

St Stephen's Conservation Area Residents' Association

Minutes of Steering Group (SG) 18 July 2024

Present: Josephine de Souza (Chair), Jennie Sibley (Secretary), Jo Smith (Treasurer and Social Secretary), Jane Joseph (Vice Chair), Kristin Dean (Neighbourhood Watch), Jas Kumar (Neighbourhood Watch), Cheryl Young. Rajan Mendis (Planning) joined virtually.

1. **Apologies:** Chris Hern, Tessa Archbold, Sharan Puri.
2. **Minutes of Steering Group Meeting 23 May 2024** were accepted as correct.
3. **Social Events update:**
 - a. **The Big Lunch:** Was successful, though numbers were down on last year. First drink free had been funded from Communities grant. Agreed that this was better than all drinks free. This was not a fundraising event. Jo reported that takings were £289.50. £220.95 were spent on flyers and purchase of refreshments. The balance of £68.55 was put into RA funds.
 - i. Suggestions / improvements for next time:
 1. Possibly holding event on a Sunday. Women's Wimbledon Finals were on the same day.
 2. Flyers perhaps to be bigger next time.
 3. Jo said that more help would have been good in setting up.
 4. SSCARA table to be staffed properly.
 5. Jo trying to find storage for our community gazebos.

Action: Jo to see if storage possible in the Church. If not, to look for an alternative location.
 - b. **Open Gardens Event, 14th September 2024, 1-3pm:** Highlighting our Conservation Area. Information will be given at the Church garden as to which gardens are open for viewing. There will be a hand drawn map of the Conservation Area, showing these details. We need to recruit people to open their gardens, to guide the tours and people to hand out the maps and answer any questions people may have. Following the event for those who have opened their gardens and helped, Kristin will have drinks and nibbles in her garden from 4-6pm.

Action:

 - Kristin to set-up a subgroup to plan and prepare for the event.
 - All members of the SG to ask neighbours if they would be willing to open their gardens and report back to Kristin.
 - Jennie to give Kristin contact details to book Church garden and toilet facilities.
 - c. **Festival of Lights:** decided to move this item to next SG meeting agenda.
4. **Treasurers' Report:** Jo said that we have £1,333.98 in total in our account.
5. **Planning Update:** Various items were discussed, including:

- a. **Heritage lamp posts:** Josephine has sent an email to Cllr Kiani regarding the installation of heritage lamp posts in our Conservation Area [CA]. He advised at our last meeting with Councillors that he would look into this.
- b. **Looking to register St. Stephen's Conservation Area as being at risk via English Heritage:**
 - i. The Chair contacted Historic England about concerns that our Conservation Area is becoming at risk, due to the number of unsympathetic changes that are not being challenged by enforcement. Richard Parish, Historic Places Advisor, would have to work with Hounslow's Conservation Officer, Sean Doran, to make improvements to our CA. Historic England does not have authority to intervene on a unilaterally.
 - ii. Sean Doran doesn't think our CA is at risk. There is another area which is more at risk by comparison and would have higher priority for available resources.
 - iii. Article 4[2] Direction was proposed in the 2018 Appraisal of the CA. Sean Doran has advised that we would need to demonstrate that the majority of residents would want an Article 4[2].
 - iv. There is a lot of detailed work needed to show an area is at risk and the Council does not have the funds to do this work at present. If we undertake this work, it would need residents to help gather the evidence.
 - v. Meeting has been set-up with Sean Doran and possibly some of the Planning Team, Thursday 31st October.
- c. **Ward Walk suggested by Councillors:** The CA being at risk was raised at the meeting with the Councillors. A Ward Walk was proposed to see the issues involved after the General Election. The SG decided this ward walk would be for people who could best contribute on this subject rather than all residents. Potential participants in the ward walk are the Chair, Kristin, Sunita Ambasna, Chris, Rajan and Jennie. Preference is for the evening or weekend, but it may have to take place in office hours.

Action: Jennie to get a date for the Ward Walk from Cllr Chaudhary.

- 6. **Lower Traffic Neighbourhood [LTN]:** Rajan reported that the Council do not have the funds to implement a new LTN until the next financial year. In the meantime, we can start planning for next year to find out if residents want it, whether it should cover all the CA or just part. For residents to be able to comment on whether they want an LTN, they would need to be informed what as to what it is, how it operates and any other implications. It was stressed that we need to be clear about why we are looking into an LTN and point out many of the potential benefits. There was discussion about whether LTN is a suitable subject for our AGM.

Action: Jennie has asked Rajan if he can prepare a proposal for this meeting to draw residents' attention to the LTN scheme.

- 7. **AGM Preparation:** Decided to postpone the AGM to January 2025, due to the amount of work currently being undertaken by SG members. We want to show residents what has been done so far and what work is ongoing, as well as consulting them on several issues concerned with the RA work programme. We also need more time to prepare the information and paperwork for the AGM.

Action: AGM planning meeting Thursday 24th October, 7.00pm.

8. **Neighbourhood Watch:** More cars abandoned on Parkside Road. When the deep clean was done, 5 cars were ticketed in Parkside Road and these cars have not been removed to date.

Action: Jas to chase up with the Council.

- (i) **Camera in the alleyway leading to Hounslow train station:** Thanks were given to Jane and her helpers for clearing vegetation from the sightline of the camera put up by the Council. Dwayne Ewart, Council CCTV Manager, requested the RA to do this. He now confirms the sightline is clear.

Deals continue to be done out of sight of the camera though.

- (ii) The corner at the end of that alleyway needs to be enclosed so that people can't dump/pee in there etc. It needs paint, hedges cleared and cleaned. We need to get the Council to do it and tell the Council what happens on Parkside Road since the camera was installed.

Action: On the next Ward Walk raise the issue of closing off the open corner in the alleyway to prevent anti-social behaviour.

- (iii) **Safety at the Tesco end of St. Stephen's Road:** Many of the residents towards that end of St. Stephen's Road are feeling unsafe. There are drug deals and fly tipping in this part of St. Stephen's Road. People are hiding in the bushes by the alleyway leading to Nelson Gardens and the alleyway next the Barbers Shop. A camera has now been installed though possibly for only 3 months.

- (iv) **Safer Neighbourhood Teams [SNTs],** proposal for a joint meeting with the RA, Council and police SNTs to find out where issues should be reported, how they work together, getting a plan together to improve safety in the CA.

- (v) Kristen is not getting replies about the meeting of the Ward Panel with Councillors and police, so the RA representatives have not been able to attend. She is meeting with Mani from the Met Police SNT on 19th July.

9. **Website Update:** Professional photographs were taken at our Big Lunch event.

Action:

- Chair to share photos with Kristen for our Instagram account and with Jo, so that she can use them in her report to demonstrate how we have used the Council grant.
- Chair to invite the photographer to our Open Gardens event to take more photos, including of our Conservation Area.

10. **Litter:**

- (i) **Litter clearing:** agreed there needs to be litter clearing events for adults as well as children. We also need to organise a litter collection on the Thursday before our Open Gardens event.

Action: Kristin to organise litter clearing events for children and adults. Open Gardens event planning group need to organise litter clearing on Thursday before Open Gardens event.

- (ii) **Leaf clearing supplementary to the Council leaf clearing during heavy leaf fall:** Leaves are slippery when it rains and when leaf fall is thick further danger comes

from not being able to see the uneven points in the pavements. People also walk down the middle of the road to avoid leaves and uneven pavements.

It was suggested that the SG had too much on and that the RA should not organise this. Agreed to ask Ravi if he can get bags from the Council and hand them out to people willing to do supplementary leaf clearing and arrange collection of leaves by the Council as necessary. He did this last year after attending a meeting of the Hounslow Area Forum.

Action: Jennie has asked Ravi if he is willing to take on the supplementary leaf clearing project during heavy leaf fall. He has said that he will.

11. **Closure of St. Stephen's Church:** Concern was expressed that the committee overseeing things since the Church has been closed has little local representation. There is a new vicar with responsibility for St. Stephen's Church. We need to find out contact details.

Action: People with contacts at the Church to find out the contact details of new vicar and to put our concerns forward, as well as requesting to be involved in discussions affecting the Church. Jennie is willing to do this.

12. **Date of next SG Meeting:** 11.00am, Saturday 21st September 2024. Church Hall now booked.