

Minutes of Annual General Meeting of the Wandsworth Bridge Road Association (WBRA)

Date: 4th December 2023

Time: 19.30. by Zoom

In attendance from the Management Committee:

Gary Fannin - Chairman
Beatrice Goater – Deputy Chairman
Jonathan Goater - Treasurer
Natalie Lindsay – Secretary

Gary Fannin thanked everyone for attending the 3rd AGM of the association and introductions were made.

1) The minutes of the 2022 AGM were approved.

2) Appointments and resignations of the Management Committee

Bea Goater has resigned from the Management Committee.
Jonathan Goater remaining on Management Committee but stepping down as Treasurer.

5 new members to the Management Committee were nominated. There were:

Caroline Wolff – nominated as new Treasurer
Casey Abaraonye
Patrick Frank
Edward Jospe
Naz Zeneldeen

The Secretary Natalie thanked Bea Goater for her contributions to the WBRA over the years. New nominated members were invited to introduce themselves and give brief backgrounds. Natalie invited questions from the attendees for any of the new nominees. The new Management Committee members were formally approved and appointed.

3) Approval of the Accounts

Gary Fannin, the Chair, presented the financial statements for the previous year. He showed the breakdown of expenses vs income for the year. He highlighted the 3 Grants the WBRA received during the year; two for the Spring Fayre and one micro grant for a green roof installation over some businesses on WBR.

He also presented a breakdown specifically for the Spring Fayre event, showing monies received; these included Stallholder fees, Sponsors, donations and sales of shopping bags. He also presented a breakdown of expenses of the Spring Fayre, with the shortfall made up from the previous GLA grant.

The accounts were then dually accepted by the attending members.

4) Objectives of the Association

Natalie presented the official Objectives of the Association as a reminder of what the association is working towards. 5 main areas of focus were highlighted: Streetscapes, Travel, Climate, Businesses and Community and invited more support and help from the community.

5) 2023 in Review

A review of the year was presented by Gary and Natalie.

Gary highlighted the various **Events** that were hosted by the WBRA over the year, including the Spring Fayre, Music Nights, Cargo bike events, Christmas events, Christmas Carols and Pétanque.

Natalie discussed the **Engagements with the Council** and how this is a fundamental part of the WBRA's work in transforming the Wandsworth Bridge Road away from an unpleasant commuter through-route to a destination High Street. She discussed the outreach that's already taken place and the large amount of work still needed from the Council. The key is that the council is committed to implementing the changes to make the WBR a destination High Street. She highlighted the work they've already undertaken on the road such as the green cycle lanes at the junctions, the SIDs digital speed signs plus the ongoing redesign drawings.

The Council's Cycle strategy was discussed and how Natalie and Casey have been working with the council on making cycling safer and easier in the local area. Outreach has also been done with Walking and Cycling maps produced and shared with the local businesses and online. It was suggested that those who are interested in more bike parking and cargo-bike parking to let the council know via their online public portal.

Healthy Streets were discussed with the Council's commitment of more planting of more trees and installation of SUDs (Sustainable Urban Drainage) as part of their Clean Air Neighbourhoods.

Gary discussed **Road Safety** on WBR and the work undertaken with local Police Community Support Officers. Su Waterhouse spoke on the excessive speeding at night from cars and motorbikes and the anti-social issues from noise. Work with the police this year included Speed Checks and discussions of Speed Cameras or Average Speed Cameras for the road. Raised road sections and chicaning would help address the excessive speeds.

The closure of the Wandsworth Bridge by Wandsworth Council for repairs were discussed. The WBRA had written to Wandsworth Council about pedestrian and cycling provision during the closure. The layout was discussed to explain the repurposing of lanes to include the northbound bus lane and the dedicated cycle lane. The need for TFL to redesign the lights / junctions was key to helping to control the volume of traffic entering the WBR from the bridge. A properly designed junction at Townmead / Carnwath would allow for bus priority, full pedestrian light phase for safe crossing and controlling the volume of vehicles entering the road. If there is to be any queuing traffic it should be on the bridge rather than on WBR itself.

Business initiatives were presented by Gary; including 'How to Access the WBR' booklets / maps showing how customers can still visit the area with details of where to park, where the bus stops/ stations are, bike parking and walking distances. This was to counter the online discussion on specific Social Media sites that misled the public that visitors could not access any side streets without fines. Other initiatives that were implemented this year included the new OurBikes, the Shop Local Banners and events.

It was highlighted that more businesses on WBR have opened in the period since the Pandemic than have closed.

Gary also presented the various communications the Association undertook throughout the year, via newsletters, social media, website, guides, printed materials and community initiatives such as river clean ups and other green events.

Gary also discussed the various Planning proposals that the Association has engaged with over the year, including Albert & Swedish, Hurlingham, Lots Road and Earls Court developments.

6) Spring Fayre summary

Gary presented statistics from this year's Spring Fayre including number of stall holders (105), increased size of the Fayre compared to the previous year and finally official footfall figures of 14,000 from outside the area visiting the road.

7) Plans for 2024

Sub-committees: Natalie discussed how the scope of work for the WBRA requires more help from volunteers. She proposed the establishment of various 'Teams' to address the areas of focus. These include: Fayre & Events, WBR Road Designs, Climate Change, Planning & New Developments, Business, Road Safety, Markets and Active Travel. They could operate via WhatsApp groups. Gary and Natalie discussed the specifics of what each Team's focus would include and invited attendees to say if they were interested in joining specific teams.

During Road Safety discussions one attendee voiced concerns that the proposed designs would make the road less safe. He raised concerns about the chicaning and cycle provisions. Casey then spoke to explain various data from other such initiatives and why these types of designs have had positive affects in other cities. The attendee made it clear he didn't agree and still had concerns.

Natalie spoke about Active Travel and the various means of encouraging people to take up more cycling or walking rather than driving. Cargo bikes were discussed and secure on-street parking for these for residents. Other Active Travel initiatives coming up are Beat the Streets by the council, School Streets and Healthy Streets. She also discussed the Climate initiatives from the council including the importance of SUDs (Sustainable Urban Drainage) to prevent flooding.

Gary spoke of the proposal for a monthly or weekly market on the forecourt at Barton House, at the junction of Stephendale Road and the WBR.

8) Any other business

The question of the excessive HGVs on the road was raised and the idea of a weight restriction on the bridge was proposed. This would need to be raised with Wandsworth Council.

The unsightly empty shop fronts on the WBR were discussed and the idea of window decals / screens to help smarten them up was proposed.

No other questions were raised.

The meeting lasted 1 hour and 30 minutes.

Signed:

Gary Fannin

Gary Fannin (Chair)

Natalie Lindsay

Natalie Lindsay (Secretary)