn and Sandy Lane):**
 - 1 x Catalpa bignonioides
 - 1 x Fraxinus ornus
 - 1-2 x Cercis siliquastrum
 - 1 x Parrotia persica
 - 1 x Prunus serrula
 - iii. Orchard by the Walnut Tree Allotment:**

It was planned to plant apple trees on land between Riverside Drive and the children's playground in honour of Andrew Beedham, who had been instrumental in setting up the Neighbourhood Forum.
- e. Lighting and Conservation Areas:** GB reported that there was a lot of concern regarding the LBRuT replacement lighting programme replacing sodium lighting by LED lighting, regarding light pollution (as the replacement lights were brighter and whiter), the effect on wildlife, and the replacement in conservation areas of 'heritage' lights by modern street furniture. Cllr Penny Frost stated that she understood that 'heritage' lights would initially be replaced by standard lights, and would later be retrofitted with a 'heritage' kit. John Asbridge remarked of the negative affect of the new lights on Ham Street and the belief that a retrofitted lamp to a modern pole may look even worse.
- f. Ham Close:** The expectation is to reach the planning stage of the project in the spring 2021 and to start construction stages in March 2022. This will take the site from 192 units to 452. The concern is over access to the site as well as pressure on local services. The Ham and Petersham Association will be very vigilant to make sure the harm to the character of Ham and Petersham is minimised particularly in respect of the design.

7. **Amalgamation with Ham Amenities Group:** Sir David Williams reported that since the last AGM there had been much discussion by the two committees about how the amalgamated organization would work, and on its constitution. As HAG was already a charity it had been agreed that the amalgamated organization should also be a charity, and he apologised for the length of the new constitution, explaining that it was in the form recommended by the Charity Commission so as to ensure its speedy approval. GB then asked the members attending if they had any questions.

Q: What are the disadvantages of the amalgamation?

A: Both GB and DW agreed that they didn't see any disadvantages that could not be overcome: the two organizations complemented each others activities, and amalgamation would stop any duplicating of roles. The disadvantages considered were loss of identity for each organisation but with care these can be preserved in one organisation. For example, Ham Amenities Group will continue to be the main umbrella name for activities improving the amenities of the area. We also considered the loss of committee members but we hope the new organisation will combine both committees and will attract new people.

GB then proposed the Resolution to Amalgamate with the Ham Amenities Group to form the Ham and Petersham Association and Amenities Group: *The Ham and Petersham Association (HPA) approves the amalgamation of HPA and Ham Amenities Group (HAG), and the submission by HAG to the Charity Commission of an application for the creation of a new Charitable Incorporated Organisation to be called the Ham and Petersham Association and Amenities Group.*

He reported that the Association had received 30 postal/email votes in favour of the Resolution, and none against, and he asked if any member attending the AGM objected to the Resolution. In the absence of any opposition to the Resolution it was carried unanimously.

8. **Any Other Business:** A question was asked about phone masts. The latest phone mast application at Thames Young Mariners has been declined. However, there is a probability that new planning law will make it more likely that phone masts will gain permission. The HPA have encouraged the Neighbourhood Forum to find the least objectionable site which may prove to be the Rifle Range.
9. **Meeting Closed** at 9 pm with thanks to all who attended.