

In attendance:

Part 1: April 20

Vicki Carol (VC)

Irina Charalambous (IC)

Lynne McNulty (LMcN)

Part 2: April 21

Frank Burgess (FB)

Stuart Oliver (SO)

Joe Olding (JO)

Terry Brown - Coordinator (TGB) both sessions

Apologies:

Kim Boyd (KB)

Welcome:

TGB welcomed attendees at each session.

	Note	Action
	Part 1	
	TGB opened the meeting by explaining the purpose of the ‘activity schedule single line’ matrix sent out by email and referring also to the Google Drive facility. It was acknowledged that it was still not clear how these would function to best effect and more thought might be necessary to clarify how. TGB to formulate thoughts.	TGB All
1	Mayoral Election Meetings	
	In collaboration with Merton FOE, WFOE has arranged Mayoral meetings. Four have now been held with Conservative (Louise Calland), Labour (Leone Cooper), Liberal Democrats (Sue Wixley) and Green Party (Pippa Maslin) and have been interesting. Attendance by both FOE groups was however low.	
2	Review of Activities Schedule and development of campaign ideas	
	Stream A: Urban Greening	
	Initial discussion focussed on King Georges Park & its relationship to the River Wandle	
	VC talked about the Wandle Valley Forum and the ‘Wandle Valley Forum Week’ which is in September and for which groups can obtain grants from £50 of up to £200 to put together a Wandle based activity. Confirmed that any individual or a group can apply for a grant. Perhaps WFOE might put on an event. Details to be passed on by VC.	VC/TGB

<p>VC raised the possibility of gathering Wandle rubbish? ‘Plogging’ event: Steffi Sutters has organised litter picking.</p>	<p>VC</p>
<p>Might look into sorting litter in around Wandle. Might work out the sources of litter. Also on the Wandle Trail. LMcN might take up. Relates to current VC activity stream regarding single use plastics.</p>	<p>LMcN</p>
<p>Fenced off Wandle: how it came about as a Health & Safety response. Open railings as opposed to dense fences? Risks to children. By some relatively recent apartment buildings, there is a path with no fence. Is height of banks an issue? Looking at fencing and banks, conflict: protection for nature or give visibility and access to people. Level of Wandle can rise quite quickly and it is naturally fast flowing.</p>	
<p>Council want a mobile cafe on the Tideway site near the Wandle, but local residents have objected. They suggest a café further into the park possibly on the Wandle.</p>	<p>LMcN</p>
<p>TGB asked: is there a study that fits in with how to integrate accessibility/safety/nature along the river. Who owns the land? Need to look at the Wandsworth Local Plan. Wandle Delta proposals. Big, high-rise development planned. How will development affect biodiversity. Removal of half tide wear was supposed to improve biodiversity.</p>	
<p>Develop ideas in this area</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>Increasing coal consumption world wide was mentioned in passing.</p>	
<p>Are we in a bubble?</p>	
<p>The Urban Greening stream is currently mainly Kim & Katy. TGB now to do a bit of work on the Wandle. Green & Blue Infrastructure was discussed.</p>	
<p>LMcN referred to the ‘Greening the Grid’ group. Greening the grid is a strong movement that has done lots of things in the Southfields Grid streets and front gardens with the backing of local councillors. Could it happen in East Putney too? Developer provided green spaces are not good and often badly planned. Private developments need good management for biodiversity. Need expertise and community involvement. Tendency to pave over open space. Obligation to provide green-space in accordance with planning policies, but often poor quality. Also maintenance with toxic chemicals. Need to think about who to approach. Who is in charge? The role of Enable can be used as a ‘distancing’ technique. How are WBC decisions made? Expertise: Valery Selby ‘Biodiversity Action Plan’. Annabel XXX (need to find out surname) is Enable ecologist. Consultants appointed by Council and developers alike to hold the line and very often they are evasive and unhelpful.</p>	
<p>VC: Council proposes working with community Involvement, but is still not interacting with local groups. Ian Mitchel (?role?)</p>	
<p>Wandsworth & Richmond appear to have an Animal Welfare Manager (Mark Callis?) and Officer. Roll of officer seems mainly to do with treatment and control of domestic ‘pets’ including legal requirements for controlling them. Job description for officer has a single item amongst 26 responsibilities ‘Required to ensure the protection and monitoring of flora and fauna and wildlife’, which doesn’t suggest a major focus.</p>	
<p>New or reallocated open space might be devoted to community gardens rather than allotments. There are vacant allotments elsewhere in the borough. It has been suggested that this is possibly due to Covid, as people stopped visiting and hence stopped paying rent. They have not yet been offered but will presumably be allocated once restrictions are lifted.</p>	

	How can a local authority work with community groups? Different to allotment holders, who have a contract with the council. Bramford Garden community garden, located on the Wandsworth Bridge roundabout is an example. Guerrilla gardening. Open spaces near schools, school community gardens. VC thought school community gardens is a good idea.	
	Demise of bowling green in King Georges Park. What can be done? Only temporary use. . . King Georges Park Management Plan produced by consultants at great costs. New toilets, more buildings. Southern end chalk grassland so important to conserve.	
	LMcN to try to get Fleur Anderson to walk through King Georges Park.	LMcN
	TGB: would group members go away and crystallise a proposal for one of these areas. Trying to get group to be visibly active on something that we are passionate about. Small measurable achievements KPFs.	
3	Succession	
	TGB mentioned succession and the possibility of a younger member taking over coordinator role, possibly after assisting for a period.	
	Part 2	
4	Discussion regarding WBC & the Climate/Ecological Emergency	
	How can Council engage with communities? Currently WBC seems to use Enable to block community involvement. JO pointed out that (on the basis of the WESS) the Council only seems to be interested in its own activities and not in how it can use its communicational capacities to persuade the Wandsworth public to be more environmentally conscious.	
	There are limits to what the Council does. There are private actions, community actions and then Council activities. Can't affect private actions directly. 330,000 people in borough, so their activities have a big effect. Some of the old means of communication, such as local newspapers, have fallen away. Get in contact with Community Groups and speak to them or invite them to a meeting. SO will happily to give a talk on Climate Change to the Wandsworth, Battersea and Putney Societies.	SO, TGB
	FB: very interesting, so many different organisations. Good if societies come together to have a cooperation between them. Reaching out to people. An example of group pressure failure: Winstanly Estate tree removal. Biggest problem is the Council. For instance, Council proposal for town centre improvement proposals has come to nothing and costs seem to escalate. Council has allowed more and more high rise. Council expresses an ambition to be London's Greenest borough, but no real appropriate action. Can FOE be a sort of catalyst to bring together community and civic groups. Everybody knows about the climate and ecological emergency, but little action is evident.	
	JO: people are in denial and vested interests rule. SO drew the analogy that we are all sitting in a comfortable lounge on HMS Titanic. His talk would focus on climate change and what we might do in Wandsworth. TGB to make introductions. SO referred to his recently published book "Abandoning Land to the Sea" that focusses on the coastal effects of climate change. His talk would focus on 'What we can do in Wandsworth'. TGB to organise talks for Dr Stuart Oliver.	TGB SO
	Groups should share information and news. Discussion of XR and their strong presence. There is a Wandsworth XR group. Broadening the campaigning front is a good idea. Wandsworth has very poor environmental record. Cycling improvements don't seem to be carried out. FB thinks Council needs to be shamed regarding its inactivity. We should promote a FoE influenced society.	

	FB to pick something out of Councils agenda that we can highlight and develop as a campaign.	FB
	TGB: Typical of Council: introduction of EV charging points. Doesn't curtail activity and will not upset supporters of the Conservative majority, who will be motoring lobbyists. Replacing diesel/petrol vehicles with EVs doesn't help congestion or entirely remove particulate air pollution. LTN disaster, on the other hand, required mild motorist restraint and caused outrage.	
	Central government and local government prefer big macho projects that cost a lot of money and therefore out of which a lot of profit is made by their supporters.	
	TGB explained the Wandle focus that had emerged in part 1 of the meeting. JO has seen Kingfishers. Eels now in Wandle.	
	JO to look at greening.	JO
5	Winding Up & Further Meetings	
	Due to the pending 'A More Natural Capital Mayoral Debate' immediately following, the WFOE meeting had to be drawn to a rather premature conclusion.	
	TGB urged group members to come to next meeting and aim to focus on action/ campaigning possibilities	All

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