

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - THURS 17 MARCH 2022

St. Mary's Church, Battersea Church Road, London SW11 3NA

Refreshments available from 6.00pm. The AGM will start at 6.30pm.

| AGM Business Agenda 2022 | |
|---|---|
| 1. Chair's welcome | Jenny Sheridan |
| 2. Apologies for absence | Sue Demont |
| 3. Minutes from 2021 | Sue Demont |
| 4. 2021 Accounts | Ian Beardall |
| 5. Reappointment of trustees under 3-year rotation & confirmation of officers (see below) | Sue Demont |
| 6. Election of new trustees (5 vacancies) | Sue Demont |
| 7. Chair's Report | Jenny Sheridan |
| 8. Committee Reports (chaired by Jenny) - Planning - Events - Open Spaces - Heritage | Liz Walton Sara Milne Clare Graham Sue Demont |
| 9. Other Reports (chaired by Sue) - Website & Membership - <i>Battersea Matters</i> - Social Media | Mike Roden/ Carol Rahn Duncan Parish Jenny Sheridan |
| 10. Vote of thanks & closing remarks | Jenny Sheridan |

7.15pm Guest Speakers: Betsy Blatchley, Pioneer Minister in the Arts at Nine Elms

TRUSTEES REQUIRING REAPPOINTMENT UNDER 3 YEAR ROTATION

Carol Rahn (3 years completed), Jenny Sheridan (6 years completed)

LIST OF OFFICERS

Jenny Sheridan (Chair) *standing down*

Sue Demont (Secretary) *standing down*

Ian Beardall (Treasurer) to be confirmed

Please note that a new chair and secretary will be appointed by the Battersea Society Executive Committee on 25th April.

LIST OF TRUSTEES as of 17 March 2022

Ian Beardall, Sue Demont (standing down), Clare Graham, Michael Jubb, Sue Marshall, Sara Milne (standing down), John Oughton, Duncan Parish (standing down), Carol Rahn, Jenny Sheridan, VACANCIES (2)

CO-OPTED TO THE EXECUTIVE

Adrienne Carr (Minutes Secretary)

The Battersea Society is a Registered Charity (No. 1103560) whose purpose is to preserve and improve the amenities of Battersea determined by the area of the former Metropolitan Borough of Battersea, comprising the wards of Battersea Park, Lavender, Nine Elms, Northcote, Shaftesbury & Queenstown, St Mary's and part of Balham. The Society's constitution is published on our website www.batterseasociety.org.uk

17 March 2022

The Battersea Society
Annual General Meeting
18 March 2021 at 6pm
By Zoom
Minutes

Present There were 55 members in attendance.

1. Chair's welcome & tribute to Harvey Heath

The Chair welcomed all present and expressed gratitude for the good number of attendees. She paid tribute to Harvey Heath who died of Covid 19 in January. Harvey was extremely active in the Battersea Society for many years and will be missed.

NB the agenda for this year's AGM was adjusted to take account of its virtual nature and therefore did not include presentations by chairs of committee. The Annual Report was circulated in advance.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Patrick and Di Scott, Mark Cornwall-Jones, Mhairi Brown, Marie Blanche Camps, Kenneth and Beryl Fergusson, Sandy Copland, Rita Kelly, and Annabel Clarkson. John Bowis subsequently asked for his apologies to be added as he experienced technical problems with logging in.

3. Minutes from 21 March 2019

The Secretary noted that the 2020 AGM did not take place due to the Covid 19 Pandemic. The minutes of the 2019 AGM were approved.

4. 2019 Accounts & 2020 Accounts

The accounts had been posted on the website with the calling papers. The Treasurer offered to answer any questions arising, but there were no queries. The Secretary thanked the Treasurer for his hard work, which was warmly applauded.

5. Reappointment of trustees & officers under 3-year rotation

The Trustees offering themselves for re-appointment had been listed on the calling papers, namely Clare Graham, Duncan Parish and Michael Jubb. All three were re-appointed.

The Officers, namely Jenny Sheridan (Chair), Sue Demont (Secretary) and Ian Beardall (Treasurer), were confirmed in post.

6. Election of new trustees 2020 & 2021

The Secretary requested confirmation of the election of John Oughton as a trustee from 2020. This was agreed. For 2021, no new trustees have been proposed. Therefore two vacancies remain.

7. Chair's Report

Jenny Sheridan, Chair, presented her Annual Report. This had been included in the calling papers. There were no questions.

8. Questions to Trustees/ Officers

The following question was asked:

Mark Gitsham – when will the new website be launched and how will it be publicised? Carol Rahn responded that the website should be up and running in April and its launch will be publicised through our social media channels. Duncan Parish added that the new website includes the rebranding of the Society. Monica Tross clarified that the current website is still available. Pam Alexander – could we clarify the date and timing of the summer party? Sara Milne confirmed this would be held on Thursday 15th July from 6.30-9.30pm.

10 Closing Remarks

The Chair proposed a vote of thanks to the Trustees, the chairs and members of all the Committees, and in particular the Secretary, Sue Demont. She also thanked Mike Roden for his work on comms and the website, all those members who deliver *Battersea Matters* by hand, Suzanne Perkins, designer of *Battersea Matters* and Adrienne Carr, minutes secretary. The AGM concluded at 6.30pm.

The AGM was followed by a talk by Aaron Barbour of the Katherine Low Settlement.

Battersea Society: Vision – Mission – Values

Vision: Our vision is for Battersea to be recognised as a great place to live and work.

Mission: We celebrate Battersea's past, support Battersea's present and promote Battersea's future.

Values:

- ***Community:*** working together to benefit Battersea and its people
- ***Integrity:*** representing interests fairly across the Battersea community
- ***Discovery:*** promoting knowledge and recognition of Battersea's past, present and future.

Srapline: Proud of Battersea

Battersea Society Annual Report 2021-22

Chair's report by Jenny Sheridan

Despite the discombobulating effects of Covid lockdowns and sudden Government changes, this has been a good year for the Battersea Society. We have welcomed a record 65 new members, as lockdowns showed people how much there is to value in their local area. And Zoom has enabled members from further afield and those with difficulty in travelling to attend our talks.

Sadly we had to cancel our annual Christmas drinks, about which members were very understanding; but our summer party, though postponed by a month, was much enjoyed.

For many years we had wanted to host an event involving the wider Battersea community, and this year our photo competition *My Battersea* actually happened. Duncan Parish, Sara Milne, Clare Graham and Sally Sellers had already put in a huge amount of preparatory work, and the competition finally took place this summer (*see Events report*). As one of the three judges it was the highlight of my year.

The Battersea Society is one of the social glues that hold our area together. It has been very pleasing to see this being increasingly recognised both through invitations to work with other organisations as well as our own proactive work.

After four years as chair, I am standing down, though continuing as a trustee. I am enormously grateful to all the hard-working team of trustees, including those who are stepping down – Duncan, Sara and Sue (Demont). I'd especially like to thank Sue, who has made a phenomenal difference to the administration of the society. She has been a friend and a rock to me.

Much of the Society's work is done by its committees, and I am deeply appreciative of all they do. I'd also like to thank Mike Roden, not only for brightening the pages of *Battersea Matters* and producing the much admired *Battersea Insider* but also for his management of our membership system.

And finally thank you to our members, without whom we wouldn't exist. I hope that vaccines and boosters will enable us to meet much more in the coming year.

Planning by Liz Walton

The work of the planning committee is little changed from previous years. Our focus is responding to consultations and planning applications relating to: major building developments; Government, Mayoral, and Council planning policy documents including the developing Local Plan; TfL proposals and significant applications within conservation areas. We inform our members of these, and our responses, through articles in *Battersea Matters*, occasional Planning Updates and the Planning pages of the website. We respond to email queries and welcome comments and feedback.

We have noticed a slightly lower volume of applications this year but there have been many ‘non-material amendments’ to earlier applications in Nine Elms and York Road. There are a worrying number of applications for both student housing and co-living apartments which serve a transient population rather than a settled and diverse community.

After many years of our inputting to meetings and consultation, we welcomed two notable developments benefitting Battersea residents. In September we saw the long-awaited opening of the Northern Line Extension and recently increased access around and in front of the Power Station has confirmed just how wonderful a building it is.

We continue to play an active part in the work of the Wandsworth Community Planning Forum and the Conservation Areas Advisory Committee. We liaise with our colleagues in adjoining civic areas, the Friends of Battersea Park and participate in other Community Fora such as the London Forum of Amenity and Civic Societies.

The Society is one of the partners in a project led by the Clapham Junction Business Improvement District (BID) to identify ways to improve the environment of the Junction's town centre. BID is currently undertaking a review of its performance and is developing a strategy for the period leading up to a new ballot of businesses in autumn 2023.

Events by Sara Milne

The start of the year saw us go into a second lockdown, which meant that once again our events programme had to be a virtual offering – but one that proved to be incredibly popular with record numbers of people attending online talks and readings.

We kicked off 2021 with a Twelfth Night Poetry Evening and a talk on the Battersea Riverside Industrial Heritage, swiftly followed by a virtual walk round Battersea’s Locally Listed Buildings and a talk by some of the Battersea Power Station’s Heritage Contractors.

The spring heralded the Wandsworth Heritage Festival, to which we contributed two virtual events: a virtual poetry reading from co-authors Joolz Sparkes and Hilaire of extracts from their *London Undercurrents: The hidden histories of London’s unsung heroines*, and a talk by local historian Jeanne Rathbone on Four 18th Century Houses and their Occupants.

Our contribution to Wandsworth Arts Festival in the summer was the society’s first *My Battersea* Photography Award in partnership with the Royal College of Art. Battersea Society members enjoyed a special preview of the resulting photography exhibition at the RCA Dyson Gallery which showcased finalists and award winners over three days; the accompanying calendar was a sell-out!

The Summer Party was our first live event for 18 months, providing a much-needed social gathering that was enjoyed by all. It also kick-started our return to ‘real life’ talks including the St Johns of Lydiard Tregoze and Three Gentlemen of Battersea.

The year was rounded off by a musical evening with an exclusive performance by actor and pianist Stefan Bednarczyk of the songs of Flanders & Swann with a special introduction by Alison Smith-Swann, widow of Donald Swann.

A very big thank you to all the events team without whom none of this would be possible – especially to our secretary Sally Orman. If you would like to help or contribute to any of our events just let us know events@batterseasociety.org.uk

Open Spaces by Clare Graham

Our walking guide *Discovering Battersea's Open Spaces*, published in December 2020, has continued to receive favourable reviews and to sell well. It can be purchased through the Society's website. In September 2021 we drew on some of these walks to offer four guided tours showcasing *Battersea's Hidden Parks* within London Open House. Those sold out very quickly, attracting an enthusiastic and diverse audience drawn from all over London and beyond. It was the first time the Society had participated in this festival, but surely not the last.

For the parks themselves 2021-2022 like its predecessor has been a year of unusually heavy demand, thanks to Covid. Right now at the end of winter the extra wear and tear to grass and other surfaces is especially evident. Enable (which maintains our open spaces on behalf of Wandsworth Council) does have a renewal programme in place and is also we feel coping better with the increased littering. And it's good news that some of the Council's recently-announced £5 million public realm improvement fund is delivering drinking fountains and extra cycle racks for some parks, and improvements to the Thames Path.

There were public consultations for larger improvements at Fred Wells Gardens (now complete), Harroway Gardens and Shillington Park (work due later this year). We contributed to those, and also commented where appropriate on wider Council policy, including the new Local Plan and the Walking and Cycling Strategy, and individual planning applications. We were amongst the many local bodies and residents who objected to 2021/4506, Putt in the Park's inappropriate application for a mini-golf course to replace the old bowling green on Clapham Common. It was good to hear in January that this had been refused by Wandsworth Council planning officers using their delegated powers, but a fresh application remains a possibility.

Heritage by Sue Demont

Whilst 2021 ended rather more positively than its predecessor, normal service has not quite resumed. However this hasn't deterred us from pursuing our diverse historical activities, both virtually and in real time. These have included presentations to the Wandsworth Historical Society and the Clapham Society as well as the Battersea Society events programme, and members also took part in Wandsworth Libraries Week and the Wandsworth Heritage Festival (*see Events report*). Special mention should be made of Jeanne Rathbone's three new walks - Battersea North, Central and South - taking in the historic borough's blue plaques. We were delighted to add a new plaque last year at Clapham Junction Station, honouring John Buckmaster, saviour of Wandsworth Common.

Our productive relationship with the Nine Elms Partnership continues. Our quarterly heritage displays are published on their website as well as on the noticeboards at Bourne Valley Wharf, Battersea Park Road and Carey Gardens. Topics have included the Festival Gardens (Sally Sellers) and

New Covent Garden Market (Carol Rahn); our current display (by Jeanne Rathbone) features pioneering woman pilot Hilda Hewlett. We have provided historical context for initiatives such as the aviation sculpture on Prince of Wales Drive, and the Arch 42 project, where Hilaire McLiesh represented the Society in a webinar run as part of the London Festival of Architecture.

We have also supported our Planning Committee over two controversial applications; the signage for the Cats and Dogs Home, and no. 7 Alexander Avenue, for which Historic England listing is being pursued.

We continue to provide copy for our social media platforms and have begun writing up some of our research in more depth on the Heritage pages of the Society's website; do take a look. This year's most exciting project is the publication of Jeanne Rathbone's *Inspiring Women of Battersea*, which will be launched at the Wandsworth Heritage Festival in May/ June. Make sure you come along and get your signed copy!

Many thanks to our hardworking committee members for another productive year.

Website & Membership by Mike Roden and Carol Rahn

In 2021, the Battersea Society took the big decision to update its website. Mike Roden assisted a committee of trustees, Sue Demont, Duncan Parish and Carol Rahn, who were appointed to oversee this change. Matthew Pemberton of MatBlack Design was chosen to design the new site, based on SquareSpace. The new site went live in July 2021.

The website has the visual appeal that people have come to expect from websites and provides a much more up-to-date look online. Committees are now able to publish blogs, keeping the material refreshed. Events on the website are linked to Eventbrite for registration. Through our online shop we sold the 2022 Battersea Society photography calendar (*see Events report*) as well as 22 copies of Clare Graham's walking guide (*see Open Spaces report*), and 38 copies of *The Bombing of Battersea* by Sue Demont.

Around 160 members renewed their membership by signing up on the new website. We had hoped that sooner rather than later all memberships would come via the website. However, we have an appreciable minority of members who continue to pay by standing order or cheque. It seems for the foreseeable future that there will be this mix of payment methods, but to reduce the administrative complexity and chance of error, we would encourage as many members as possible to renew via the website.

On a positive note, the Battersea Society now has 391 members, the highest number of new members in recent memory.

Mike Roden's monthly email newsletter *Battersea Insider* (which goes to around 650 people) continues its invaluable role as a source of information for members and non-members; and as a marketing tool encouraging non-member recipients to join. Many new subscribers to *Battersea Insider* have come via the website.

Mike continues to make improvements to the online membership administration system and has increased the range of membership information available for use by members of the Executive Committee.

Battersea Matters by Jenny Sheridan

As editor, I aim to cover Battersea's past as well as our present and our potential future. The latter has been discussed in Michael Jubb's articles on reaching net zero.

Several articles on the area's rich history have included breweries, floods, a member's delightful story of her father's Edwardian childhood as well as the infamous attempt to cover parts of Battersea and elsewhere in south London with multi-lane motorways.

We don't fight shy of controversy. Aspects of an article on the late Sid Sporle were robustly rebutted, and an architect member has argued that Battersea Power Station should have been demolished rather than redeveloped. The closure of Northcote Road to traffic on summer weekends was welcomed by some, but not by many older residents – an issue that will probably be revisited in the coming summer.

Our green spaces are much loved and used. We have published articles on the council's biodiversity strategy and the need to restore parks and commons after heavy use during the lockdowns. We also covered the fight to save the bowling green on Clapham Common (which has been won, at least for the present).

Battersea Matters has undergone a handsome re-design to reflect our new website. Our fantastic designer, Suzanne Perkins, has taken this in her stride through thick and frequently thin. I'd like to thank her, and also those members who deliver the magazine through letterboxes across Battersea, wearing out their shoe leather and saving the society hundreds of pounds every year.

Social Media by Duncan Parish

The Battersea Society's social media reach has continued to grow over the last 12 months across Facebook, Instagram & Twitter. You may question why we use all three, but with each often having a different audience, it helps the Society to publicise our work across as much of Battersea as possible reaching new members and new audiences for our events and campaigns.

This January marked the 3rd anniversary of our Battersea Society Instagram account. In October we undertook some research to look at how our fellow London Civic Societies are using the site: out of the 120 Civic Societies registered in London, just one third had an Instagram account and of those who did we are proud to say ours is the 8th most popular reaching over 1,200 followers.

Like other societies, we have used our online presence not only to advertise our events and the work of our committees, but also to highlight what's on in the borough, to celebrate our history by marking particular dates in our heritage, and to support local charities and campaigns. Alongside our new website and the *Insider* newsletter, our social media platforms are a great way for us to continue to raise our profile and to promote the work of the society in making Battersea a great place to live, work and visit.

Compiled by Sue Demont, Secretary

14 February 2022

