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**Minutes of the Virtual Annual General Meeting**

**Saturday 3 July 2021 (12:30pm)**

**Live on Facebook**

**Committee Members (2020-21) present: Ibtisam Adem,** Anne Crane, Jane East,

Kim Hart, Su McLaughlin, Gloria Orosungunleka, Noshir Patel and Philip Virgo

**Also present:** Helen Hayes MP; Councillor Jane Pickard (Lambeth Council),

Adeline Aletti and Briony Marshall (Plastic Mountain community arts project)

Over 60 members of the public, Tim Stephens (Forum Administrator)

Kim Hart in the Chair

1. **Welcome from the Chair**

Kim Hart welcomed everyone to the meeting, regretting the need to hold the Annual General Meeting online again as meetings could not be held in venues due to the recent extension to the coronavirus restrictions. The meeting was accessible to all online via Facebook and would be available afterwards {[recording is here](https://fb.watch/v/1YK8K4vSj/)}.

1. **Helen Hayes MP: address**

Kim Hart welcomed Helen Hayes MP to the meeting. Helen would give an address and then respond to questions asked in advance and as many as possible which were posted live on Facebook.

Helen Hayes acknowledged the steps taken by Norwood Forum to try to hold the AGM in person, and hoped this would be allowed next year. The 2020 AGM was also held during Covid-19 restrictions and it was important to reflect on how difficult the past 15 months had been for sections of our local community. It was also important to thank Norwood Forum and other community groups active in the community and individuals in supporting neighbours etc. for all their voluntary work during this time.

It was great to see the gradual return of the local community with the reopening of West Norwood Feast, the Library, and Picturehouse, the wealth of local shops, and works now underway in West Norwood Cemetery.

West Norwood had suffered the further blow during Covid-19 of the Thames Water works along Norwood Road. Whilst these had finished, extensive water works were now underway in many of the neighbouring residential roads. Thames Water caused residents many problems across the Constituency due to its ageing infrastructure but also because of its poor planning of works and public communication. She had to keep constant pressure on the company for better advance notification, response to mitigation measures and compensation where appropriate.

On #ScrapTheYard, she was disappointed to see the officer recommendation was to approve the planning application for the extended metal scrap yard at Windsor Grove. Along with all the local ward councillors she was opposed to the proposal which was simply for the wrong site for a recycling facility. The new facility would be too close to local residents and neighbouring schools, generate a vast increase in traffic (and much of it heavy lorries), and would be reached via too narrow roads. The Planning Applications Committee would make its decision on Tuesday 13 July 2021 and there would no doubt be further publicity on how local people could get involved in opposing the application before and at the committee.

On Streetworks, Norwood Forum was now working with the Council to finish off the remaining works along Norwood Road. The remaining part of the project was the removal of the Tulse Hill gyratory to create a better gateway to West Norwood, and she would continue working with Marina Ahmad AM to keep up the pressure on TfL to fund these works. TfL however was the only known transport authority in a major city not at least part-funded by central government.

Young people had in particular suffered during the pandemic; their social life had been much curtailed and education adversely affected despite the efforts of teaching staff. Adequate government funding was needed for both catch up teaching and extra-curricular activities during the summer holidays to back up the work being undertaken by local voluntary organisations and councils. She was pleased to learn that Rathbone would be running a youth hub on the Central Hill estate during the holidays.

Helen Hayes answered the following questions submitted beforehand and during the meeting via Facebook:

* Boundary reviews - Parliamentary Constituency and re-revised local ward boundaries: a variety of views had been proposed during public consultation for the West Norwood area ward boundaries and now further revised boundaries had been published for comment. She urged everyone with a view to submit comments and also let her know as she would be submitting further comments herself {these Local Government Boundary Commission for England proposals can be accessed [here](https://www.norwoodforum.org/news/30-jun-21/have-your-say-five-ward-boundary-change-proposals); views required by 26 July 2021}. The final report would be published in October and the new wards would apply for the May 2022 Lambeth Council election.
* The Constituency review being undertaken by the Boundary Commission for England was entirely separate and used the ward boundaries as at December 2020 {see [here](https://www.norwoodforum.org/news/10-jun-21/proposed-new-parliamentary-constituencies) for the first draft; views required by 2 August 2021}. The proposals would carve-up West Norwood into two constituencies – Croydon/Norwood area and Streatham. It is usual for first draft proposals to be amended substantially in the light of representations and she urged all with views to submit them. She knew Norwood Forum, Norwood Action Group and others had submitted strong views against the last recommendations as these would too have carved-up the coherent community of West Norwood. Representations from local communities carried more weight than other views.
* Public utility works: each had their own statutory powers and working practices; she found Southern Gas Network to be better at communication and responsiveness than the others and especially Thames Water (in two recent cases their office was unaware of ongoing works). She was to meet again with Thames Water on local concerns. More legislation was required to require better communication and co-ordination with other bodies including publication of plans of utility services.
* E-Scooters: government action to revise the regulatory framework and enforcement has lagged behind people’s behaviour. She was in correspondence with the government on the need to address pavement use, lighting, the wearing of helmets and insurance needs. The current use adversely affected other pavement and road users, and partially sighted people in particular.
* Looking forward: she was looking forward most to being able to meet up with her constituents - voluntary organisations, community groups, local businesses, and local people. And getting back to the West Norwood we all know and love; seeing the area flourish and thrive once again.

The Chair thanked Helen Hayes for attending, updating the local community on such a wide range of important and wide-ranging issues, and answering the questions so thoroughly.

1. **Minutes of last AGM (14 August 2020)**

No comments had been received, and the minutes of the last Annual General Meeting held on Friday 14 August 2020 were taken as agreed as a true record, with no actions remaining.

1. **Chair’s Annual Report 2020-21** (see written report)

Kim Hart presented the written report covering the year’s activity and especially the response of the Forum to the COVID-19 pandemic. The supporting slides can be [viewed here](https://www.norwoodforum.org/sites/norwoodforum.org/files/Forum%20AGM%202019-20%20slide%20deck_0.pdf). She highlighted:

* Planning applications, working with Norwood Action Group, and plans to publish these on the [Norwood Forum website](https://www.norwoodforum.org/)
* Work on a number of bodies including West Norwood Cemetery and Brockwell Park
* Pandemic: production, expansion and maintenance of the website Covid-19 help and advice section, especially the promotion of the work of the Norwood & Brixton Foodbank, Station to Station and Community TechAid.
* Wild Norwood – building on the success of the 2019 festival, an extended event including online and in person events and an increase in the number and breadth of the window displays both at local people’s houses and high street shops.
* Community Safety Partnership; especially the latest work supporting the Hill Brook and Dale Patient Participation Group and the imminent Lambeth Summer Camp and other summer activities for young people
* Four Community Conversations
* Christmas card and boxes
* Blue Plaques: first tranche
* The wide breadth of other issues

1. **Treasurer’s Report** (see written report)

Noshir Patel (Treasurer) presented the previously published summary of the accounts for 2020-21.

The healthy carried forward from 2019-20 had enabled a larger spend than usual on Community Funding, which this year totalled £4403.80. The carry forward surplus of £3,183.34 is much reduced from the previous year but adequate to start the financial year.

Kim Hart highlighted the three times increase in the number of volunteer hours (value £45K) by the committee to the community. This was largely due to work in response to the pandemic, as well as better record keeping.

There had been no questions raised on the accounts, which were received.

1. **Election of Norwood Forum Officers and Committee**

The Committee membership for 2020-21 had been notified with the agenda. Kim Hart announced the outcome of the nomination process for the committee for 2021-22. As no positions were contested, a formal election ballot was not required and the 2021-22 Committee would be:

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| --- | --- |
| Chair: | Kim Hart |
| Treasurer: | Noshir Patel |
| Ordinary Committee members: | Ibtisam Adem  Jane East |
|  | Anne Crane |
|  | Su McLaughlin |
|  | **Gloria Orosungunleka** |
|  | Philip Virgo |

Further volunteers to serve on the Committee would be most welcome. Kim Hart gave her thanks to those serving on the Committee in the last year.

She looked forward to working with the new committee on issues such as:

**Streetworks**

She outlined the project which began in 2015, the struggle to resuscitate it with Lambeth, and ultimately the successful progress made in recent weeks. The Tulse Hill gyratory removal though was in abeyance due to the aforementioned funding difficulties, but pressure would continue to be applied to TfL to resuscitate the project at the earliest opportunity. Work was underway again to complete the Norwood Road phase {see website news stories on [Tulse Hill gyratory](https://www.norwoodforum.org/news/02-jul-21/streetworks-position-statement-1-norwood-road-and-tulse-hill-gyratory) and [Norwood Road](https://www.norwoodforum.org/news/02-jul-21/streetworks-position-statement-1-norwood-road-and-tulse-hill-gyratory)}:

* Norwood Road highway resurfacing works
* TfL Road Safety Audit review outcomes implementation
* Diagonal crossing at York Hill/Lancaster Avenue: completion
* Car parking places
* Greening project with Station to Station and the South London Botanical Institute
* Street furniture: installation of benches and chairs
* Norwood Road (Tulse Hill) railway bridge orange mural maintenance and information plaque
* Tulse Hill gyratory lighting improvement and audit

**Norwood – Your 15 minute Neighbourhood**

A project to focus on the facilities in our neighbourhood – and what was and what was not accessible within a 15 minute walk or cycle ride. September will focus on this project, culminating on Car Free Day on 22 September 2021.

**#ScrapTheYard grass roots campaign**

As already mentioned, and see below

**2020 Community Grants Awards**

The grant recipients work (11 organisations and 15 projects) was illustrated through [this video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EiVgvpwHRZc) and contact information for all the organisations can be found on the [website here](https://www.norwoodforum.org/news/03-jul-21/norwood-forum-community-grant-recipients-2020).

**Plastic Mountain**

Adelaine Aletti and Briony Marshall showed a video explaining a new public participatory artwork project for West Norwood. This will be installed in September 2021 outside the unused section of Knowles of Norwood. A wooden skeleton will be filled with earth and collected plastic litter; when the wooden structure is later removed a stratified earth/plastic litter totem will remain and gradually degrade – leaving the plastic. There will also be a mural in the Knowles of Norwood window, produced with young people, and also other projects with young people and at West Norwood Feast.

Application has been made for £15k Arts Council funding, and other project related work would be crowdfunded. Local people were invited to get involved: <https://plasticmountain.org/>

**#ScrapTheYard**

Rob Andrew emphasised that whilst Lambeth Planning officers were recommending approval of the planning application, the Planning Applications Committee (13 July 2021) consisted of elected councillors who were independent. The decision was far from a foregone conclusion. The Council was in a difficult position; if the application is refused an appeal by the applicant was likely; if the application is approved a Judicial Review application is likely. A decision to refuse would result in the final decision being taken away from Lambeth to the government Independent Planning Inspector.

Kim Hart asked all interested to follow the social media outlets to keep up to date on developments:

Get involved and keep up-to-date on the campaign here:

Facebook: [@ScrapTheYard](https://www.facebook.com/ScrapTheYard), Twitter: [@ScrapTheYard\_WN](https://twitter.com/ScrapTheYard_WN), Instagram [@ScrapTheYard](https://www.instagram.com/scraptheyard/)

To be kept informed by email: email: [info@norwoodforum.org](mailto:info@norwoodforum.org?subject=Please%20keep%20me%20uptodate%20on%20%23ScrapTheYard)

An event may be planned for 13 July. All were asked to lobby by email the planning committee members and local ward councillors.

See the project webpage which includes councillor email details here: [#ScrapTheYard](https://www.norwoodforum.org/scraptheyard).

**Sunil de Sayrah**

Kim Hart paid tribute to the services to the community of the former Chair, Suni de Sayrah – who had stepped down on moving out of the area (see also written annual report). She would rely on the rest of committee to take forward the work of the Forum in the forthcoming year.

**West Norwood Feast**

Would be held the next day, and include the return of live music.

1. **Close of meeting**

The meeting closed at 1:55pm.

Chair

Norwood Forum

June 2022