

**Shad Thames Residents' Association
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING via Zoom
7.00pm, Wednesday, 21 October 2020**

Present –

Residents: 34 local residents attended
Councillors: Anood Al-Samerai, North Bermondsey
Humaira Ali, London Bridge and West Bermondsey
Speakers: James Hatts, SE1 News Website
Emma Sanderson-Nash, Butlers Wharf Riverside Trust
Core group: Nick Napier, Chair
Andrew McKelvie, Vice-Chair
Julian Griffiths-Searle, Treasurer
Kathleen Hogan Ehrlich, Communications
Jilly Frisch, Secretary

Opening

Nick Napier, Chair, welcomed and thanked everyone for joining STRA for the AGM. He briefly outlined how the meeting would proceed, mentioning that questions could be typed into the “Chat” facility, collated by Kathleen Hogan Ehrlich, and answered at the end of the meeting.

Nick said that no-one could have anticipated what the last twelve months have brought, and that this evening is to update local residents on –

- STRA’s responses – on behalf of local residents, and,
- providing information on developments and changes in the area.

Two individuals have stepped down from the Core Group since last year – Ryan Pilkington and Janet Morris. We are very grateful to both of them – particularly Janet, who had been a member of the Group for many years – for their support and commitment and we want to thank them for their time and energy to help make Shad Thames a better place to live.

The Core Group and elected officers will continue into the next year as follows –

Nick Napier, Chair
Andrew McKelvie, Vice-Chair
Julian Griffiths-Searle, Treasurer
Kathleen Hogan Ehrlich, Communications
Jilly Frisch, Secretary

Nick, as Chair, thanked the Core Group for their commitment and support over the past 12 challenging months

He outlined the **agenda** for the evening –

Chair’s welcome and opening remarks
Treasurer’s Report
Core Group Updates on current issues:
Potters Fields Park – Jilly Frisch
Tower Bridge Court redevelopment - Andrew McKelvie
Police Ward Panels – Julian Griffiths-Searle
Conran Building redevelopment – Kathleen Hogan Ehrlich
Butlers Wharf Riverside Trust – Emma Sanderson-Nash
James Hatts – SE1 News Website
Councillors’ Reports on local issues, including Streets Project

Questions

Report of Treasurer

Julian Griffiths-Searle, Treasurer, said it had been an unusual and exceptional year for STRA. The first development had been a move to online banking, and the second had been an initial small amount of financial assistance, and administrative assistance to the Butlers Wharf Riverside Trust. He then outlined the income and expenditure, including details of donations made to various bodies.

Income

| | |
|------------------------------------|------------|
| FilmFixer | £22,927.49 |
| Just Giving.com | £ 1,283.93 |
| Research Project (via Nick Napier) | £ 50.- |

Expenditure

| | |
|----------------------------|-----------|
| Administration | £ 376.24 |
| Street cleaning | £ 1,500.- |
| Local residential projects | £ 485.04 |
| Donations | £19,075.- |

Donations

| | |
|---------------------------|----------|
| Manna Society | £5,000.- |
| Compass School | £4,025.- |
| Southwark Foodbank | £4,000.- |
| SE1 News Website | £4,000.- |
| Southwark News | £2,000.- |
| Royal Star & Garter Homes | £ 50.- |

Potters Fields Park

Jilly Frisch, representing local residents on the Park Board, said that the Park had won a Green Flag award for the seventh consecutive year. The Park has been very busy since the start of lockdown with people exercising, dog-walking, meeting friends and family, but, with the weather being warm and sunny there had been problem with litter. All planned events over the summer were cancelled, which has had a significant effect on income, fortunately, a year's running expenses is always held over.

UEFA is planning to hold the EURO2020 tournament next summer, with the Park being part of the "Football Village". This will be a lucrative event for the Park.

St John's Churchyard has been refurbished as a community park, with Boules and Table Tennis available for local residents to use, and the children's playground has had a major refresh with a soft floor and a lot of things to do and climb on.

Tower Bridge Court

Andrew McKelvie, a member of the Tower Bridge Court liaison group set up in June, said three meetings had been held, in which terms of reference had been agreed, and appointment of an independent chair. The Construction Management Plan had been debated, and we have walked through the delivery route with one of the contractors. Although most of the noise etc. will be in Horselydown Lane, the traffic to/from the development site will affect most of Shad Thames. You will all, no doubt, have noticed that work at TBC has ceased. We have been in contact with the developer, as the liaison group is bound by a confidentiality condition, but I am allowed to tell you that "it's delayed, and we don't have information about a new start on site date". TBC are using STRA's website to publish their newsletters, so hopefully we will hear more news soon.

Police Ward Panels

Julian Griffiths-Searle represents local residents on both the North Bermondsey Police Ward Panel and the London Bridge and West Bermondsey Police Ward Panel. Each Panel normally receives information on the three main priorities the Police should concentrate on in the coming three months.

At the September meeting of the North Bermondsey Ward Panel one of the agreed priorities for the Oct/Nov/Dec period, was extra policing of Courage Yard and immediate environs, to discourage the invasion of older boys on bikes who, at times, take over Courage Yard and staircases – not only do they harass residents, they sit on the stairs smoking “weed”.

Julian, speaking from personal experience, said that Police do look at CCTV if a crime, such as stealing mobile phones, has been committed.

22 Shad Thames

Kathleen Hogan Ehrlich reported on STRA’s involvement with the developer of 22 Shad Thames, also known as the Conran Building. A flyer which the new owners sent to residents last month explains the proposed changes to the building – it can be found on the STRA website.

While Councillor Anood Al-Samerai may want to discuss her communications with the developers during her updates with them, I can tell you that I met with the developers three weeks ago along with Janet Morris, STAMP, and it was clear from our discussion that they have already had several conversations with a planning officer at Southwark Council about their proposed design and they appear confident that their proposal will be approved.

One of the goals of the meeting was to ask the developer to adopt a Construction Management Plan created for Shad Thames, which includes the establishment of a working group of residents and business stakeholders who meet regularly with the developer to maintain regular communication about the project and provide an official channel through which to feed back any issues with the project.

This model has been used successfully for the development of the Dixon Hotel, the work that’s just being completed at the Shad Thames Pumping Station, and it is in place for when work re-commences on Tower Bridge Court.

We are still waiting to hear back from the developer on this proposal.

In terms of gathering residents’ feedback about the proposed plans, we’ve had conversations with individual residents and have heard that conversations are going on within individual blocks. If this is an issue about which you or your block are concerned, the best next action would be to email STRA and Anood and let us know exactly what your concerns are so that we can then work out the best way forward as a group.

Thames Water

The construction phase will end and by 31 December 2020 with the installation of some large pumps. There is still some electrical and mechanical work that will take place inside the Pumping Station in January and February 2021. Parking suspensions will be in place on Maguire Street from mid-November until end-December.

Thames Water has been a very responsive partner during the project, having adopted the Construction Management Plan mentioned above. One of the things promised at the beginning of the project was to replace the two trees which were cut down on Maguire Street, as well as providing two additional trees for the neighbourhood. The two trees on Maguire Street have already been replanted, and a third tree has been planted on Queen Elizabeth Street. We anticipate that the fourth tree will be planted on Curlew Street within the next few months.

Butlers Wharf Riverside Trust

Emma Sanderson-Nash, Leader of the Trust, thanked everyone for following the progress of the Trust. She mentioned how important the site is to local residents, with it coming into its own during the pandemic, but it is clear it needs regeneration.

The late Sir Terrence Conran's input had been hugely valuable - he was clear that we needed expert design advice, which resulted in the London Festival of Architecture conducting the competition for re-design of the site.

There were over 50 serious contenders, which with the help of an expert judging panel has become a final list of six. The standard of all was very high. And now a winner will be selected.

To summarise some of the 'don'ts and the 'do's from the feedback received –

- don't clutter it
- don't block the views
- don't create opportunities for vandals
- don't create another Potters Fields Park
- don't use wood - it burns
- don't scatter giant planters around that can be ashtrays
- don't create nice places for rough sleepers
- don't want more building disruption

- add bins
- focus on appropriate lighting for day and night
- keep the chains and anchors
- reflect the industrial look of the site
- minimalist, streamlined, mature
- protect the path and open space
- add subtle greening
- be realistic about maintenance
- preference for building off-site and modular/evolving/flexible
- celebrate river
- bring community together

The next step is to go back to the winning designer – they will work on their design based on your feedback; the details of the next steps are complex, but we are mindful of these and we are working hard to propose a partnership with the owner (Petchey), the Trust (including stakeholders), and the Council.

It's an ambitious plan but after years of working on it we are convinced it is the best model and if we all get behind it, we can make it happen – and we must bear in mind that we will not accomplish anything unless we are courageous.

Emma thanked STRA for their advice and support, including Julian, for his financial help and advice,

and she thanked her co-trustees – Kathleen and Hamish.

SE1 News Website

James Hatts gave an overview of the history of news in SE1 and the role and challenges of the SE1News website in the community. He started by thanking STRA for stepping forward with a donation when the future of the SE1 website was looking very uncertain earlier in the year as the lockdown started. A donation from the United St Saviour's Charity was also helpful.

The story of the SE1 website as it is today goes back 22 years to 1998 when my family started a local printed publication and a website. In 1998 many of the big developments timed for the millennium were in progress or coming to fruition - the Jubilee line extension, the Millennium Bridge, Tate Modern, the London Eye to name a few. There was a lot going on locally and we saw the need, and the opportunity, for a publication to help inform people about what was happening in their neighbourhood.

That is what we've tried to do for the past 22 years. We've produced more than a thousand email bulletins, more than 10,000 news articles and more than 20,000 event listings - from jumble sales to fine art exhibitions. Everything we do is underpinned by the belief that well-informed communities are stronger communities.

But the story of community journalism in SE1 goes back much further, to the mid 1970s, when a paper called SE1 was launched. When we started the late 1990s version of our SE1 website and publication, it was partly to fill the gap left by the closure of this paper back in the early 90s.

I love looking at back copies of this paper, because it reminds us that whilst everything in SE1 has changed, at the same time nothing has changed – the same issues and controversies that filled the pages of SE1 back then have a striking similarity with the things I'm writing about today.

I'm pleased to say that a group of people who were involved in the old SE1 paper have recently been exploring the archives and will be putting on an exhibition of photos and materials from the 70s and 80s when the Covid-19 situation allows.

There's still a big question mark over how we make the SE1 website a viable proposition in the post-Covid-19 era, but thanks to STRA and others we are much better equipped to tackle that question. Nationally, we are part of an organisation called the Independent Community News Network which is hosted by Cardiff University's journalism department and supports grassroots news enterprises across the country. ICNN is able to talk to government and big companies on our behalf – so, for example, we've benefitted from some free advertising on Facebook in recent months helping more local people to find us.

Councillor's reports on local issues

Councillor Anood Al-Samerai for the North Bermondsey Ward, said the job of Councillors is to represent local people to the Council. She wanted to thank Council officers for doing an amazing job to keep everything going during Covid. And the fundraising that STRA has done had been admirable. Volunteers assisting the North Bermondsey mutual aid group helping local people in need had also been appreciated.

Anti-social behaviour has been a challenge. For example, boys on bikes – last year we organised a local meeting with the Borough Commander which resulted in more resources being allocated to

dealing with this, but it has been a combination of “carrot and stick”. She mentioned the two local community centres who are always looking for volunteers.

Noise is always a problem in Shad Thames. Particularly early morning rubbish collections during the pandemic contribute to this. Filming can occasionally also add to the problem. STRA has a noise reporting system, accessible via the STRA website, which can be used.

Licensing and Planning issues have to be monitored. Hamish has been leading on TBC, and I will deal with 22 Shad Thames. The developers have hopefully been persuaded to attend a meeting with local residents which I will host next Wednesday, via Zoom.

The Streets project has been held up because of Covid, so that regrettably is not a priority at the moment. Phase 1 – Queen Elizabeth Street/Shad Thames is complete; Phase 2 – the clutter around Horselydown Lane is pending.

The **parking** project has been delayed, again, because of Covid, but we are aware that local residents want restrictions over weekends. **Street lighting** is going ahead over the next six months.

Anood wanted to congratulate the **BWRT** Trustees on taking forward the re-design of the jetty. More than 500 responses received from local people is an amazing result. Local councillors were pleased to support the project with CGS funds. They had also supported STRA with CGS funds for additional street cleaning.

Anood said there is so much positivity in Shad Thames, she urged everyone to please keep looking after each other.

Councillor Humaira Ali for the London Bridge and West Bermondsey Ward, said we have a strong focus during lockdown on mutual aid, but we have also co-founded a Greener Bermondsey Group with the aim of lowering our carbon footprint through a lot of local initiatives. After Covid the next priority is the climate emergency – she urged everyone to join the Greener Bermondsey Group, she mentioned that SE1 has a high level of pollution. The formation of the Group also marked one hundred years since Ada Salford founded the Beautification of Bermondsey initiative. A vast number of tulip bulbs have been given away to be planted in several key sites.

Councillors are now receiving CGS applications which will be considered in November.

Mutual aid groups are keeping an eye on what is happening, and as winter approaches and any possible increase in Covid they will become more active. Nick said STRA will pull information together on volunteering opportunities in the neighbourhood and post it on the STRA website, as well as STRA’s Twitter account and Facebook group.

Summary of questions from local residents

Kathleen had been fielding questions on the Chat facility –

- most questions related to the **development of 22 Shad Thames** – the loss of light, the deadline for comments – 21 days from the date of the notice, but comments can be received right up to the hearing; the developer [mistakenly] did not believe there would be objections
- another main topic related to **boys on bikes**, which had been addressed by Anood, but if there are further questions please send them to STRA;
- **St Saviour’s Dock footbridge** – the motor which allows the bridge to open still needs attention, the contractor had advised that nothing would happen until after the end of the year, it was noted that the contractor has not been easy to deal with.

- **EWS1** – Humaira said she would answer questions on this; NN said that directors from the various Shad Thames blocks were interested. The Council of Mortgage Lenders has recently stipulated that an EWS1 certificate is required if a mortgage or re-mortgage is sought. Southwark Council has appointed an officer to start to deal with EWS. It was noted that EWS1 certificates can only be issued by the CML. Leaseholders/tenants are now putting pressure on their landlords to do something about this new requirement. Jilly said as none of the Courage Yard buildings had cladding, a letter from the managing agent had been accepted by 2 or 3 mortgage lenders in lieu of the certificate. Humaira said there was clearly now a need to put pressure on the CML to look at something more sensible. She said this is a voyage of discovery – if there are sufficient residents affected by this, maybe there is community action that can be taken.
- **Party Boats** – Anood said an application for a new very large mooring at the Swan Lane Pier, for the Ocean Diva, had been rejected – this had been led by Michelle Lovric, but colleagues in Borough and Bankside had been instrumental in presenting the case for rejecting the application, which demonstrated that party boats affect many areas along the riverside.

Closing Remarks

Nick Napier thanked the speakers and local residents for deciding to join STRA for this exceptional AGM.