

Brentham Society
Minutes of Annual General Meeting (2016/17)
Thursday, 15th March 2018, 8.00 p.m. Brentham Club

Members in attendance: 30 plus Committee

Committee members present: Gina Mallin (Chair), Geoff Baxendale, Clive Evans, Martin Mortimore, Alan Henderson, Barn Cleave, Ann Wolf

Apologies: Andy Akerman, Richard Costella, Tony Miller

1. Welcome

GM welcomed everyone to the meeting. She introduced Mary Done, a volunteer guide from Kew Gardens, who was going to give a talk on the history of Kew.

2. Talk by Mary Done

3. Garden & Rose Bowl Awards presented by Mary Done

GM thanked Mary Done for her interesting talk and asked Laura Mackiewicz of the Brentham Society Gardening Club to announce the winners of the Garden awards. Laura Mackiewicz said the judges had very much enjoyed looking at the estate's front gardens during the course of the year, although some were marred by the presence of wheelie bins. Some sort of camouflaging would be welcome.

Spring award – Mrs K. Shaw, 3 Neville Road

Summer Award – Anne and Stefan Jasinski, 14 Woodfield Crescent

Autumn award – Kirin & Darshan Aulahk, 20 Ludlow Road

Rose Bowl award – Ted Nye, 42 Holyoake Walk

4. Refreshments

5. Minutes of the 2017 AGM and Matters Arising

The minutes had been distributed to those present and their acceptance as a true record of the meeting was duly agreed by a show of hands. There were no matters arising.

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6. Committee Reports

(a) Chair (Gina Mallin)

GM said that the Brentham Society had had a busy year. The finalised draft Windows Report had been put on the BS website. A paper copy could be provided if required. She hoped it would be of help to people wishing to repair or replace their windows. She asked Geoff Baxendale to give an update on planning over the past year.

GB's report was as follows:

“A good proportion of this Committee's time is taken up with planning matters. We wanted to make it easier for you to see what is happening and what we are doing. So over the past year we have tried to set up ways to give you more information on the Planning Applications which are being made, what the applications are for and how any resident can comment to Ealing Council Planning Department, and also to show any trends in the type of applications now being made. Sometimes there are misunderstandings on how the system works. It is you, the residents who make the planning application and Ealing Council are the ones who approve or refuse. This is not a decision we can make. What we do as an Advisory body is to comment to the Council on each application on the basis of the Brentham Design Guide which is a Council published document for our conservation area. This can be read or downloaded from the Brentham website. Just commenting that we love or hate something is not useful. To be effective, comments must refer to an aspect of the Design Guide as to why we feel an application should be approved or rejected.

So that all Brentham residents can see what planning applications are being submitted we thought it a good idea to post them on the BS website for everyone to see. We have done this. There is a 3 week time limit for making a comment. This is something anyone can do and by logging onto the Council website comments which have already been made can be read. We have also set up a planning sub-committee to meet and submit our comments within the 3 week time limit. The final thing we have done so far is to publish on the Brentham website a yearly analysis of the applications which were made and the Council's decisions. Last year (2017) there were 41 planning applications submitted. Of these 34 were granted, 4 refused, 1 withdrawn and 2 are still pending. Almost half of the applications were for extension or loft conversions, around a fifth for new windows or doors, and the remaining third for garden buildings, paths or boundary works (hedges, fences etc.)

As can be seen, the overwhelming proportion of applications are granted and much of this due to the large amount of pre-application advice which we give, often involving a site visit. Also, when we, as a committee object to an application this is usually done together with suggestions on moving forward. In other words, how the submission could be modified and made

into one we would recommend. These suggestions are often taken on board.

As I said at the beginning, we are trying to give you the information on the planning applications being made so that, if you wish to, you can put forward your own views. Also we want you to be able to see what we are doing and saying on your behalf.”

GM thanked GB for his report.

GM said that last year a survey had been sent out to residents so that BS could get a better idea of what residents wanted. It had been disappointing that less than half the estate's residents had responded but results had been published on BS website.

GM said that she was concerned about the state of the Estate's twittens. A plan of the twittens had been drawn up by Geoff Baxendale which showed that about half of them have been gated. GM asked Clive Evans to talk a little more about them from an historical context. CE said that “Twitten was one of several names given to a path running between two fences or hedges. The twittens on the Brentham estate play an integral part in the design of the estate. Originally they would have been used by tradesmen to deliver coal, collect dustbins etc. It was also a safe place for children to play. Some of the twittens are built around open garden spaces and allotments. Early in the life of the estate, all of the houses and the grounds – including the twittens - were owned by Ealing Tenants Ltd. Nowadays the houses are individually owned and the main reason for the pathways is no longer relevant. It is not always obvious who owns the twittens or who is responsible for their maintenance. Many householders see the twittens as a security risk and are encouraged in this by the police. As a result many of them have been gated. Many more are overgrown and impassable and rubbish is being left in them. CE finished by saying that the twittens were deteriorating and he felt something needed to be done to prevent them getting in a worse state. “

GM said she would like to start a working group to consider our twittens and research the laws concerning right of access etc. She would also be interested in getting together a practical working group to clear the junk that had been left in some of the twittens and make them passable and clean again. She would be delighted to hear from anybody who had any ideas on the subject or would like to join either of the working groups.

GM said that our idea of setting up a National Association of Garden Suburbs was a work in progress. As a basis for this association Pat and Geoff Baxendale had started to compile a Garden Suburb Directory. It would cover the whole of the country and would include both those suburbs which were in conservation - areas and those that were not. Entries would give a short description of garden suburb and address with links to local amenities. GM thought this was a tremendous start to the idea of a national association and thanked PB and GB for their work on this.

GM said that she wanted to thank the many Brentham Society volunteers for all their work during the year. Without their help annual events like the Strawberry Tea and Open Garden day would not be possible. She especially wanted to thank Mike Gandon, Membership Secretary and Martin Mortimore Editor of Brentham News for all their work.

Special thanks too to Tony Miller, a long-standing Committee member, who was stepping down this year. Ann Wolf BS Secretary and Patrick Mylon were also standing down.

GM wanted to thank her colleagues for all their support over the year. She also said that the Committee was always on the look out for new members and anyone interested in joining should contact her.

GM said she was very grateful for all the work and support from Ann Wolf and presented Ann and Tony Miller (in his absence) with a bunch of flowers as a thank you.

(b) Treasurer

In the absence of the Treasurer CE gave this year's report. Overall merchandising sales were doing well. Finances were about £200 better off than last year. The Tower Fund of about £23,000 was still sitting in its own bank account.

c) Stuart Thomson

GM invited Stuart Thomson (Chair, Brentham Club) to tell the meeting about how plans for the future of the Club were progressing. ST said there was a backlog of maintenance issues and insufficient funds for the future needs of the Club. As a result of this financial crisis the Brentham Club Committee were talking about plans to redevelop some of the site by turning half of it into residential flats which would be rented out. He said plans were not yet detailed enough and needed to be agreed first by the Club's members. He also needed to get informal feedback from Ealing Planning Department. Once this had been done then meetings with the Estate's residents and any other interested parties would be held. He hoped that plans would be ready in two to three months time.

7. Election of Committee 2017/18

The BS Constitution allows for between four and nine members and up to four co-opted members. Three members have resigned from this year's Committee – Tony Miller, Ann Wolf and Patrick Mylon. The following members of the previous BS Committee were willing to stand again:

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| 1. Virginia Mallin (Chair) | 66 Fowlers Walk |
| 2. Andy Akerman | 55 Meadvale Road |
| 3. Richard Costella | 64 Brentham Way |
| 4. Martin Mortimore | 54 Fowlers Walk |
| 5. Clive Evans | 50 Denison Road |
| 6. Geoff Baxendale | 18 Ludlow Road |
| 7. Alan Henderson | 47 Meadvale Road |
| 8. Barn Cleave | 31 Denison Road |

No nominations for new members had been received. The Chair proposed that unless there were any objections, an en bloc vote should be taken. Their election was proposed by Peter Bigwood and seconded by Maggie Bukowska and all were duly elected.

8. Q. and A

A resident, Susan Haisman who lived in Woodfield Avenue said that the residents in her street had tried to keep the twittens behind their houses in good order, but at the moment one of the houses had building work going on so it was not possible. GM said it was good to know that people were concerned about maintaining the twittens.

The meeting was closed at 10.00 p.m.