



MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS OF BRENTHAM SOCIETY AND BRENTHAM HERITAGE SOCIETY

Thursday 22nd October 2009, 7.30pm, Brentham Club

Residents in attendance: 63 including Committee

BHS Members in attendance: 18 including Committee

Committee Members present:

Brentham Society:

Alan Henderson (Chair), David Ballard (Treasurer), Tony Miller, Heather Moore, Martin Mortimore

Apologies: Dave Hobbs, Tim Llewellyn

Brentham Heritage Society:

Sue Elliott (Chair), David Ballard (Treasurer), Richard Costella, Eleanor Cowie (Secretary), Heather Moore, Martin Mortimore

Also Present: Cllr Diana Pagan and Cllr Nigel Sumner

1. Minutes of the 2008 AGM and Matters Arising:

The minutes had been distributed to those present. As there were no matters arising, their acceptance as a true record of the meeting was proposed by Pat Baxendale, seconded by Peter Bigwood and duly agreed.

2. Brentham Society (BS) Chair's Report – Alan Henderson

Alan began by saying that 2008/2009 was his first year as Chair of the Brentham Society and whilst he had been involved with both societies over the years as Archivist and Newsletter Editor, this was his first time on the Committee and the top table.

Having taken over from Tony Miller, who had done sterling work, he had carried forward much of what was already in progress. As well as the usual array of social events, the ongoing issues were planning and enforcement, street lighting, relationships with other organisations, the ownership of common land within the boundaries of the estate and of course the proposed merger of the Society with the Brentham Heritage Society.

Membership:

The Society would not exist without its members, and he was pleased to report that the past year had seen a slight increase in membership. There were now just over 350 members, representing just over half of all households on the estate. This year, for the first time, an email contacts group had been established. Of the membership, just under half (172) had given a valid address. He thanked all the membership collectors, and Tim Llewellyn the Membership Secretary for masterminding the whole distribution and collection process.

Communicating with the Membership:

Communication in a number of ways was one of the most important roles for the Society.

Brentham News: With a slight makeover in format and style, three full colour issues of Brentham News had been produced during the year. The newsletter was distributed to all residents, not just members, as it was felt important that all residents were aware of the Society and might feel encouraged to support it by joining. Contributions from readers were always sought, but unfortunately it was rare to have any feedback. He expressed his thanks to former resident Michael McCarthy who continued as editor as well as producing it and organising distribution; to the street distributors and to Grimshaw & Co Estate Agents for sponsoring the production costs.

Website: Many thanks also to former resident Wendy Sender who continued to support the website **www.Brentham.com**. He encouraged those with online access to add the site to their favourites and to keep a watchful eye, as the site is regularly updated, making it the first source of information about Brentham.

Noticeboards: 16 noticeboards dotted around the estate are used to advertise Brentham events, and those of other organisations, such as the Brentham Club, that could be of interest to residents. He thanked David Denscombe for looking after the postings and Tony Mackersie for continuing to maintain the boards where necessary.

Email contact group: A new initiative this year had been the Brentham email contacts group. A Google group **brentham-contacts@googlegroups.com** had been set up and all those residents who gave a valid email address had been registered. This proved useful to email round reminders of social events and meetings such as this AGM. He emphasised that the contacts group is a secure group from which members are able to unsubscribe at any time and he encouraged anyone present who wished to join to provide their email address at the meeting.

New Residents Welcome Pack: It was aimed to provide every new resident on the estate with a welcome pack. Unfortunately the current version was now out of print but an updated version was in preparation – of which more later.

Relationships with other Organisations:

It was also important to maintain good relationships with other organisations, and the Brentham Society continued to work for closer co-operation with the Pitshanger Community Association (PCA) and the Brentham Club. There was now a liaison group meeting regularly to further our mutual interests and he thanked Tony Miller, who chairs the group. One outcome was the joint involvement in the Fred Perry Day event – more on this from Sue Elliott. Tony also attends the newly formed council-run Ward Forums (Brentham is split between two wards – Hanger Hill and Cleveland) to ensure that Brentham residents have a voice/input to any plans which might have an impact on our estate. This year Brentham Way benefited from a display of daffodils funded by the Ward Forum budget – small beginnings – however there was talk about possible traffic-calming schemes for Brentham, on which the Brentham Society would seek residents' views in the coming year.

Planning and Enforcement:

Ensuring adherence to the Planning guidelines applicable to a Conservation Area with Article 4 Direction was a key role for the Society. He was sure that all residents wanted to keep Brentham such a special place to live.

It had been another busy year on the planning front. The BS had continued to work closely with the Brentham Garden Estate Conservation Area Advisory Panel in commenting on planning applications affecting the conservation area. Since January there had been around 40 planning applications – the most (17) for extensions, eight for dormer windows and the rest for things like rainwater goods, gates, painting, paths, re-tiling, new windows and so on.

The speed and outcome of a planning application can be improved if there has been discussion before the application is formally submitted. The Panel, the Brentham Society and the staff in the Planning Dept of Ealing Council were all very happy to advise about what might be possible. Good quality plans were the key to a successful outcome and there were some examples on display.

He was pleased that residents and prospective residents were contacting the BS with questions about possible development to properties. Our advice was based on the Brentham Policy and Design Guide, the more recent Brentham Garden Estate Conservation Area Appraisal and many years of experience.

As always, we were guided by the Council's policy that 'any development must preserve or enhance the character of the conservation area ...'.

Concern had been expressed about the impact of new security gates on the character of the conservation area. The gates installed so far were of a more bullish design than expected, and differed from the approved design that had accompanied the applications. Progress had been hampered by changes of Council personnel, but the BS had recently met with the new gating officer and a planning officer to review the impact of security gates on the character of the conservation area. Residents would be kept informed of progress.

There was concern that, despite all the efforts of the BS to make residents aware of the responsibilities of living in a conservation area, some unauthorised work had taken place that was detrimental to the character of Brentham. When this happens enforcement action can be taken by the Council's planning department and the resident concerned may have to undertake remedial work. This causes distress and often entails expense. It was always best to check whether planning consent was required before undertaking any work.

Events and Activities:

As the photographs on the picture boards showed, this had been another successful year.

Although not organised by the Brentham Society, the **May Day** procession was nevertheless a major event in the Brentham calendar. Unfortunately the weather had not been kind this year and, for the third year running, dancing round the maypole had been held in St Barnabas' church hall. Whilst a number of BS members were involved on the day, thanks were due to the small band of volunteers (in particular Pat Chapman and Pat Baxendale) who constitute the ad hoc committee and make the whole event happen; they were always looking for helpers.

Carol Singers had raised £164 for the Childhood Eye Cancer Trust and he thanked all who supported the event by singing, collecting and giving last December.

The **Family Cycle** had only attracted a small but enthusiastic group this year. The **Open Garden Day** however was very successful, with over 150 visitors, and raised £982 which was donated this year to the Alzheimer's Society. Thanks were due to the organisers (Gina Jenkins and Laura Mackiewicz), to those who opened their gardens and to all those who visited.

The annual **Strawberry Tea** continued to be a high point in the local calendar, with a full attendance, including Steve Pound MP, the Mayor Cllr Barbara Yerolemou, and local councillors. He thanked Barbara Murray for once again hosting the event in her garden.

In addition the Society had been involved in some one-off projects.

The year had seen the culmination of previous years' involvement in replacement of **Street Lighting** to bring it up to new standards with suitable-style posts and lamps. Most streets on the estate had now seen some activity and the remaining ones were scheduled for completion by August 2010.

Common Land: The other project had been the determination of ownership of common land within the boundary of the estate. Much of the land owned by the original Ealing Tenants Ltd had previously been sold off – such as the green opposite the Brentham Club and the majority of allotment plots, many of which had been sold to individual residents. However, one group of allotments, behind St Barnabas' church, had been sold together with Holyoake House to a property investment company, while Ludlow/Denison Green and the Brentham Way/Fowlers Walk garages site were still owned by Grainger PLC. Alan thanked Geoff Baxendale for trawling through Land Registry details to determine ownership in each case.

When Grainger PLC informed the BS that they were considering selling their holdings at auction, it was felt that the Society did not have the funds or the expertise to buy and manage either site, but would be more than willing to help any resident or group of residents to pursue the purchase themselves. In the case of Ludlow/Denison Green one resident had taken the initiative, acting on behalf of all the residents adjoining the Green, and had secured a deal with Grainger. As for the allotment land behind St Barnabas church, again one resident had taken the initiative to see if the company would be willing to sell. In the case of the Brentham Way/Fowlers Walk garages site, a Brentham Way resident was in discussion with Grainger.

Alan was aware that there had been some criticism of the way the matter had been handled by the Society, particularly in the manner and timing of communications. The Committee had taken what was

thought to be the best approach at the time – and hopefully, thanks to others, the sites would now all remain in local ownership. He expressed the Society's willingness to get involved if members so desired.

Next year:

The BS wanted to increase membership and improve communication further with members. The updated and impressive new Residents Welcome Pack was almost ready for printing and the aim was to issue a copy in January to every resident initially, and then to ensure that new residents were given a copy when they moved in. Copies would also go to Estate Agents. On average there were about 34 sales of properties on the estate each year – a 5% turnover. The pack will include a brief history of the estate, background information about the Society and some useful information on planning guidelines and how and where to get advice. Alan expressed his thanks to the small group (Dave Hobbs, Sue Elliott and Rosanna Henderson) who had got this project off the ground.

The BS would also continue to build relationships with other organisations and to seek residents' views on traffic calming measures to inform the relevant Ward Forums.

Alan asked those present to submit any ideas on what the BS should be doing during the question and answer session.

Finally he gave special thanks to all members of the Brentham Society Committee for the help and support they had given him as Chair during the past year.

Questions:

In answer to a query, Alan confirmed that the Fowlers Walk garages were for sale, and that the allotments between Kingfield Road and Fowlers Walk were in private ownership and not for sale.

Several people asked what would happen to those who were renting Fowlers Walk garages. Alan replied that this was a freehold parcel of land with 16 garages on it and rights of ways over it. As the site produced relatively little income for the Grainger Trust, they were now willing to sell, but would not sell the garages individually. A lease would be drawn up with one person holding the freehold. The individual garages could then be sold or possibly leased. Alan passed on the contact details of the purchaser to those interested.

3. Brentham Heritage Society (BHS) Chair's Report – Sue Elliott

Fred Perry's Centenary:

The main event of the year had been celebrating Fred Perry's centenary and his association with Brentham and 223 Pitshanger Lane.

The BHS application to English Heritage for a Blue Plaque – lodged in May 2007 – was finally given approval in principle. Now the English Heritage historical advisors would produce a detailed historical report. The Blue Plaque Panel recommended that plaque should be in place for 2012 to coincide with the London Olympics.

Fred Perry Day on 11th July had been celebrated in association with the Brentham Club. A temporary plaque had been produced by Pitshanger artist Judy Graham and unveiled by 96 year-old Kaspar Hocking, who had been to school with Fred Perry and had played table tennis with him. Steve Pound MP, the Mayor Cllr Barbara Yerolemou and other Councillors were in attendance and the unveiling had been followed by cream teas and the presentation of the Fred Perry Cup at the Brentham Club. Martin Mortimore – our resident documentarist – had produced a short film which would be shown after the refreshment break.

In September there had been a talk at the Club by Jon Henderson, whose biography of Perry came out earlier this year. Perry's link with Brentham was now much better known, having been widely reported in the press and in BBC local TV news.

Other activities:

Merger: In preparation for the possible merger the BHS membership had been balloted on expanding the Objects of the BHS in January/February.

Visitors: There had been a number of visitors during year, including David Thompson from California, who specialises in the history of the Co-operative Movement.

Annual 'educational' trip: This had been delayed, but a visit to the Museum of Brands, Packaging and Advertising in Notting Hill would happen next month (on Saturday 21st November at 3pm).

Book and DVD sales had raised over £600.

The **Website** had gone from strength to strength, with more than 17,000 hits to date, and had received positive feedback. Sue thanked Wendy Sender for keeping the news up-to-date.

Open House: This had taken place over the weekend of 19th/20th September as part of London Open House. Sue thanked Jackie Moss for organising it and Clive Hicks for leading the guided tours. On each of the two days about 25-30 visitors new to Brentham had taken part in the tour.

Postcards had been a priority for the year. The preparation of a set of Brentham postcards was now underway and Sue urged those present to choose their favourites from the exhibition of possible designs.

Architecture publication: Less progress had been made on this project, which had been reported on at last year's AGM. A mass of fascinating raw material still awaited a major editing job to turn it into user-friendly form, possibly accessible online via the website. Sue appealed for people with editing and/or IT skills to help take this important initiative to fruition.

Sue concluded her report by saying that, if the merger went ahead, this would be the end of the Brentham Heritage Society after ten years as a separate entity. There was reason to be proud of its achievements in spreading the word about Brentham and its unique heritage. This work would not cease but would, she confidently expected, continue under the umbrella of the new Brentham Society.

4. Treasurer's Report (David Ballard)

Copies of the Accounts had been distributed to those present.

David began by thanking Andy Akerman, who lives on the Estate, for carrying out the audit of both sets of accounts, something he does each year.

He was pleased to say that both accounts had been given a clean bill of health, and both societies had healthy finances.

(a) Brentham Society

Income at first glance appeared to be only three-quarters of last year's income, but if the incidentals such as the carol singing, the grass cutting on Ludlow/Denison Green and the Open Garden Day were excluded, the income for this past year was very similar to the previous year. In particular, the subscriptions and donations had held up well. Although those incidental items just mentioned came into and out of the BS account, they were not actually Brentham Society business.

On the expenditure side, the story was much the same: no great change from the previous year, and a healthy surplus at the year end.

Total funds at the end of the year stood at **£9,691** compared to £9,035 last year.

(b) Brentham Heritage Society

The accounts again showed a successful year, with a small surplus. Although book sales had been well down, sales of the DVD were slightly up. The Society had received £100 in compensation from the NatWest bank, for their incompetence, and £75 from the All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club for loaning them some material for their Fred Perry exhibition.

Total funds at the end of the year stood at **£4,485** compared to £4,337 last year.

David was asked whether there was a stock of books stored, which could be shown as an asset; he replied that they were not shown as an asset, but only appeared as and when they were sold.

Adoption of the BS accounts was proposed by Tony Miller, seconded by Bevan Jones and agreed nem con.

Adoption of the BHS accounts was proposed by Ken Butcher, seconded by Barry Murphy and agreed nem con.

5. Special Resolutions

David Ballard explained the background to the resolutions. The Brentham Society (BS) had been founded in 1970 and the Brentham Heritage Society (BHS) was set up in 1999 as a charitable body able to accept donations. However, the existence of two societies was confusing for residents and could adversely affect membership; it also resulted in duplication of the work of the Committees. For these reasons the Committees had considered merging the two societies into one. To retain charity status, the BS needed to merge into the BHS, but the BHS objects as they stood were not wide enough. The first step had therefore been to widen the BHS objects in a form which was acceptable to the Charity Commission, while retaining the elements specific to the BHS*.

BHS members had been asked for permission to register the revised objects with the Commission in February. A revised constitution had also been redrafted for the combined Society, derived from both previous constitutions, in a form which complied with the Charities Acts. Finally, it was proposed that 'Brentham Society' would be a better name for the combined charity.

Pam Turner asked whether the proposed Constitution implied that subscriptions were due from all individuals over 18 in a household. David replied that this had not been the intention and the relevant clause would be changed to make it clear that only one subscription was required per household. Pam also queried a clause about employing and paying pensions to staff, but it was explained that this was part of a standard set of clauses for charities and was not intended to be used.

Peter Bigwood asked whether there was anything that the BS would no longer be able to do as a charity, to which the answer was 'no'. David also confirmed that all documentation, including the Constitution, should show the charity number.

Alan Henderson asked for a vote on the following resolutions:

1. In accordance with Clause 9.5 of the Constitution, the members of the Brentham Society resolve to wind up the Society and to join the Brentham Heritage Society, with the funds of the Society being transferred to the Brentham Heritage Society.

Proposed by Barry Murphy, seconded by Bevan Jones and approved nem con.

2. In accordance with Section 74D of the Charities Act 1993 as amended by the Charities Act 2006, the members of the Brentham Heritage Society resolve to adopt the revised constitution (including the change of name to the Brentham Society) attached to the calling notice for the 2009 Annual General Meeting.

Proposed by Paul Fodrio, seconded by Pam Turner and approved nem con.

Alan Henderson explained that as the Brentham Society would now have a larger remit, it would organise its work in a different way, with fewer Committee meetings during the year, and more work delegated to informal specialist groups covering Heritage, Planning, Communications and occasional ad hoc projects.

He encouraged volunteers to come forward and make a contribution to one of these specialist groups (without needing to be on the main committee).

***Revised Objects of the Brentham Society**

For the public benefit for the following purposes in Brentham Garden Suburb:

- (a) To stimulate public interest and care for the amenity, beauty and character of Brentham Garden Suburb
- (b) To preserve, protect and improve the amenity, beauty and characters of Brentham Garden Suburb, including the features of historic, architectural, landscape and public interest there
- (c) To promote high standards of planning and architecture in Brentham Garden Suburb
- (d) To advance the education of the general public in the heritage, architecture and development of Brentham Garden Suburb, in particular by the collection and preservation of photographs, documents, films and other artefacts that relate to the history, architecture or development of Brentham Garden Suburb

6. Election of Brentham Society Committee 2009-10

The revised Constitution allowed for between four and nine members and up to four co-opted members. The following members of the previous BS and BHS Committees were willing to stand again:

1. Alan Henderson (Chair)
2. David Ballard (Treasurer)
3. Eleanor Cowie (Secretary)
4. Sue Elliott
5. Dave Hobbs
6. Tim Llewellyn
7. Tony Miller
8. Heather Moore
9. Martin Mortimore

No other nominations for new members had been received.

Alan proposed that unless there were any objections, an en bloc vote should be taken for the Committee members standing again and all were elected nem con.

7. Garden Awards

Sally Kelly said that she had very much enjoyed viewing the gardens, together with the other judges, Gilda Kelly and Nita Davis. She went on to announce the winners of the three seasonal awards:

Spring Award: 33 Ludlow Road

Runners up: 63 Meadvale Road, 51 Ludlow Road, 27 Denison Road

Summer Award: 16 Woodfield Crescent

Runners up: 46 Brentham Way, 91 Fowlers Walk, 58 Holyoake Walk

Autumn Award: 46 Meadvale Road

Runners up: 1 Neville road, 17 Woodfield Avenue, 50 Meadvale Road

The **Rose Bowl** for overall excellence was awarded to Brian Vaughan. Brian had for many years led the appreciation and judging of the estate's gardens, making him previously ineligible for an award, and it was felt that his award of the Rose Bowl this season was well deserved.

8. Members' Questions

- Paul Fodrio asked how residents could improve the thermal efficiency of their houses without ruining their character. Pat Baxendale replied that English Heritage had addressed this issue; at the moment Conservation Areas were exempt from the regulations, but advice on e.g. internal linings and secondary double glazing was given. Ian Brocklebank revealed that he was writing the English Heritage guidelines on increasing the thermal efficiency of traditional constructions. From April 2010 there would be a new definition of traditional solid-wall buildings. More science is going on which shows that these buildings behave better than the science would predict.
- Nigel Dodd had noticed that new street signs had recently started appearing – were there any plans? Tony Miller replied that he had been talking to the street management group on the Council about a survey of existing street signs in Brentham so that existing signs could be preserved or replaced. We were now working with the Council and he is undertaking a photographic survey of all street signs. They would not be removing any more of the old signs.
- Peter Bigwood asked whether there had been any consultations with the Brentham Club about replacing the bowls pavilion [which had been destroyed in an arson attack]. Tony replied that he had been consulted by the architect responsible.
- Maureen Monahan asked for clarification on the issue of alley gates. Heather Moore explained the BS's position. Residents had voted to have them and a design had been approved but those installed were not to the submitted design; there were also siting issues. The gating and planning officers now understood the situation and an architect was producing a working drawing of a suitable design. As regards siting, there were some alleyways which the Panel, the BS and the Conservation Officer did not want blocked.

In Denison Road, where terraces were joined by brick arches, it was not appropriate to put gates to ruin this feature. They were trying to design a gate to fit the arch. Pat Baxendale pointed out the difficulty of getting the Planning Officer, Conservation Officer and gating department to co-operate. The existing new gates would be replaced.

- Cllr Nigel Sumner added an update: Gating of Meadvale had been abandoned. The Council were postponing consultation about a Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) in Mount Avenue for fear of 'CPZ creep'. Following the recent Hanger Hill Ward meeting, he encouraged BS members to get involved in the Friends of Montpelier Park; Sue Elliott asked whether residents would be interested in helping to plant shrubs.
- Jane Robinson reported that on at least three occasions in the last fortnight, lead had been stolen from the flat roof between St Barnabas Church and the Church Hall. She asked anyone hearing or seeing anything suspicious to report it to the police.
- Krystyna Dabrowka expressed her thanks Jacqui and Roman Nemecek for their work in preventing Ludlow-Denison Green from being sold at auction.
- Tony Miller drew residents' attention to the importance of the Development Plan, which would affect the whole of Ealing and would shape the future of the borough until 2026. Although there was a legal requirement for consultation, most people were unaware of the Plan. However, the planners were still interested in having our opinion and he appealed to people to get involved.

Finally Alan Henderson thanked all for attending and the meeting closed at 9.35pm.