

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, Wednesday 23 May 2019 at Isleworth & Syon School

Present: Cliff Assi (Chairman), Laurence Hawcroft (Vice-Chairman), Barbara Stryjak (Secretary), Lis Guest (Street Rep Co-ordinator), Cecilia Hodgson (Communications Officer), David Pavett (Webmaster), Ed Locke (Membership Secretary), Sheila O'Reilly (Planning Officer), Colin Hume (Ward Panel, Crime & ASB), Paul Bains (Committee Member - Accounts)

There were about 120 OWGRA members and local residents present.

1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence. The Chairman welcomed those attending the meeting, and handed over the meeting to the Vice-Chairman.
2. The Vice-Chairman welcomed The Chief Executive of the London Borough of Hounslow, Niall Bolger, who gave a presentation on "THE FUTURE VISION FOR LB HOUNSLOW". Following this, there were a number of questions from local residents, which were fielded by Niall and Steve Curran, the Leader of the Council. The Vice-Chairman then thanked Niall and Steve for a highly informative talk and their responses to residents' questions.
3. After a refreshment break, the Vice-Chairman then introduced Lyndsey Feeley, the Visitor Experience Management from the National Trust at Osterley Park, who gave a presentation on "OSTERLEY PARK - CURRENT ACTIVITIES & FUTURE PLANS." Lyndsey then answered questions from local residents. The Vice-Chairman then thanked Lyndsey for a highly informative talk and the responses to residents' questions.
4. The Chairman then presented the minutes of the last AGM held on Wednesday, 23rd May 2018 for approval. The minutes were approved.
5. Chairman's Report. The Chairman reported on our activities in a busy year
 1. Held 8 Committee Meetings.
 2. Held 2 Public Meetings. The first was on Crime and ASB at Sky's offices, and the second is this meeting.
 3. Issued 2 newsletters delivered to some 5000 homes in the OWGRA area via our Street Reps and sent 24 e-newsletters to our e-mail list. Due to the introduction of GDPR data protection regulations, we are only able to send e-newsletters to OWGRA members.
 4. The OWGRA website is continually updated with records of public meetings and committee meeting minutes, our newsletters and e-newsletters, and latest news items. In addition this year we have undertaken a major update of the website, covering the following areas
 - History of OWGRA
 - updated/new sections on Planning (details of the Planning Process, how to respond to application and significant developments and our response to them).
 - Our Area (with sections on Traffic and Transport (rail, bus, etc.), Local Facilities and Reporting Problems (details of all the sports clubs in our area and how to report problems), Charities and Support and Our Councillors, and
 - Local Neighbourhood Watch and Crime.
 - More details about OWGRA and how it operates.We are currently working on new website content for the History of our Area, Crime and Neighbourhood Watch, and a new section on Recycling, Pollution and the Environment coming soon.
5. We are active on Twitter and our tweets feed into our Facebook page.

6. We have 60 Street Reps covering the 90 streets in our area, so we need more Street Reps. We are very grateful to our diligent Street Reps for their work in delivering newsletters and recruiting members for OWGRA.
 7. We had a membership of 448 in 2018/19. So far (as of 22 May), we have 380 members for the 2019/20 year of which 90 are new members. Payment is split equally between the 3 methods (118 cash, 150 cheque and 112 on-line).
 8. We get about 100 e-mails into the OWGRA e-mail in-box every week and endeavour to answer within 24 hours.
 9. Maintained regular contacts with other local Residents' Associations, our Councillors and the Council.
 10. Attended Council planning committee meetings, Isleworth & Brentford Area Forum, Residents' Association Forum, Ward Panel, Hounslow Highways, etc. and held meetings with a number of other groups including Tesco and the National Trust at Osterley Park. This typically involves us attending over a dozen meetings each month.
 11. Continue to work closely with the local Neighbourhood Watch to increase the numbers of streets in the OWGRA area with Neighbourhood Watches, and with the local police to prevent crime.
 12. Planning applications continue to take up a sizable amount of our workload. We prepared detailed responses to the planning applications for Adini, Osterley Park Hotel's application for a Shisha lounge, and worked with the Council and/or developers to amend proposals to achieve a much better outcome for residents on the Nishkam school netting right next to residents' gardens, the redevelopment of Brentford FC Training Ground on Jersey Road and the Access Storage development at Syon Lane/Great West Road. In addition we have opposed several conversions of family houses into a number of small, low-quality flats.
 13. As more people move into the area, and more jobs are created, traffic levels rise in response. Congestion increases along with more gridlocked roads and more parking problems. We have worked with local residents to address these issues in several areas, including the Red Route parking control scheme around the new Nishkam school, Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs) in several areas and traffic jams at rush hour in some back streets. We have a good relationship with the Traffic & Transport Team at the Council, and work through our Councillors to deal with TfL.
 14. We have started organizing Community Litter Picks to clear up litter from areas badly affected by people throwing rubbish on the street. So far we have targeted the undergrowth on Jersey Road and on Windmill Lane, yielding over 100 bags of litter.
 15. In the last year we have increased our focus on Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour in the area through working closely with the local Neighbourhood Watch group. We regularly include topics in our e-newsletter about how to reduce the risk of being a victim of crime. We have a section on our website giving advice on how to report crime or suspicious activity and steps you can take to protect yourselves.
 16. We have been supported in all our work by our Tony Louki, Unsa Chaudri and Richard Eason, and thank them for all their support.
6. Treasurer's Report. The Secretary then presented the Treasurers Report. OWGRA continues to manage its finances on a prudent basis. We continue to minimise expenditure, and as a result OWGRA is financially stable. The increased membership (versus last year) and minimised expenditure has again resulted in a surplus for the year. As a result we now have over £4,500 in the everyday Co-op account, of which £1,000 belongs to the Friends of Jersey Gardens, and still

£11,500 in the Manchester Building Society. It is important to continue in this prudent manner in case we need to put money into assisting a planning campaign such as the Campion Concerns or Keep Osterley Green one (as the latter ended up costing well over £40,000 when the costs of the Judicial Review were included). The membership fee remains at £5 per person per annum. The accounts were approved.

7. Election of OWGRA Committee 2019/20. The following new Committee was nominated and elected unopposed. Chairman: Cliff Assi; Vice-Chairman: Laurence Hawcroft; Membership Secretary: Ed Locke; Planning Officer: Sheila O'Reilly; Communications Officer: Cecilia Hodgson; Webmaster: David Pavett; Street Rep Co-ordinator: Lis Guest; Colin Hume : Ward Panel, Crime & ASB; Paul Bains : Committee Member - Accounts. Ian Speed was elected to the position of Treasurer. Barbara Styjak stood down as Secretary and that position is now vacant, together with the Events Secretary, Social Secretary and Publicity / Advertising / Fund-raising Officer positions.
8. AOB. The Committee thanked Barbara Styjak for her work over the last few years for OWGRA and presented her with a gift.

The Chairman closed the meeting and thanked the speakers and everyone for attending.