



**Minutes of Annual General Meeting held on Thursday 29 September 2011
At 7.00pm at The Children's Centre, Ashburnham Road, Ham**

Present

Mark Brand (Chair), Andrew Beedham, Jean Loveland, Sarah Perret, Carole Hegedüs, Chas Warlow, Cllr Sir David Williams, Jill Lamb, Briony Rowland, Cllr Brian Miller, Cllr Sue Jones, John Hatto, Jose Medina, Alastair Walker, Stuart Walker, Danielle Coleman, David Metherell

Apologies

David Lawton. Chris Hunt, Wendy Hatto, Anne Powell, Peter Rixon, Diane Slater, Frank Hegedus, Mary Pitteway, Zoe & George Varnava, Janice Baker

1 Chairman's Remarks

Mark welcomed everyone and thanked them for coming to what was HUG's first AGM as a CIC.

2 Approval of the minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on AGM held on 27 September 2010 were approved.

3 Chairman's Report

- This has been quite a momentous year, our first since incorporation as a CIC. We are finding our feet with the new format. There has been some confusion regarding the accounting format and reporting standards.
- To recap, HUG is not a charity and we have no charitable status. The same reporting is required of us as any other company, but we are regulated by a special government department.
- Annually the Chair has to report to the CIC Commissioner, otherwise everything is similar to a small limited company.
- There are good reasons for being a CIC. It is clear that assets are locked into Community Interest projects, to a good social end and it is important for donors to know this. An annual return to Companies House must be made. We can present abbreviated accounts with directors' clarification, but it might be worthwhile not sending abbreviated accounts.
- Every year at the AGM the accounts must be presented to the membership for approval.
- HUG has been and remains informal, participative and optimistic. We need to make plain to the Regulator what it stands for and that its core mission is sustainability and the environment.
- Incorporation of Ham Hydro as a CIC --- "nebulous" to a clear timeline. HUG will be a beneficiary of Ham Hydro and will have a non executive role.
- HUG's involvement with the Low Carbon Zone and Street Champion has worked well with support from Council Officers. LCZ projects are multiplying through small grants.
- The Brainstorming and Local Planning element is very important for community involvement. Thanks to Andrew.
- Actual projects: some have been inspirational, particularly the community allotment and the chicken scheme, including getting funding.
- The Library Garden and tree planting schemes with the Woodland Trust, very good to see the work continue and expand.
- The Cycle Scheme is just coming into fruition.
- The Christmas Carols on the Green, Apple Festival, Barn Dance (with another one coming up).

- Ambition (targets?) for coming year are to address communications for HUG, to grow in number and not to lose people.
- The improvement in the HUG website has been very good but there hasn't been as much traffic as we would have liked. Facebook? Twitter? Is anyone likely to value these? Talk to Chas and Dave about this.
- We have tried to meet people at several events, like Ham House and Ham Fair. We haven't; made the best use of the contacts we've been given, principally the Ham & Petersham Assn. Richmond Borough Council, the Low Carbon Zone, Richmond Housing Partnership and Ham & Petersham Assn have all been donors and participated in many projects.
- Jose has helped us with the draft accounts, to be further discussed under AOB. I would like to propose that in future, we hold an Extraordinary General Meeting to look at the accounts prior to the AGM. We should take a bit of time to get it right so would have a template for future accounts.

DW: Separation in the accounts between Ham Hydro and HUG?

MB: they are now two separate entities but there is still some loan outstanding. For administrative purposes, HUG paid for the Ham Hydro incorporation, plus reimbursed Chas for the costs associated with the Expression of Interest, but we will be getting this back. An invoice has gone to Ham Hydro Treasurer.

JM: This should be on the balance sheet.

BM: The accounts should be circulated at least a week before. Not possible to approve at no notice.

MB: Agree. They should be sent out 14 days in advance of EGM, and they will be in future.

BM: Companies House is being increasingly severe on late accounts, there is a fine of £250+VAT.

MB: Our filing day is the end of January 2012. The accounts can be in far more detail, which we will do even though there is no actual obligation, as we are taking money from the public.

DC: Remuneration committee and disbursement to say if any to go to directors?

CW: There will be at least three directors of Ham Hydro, 1 HUG, 1 SWLN and 1 council. The Committee will make proposals but it will be up to the shareholders of the Industrial & Provident Society to decide. We need to think about this.

There is a potential benefit to HUG from Ham Hydro. Some funds will be disbursed to local projects worthy of support.

MB: The nature of the relationship not fully clarified as Ham Hydro is not quite incorporated. The important point is that HUG has no liability for Ham Hydro.

3 Report by the Treasurer

- **JL:** We were incorporated in April 2010 and the accounts are to April 2011.
- Bank and cash statements show where the money comes from and where it goes to, including some expenditure, which is slightly higher but money is due back from Ham Hydro.
- There are four projects ongoing. The ongoing allotment, which Mary reconciles and we can show this in detail; the 'Carols on the Green', for which we received £200 from RHP and £100 from H&P Assn. We want this to be a repeat event as it was very successful. The LCZ had funding from the council and London Sustainability Exchange (LSX). £500 is due to be spent. Vouchers may be inspected.
- Donations from H&P Assn, the Council, Ham Amenities Group and LSX were gratefully received.
- Happy to go through any of it if there are any questions. We have a statement to show the receipt of monies from the allotment and making jam to raise funds.
- There are two types of funding: grant, where we get money first, spend it within a given period and account for it, and return any unspent at the end of the period; and commissioning, where we agree to do something and funding is released to us as we go along. Generally we only do the former.
- **CW:** Is there any money for the Fit Point?
- **JL:** We can invoice RHP £784 for training. We can have some money to do repairs. It is all pretty positive and the school is happy.

- **MB:** I propose that we pass a resolution to approve the accounts at an EGM within 45 days, copies of accounts to be available 14 days prior. We need to look at the Articles to see what it says about a quorum. It would be a good idea to combine the EGM with exciting agenda items.
- **JM:** Jose, in response to a request to act as Honorary Examiner to the accounts, said that he was not qualified in England as an accountant but would prepare them. The Hon Examiner would also need to be independent. We can proceed without one, but the directors would need to sign instead.
- **BM:** This should be put to the next AGM.
- **MB:** A separate report on community impact goes to the CIC Regulator. What format would people like to see the accounts in? Last year's minutes on page 4 was a very useful, informal report that would seem sensible.
- **JM:** Not in a position to comment too much as not familiar with the projects.

4 Updates on Current Projects

Chris Hunt, who sent his apologies, requested that during updates of current projects, his thanks be passed on for all the work that HUG members have completed over the past year and give special thanks to Chas's contribution towards the Street Champions project.

Ham Hydro

- **CW:** There has been feverish activity to prepare the planning application, with much help. We are 75% there to completing the submission. We will apply in October, constantly talking to Richmond Council and the Environment Agency (EA). It is an involved procedure but we are getting there. Once approved, we need to raise money, as much as possible. Nothing will come as a grant except £250,000. The cost of the project will be £2.6m, of which at least 10% would be share capital and we can get the rest from the bank. We are still aiming for construction between April and October 2012.
- HUG has no executive influence over Ham Hydro.
- There will be a Public Meeting tomorrow at St John Ambulance, Park Road, Teddington hosted by The Teddington Assn. There will be drinks and nibbles at 7.30, the meeting to start at 8pm. A representative from the EA will be there to answer questions.
- We will be improving the fish passes.

LCZ

- **AB:** The LCZ was a hive of activity last year, with many workshops of all sorts. We need to gear up for the autumn for much more. On 20 October, there will be a refresher for street champions who know something about thermal imaging, and on 31 October we will be visiting houses where interest has already been shown. 110 houses have expressed interest in thermal imaging sessions.
- The LCZ finishes in Mar/Apr 2012. The question is how to continue it to phase 2. We need to have a major discussion in November. Some areas are more recalcitrant than others, but we can do it with a bit of extra effort.
- RHP have a new person, Sarah Thomas, who is more receptive. We need to get tenants involved, to save money and reduce carbon.
- **MB:** Chris Hunt had an intern who made an excel spreadsheet which is very good and detailed, showing types of houses and construction. We now have a sheet for each type of house or a statement on it. We are talking to the director of Parkleys.
- **JL:** I am in dialogue with RHP and making progress.
DW: Justine and I will approach the Board of RHP.
CW: Talking of a couple of young guys about doing draught proofing. We need more street champions. Some are being more proactive and taking a lead. It would be better to be more targeted on individual aspects.
AB: There will be huge energy bills this year. It hasn't really registered with people and we need to capitalise on this. Changed from last year.

Ham Plan & Brainstorming

(refer Andrew's print out)

Village Plan

- **AB:** It is important to get HUG's vision to the council. We need to do it or groups need to prepare a draft and then get it to them. We have 4-6 weeks to finalise it and then get it to the council with an outline of the neighbourhood forum. Hope that current administration will be supportive of us as we are very proactive.
- **DW:** If the initiative is taken, it will be much more than anybody else is doing; we will have a head start. HUG membership produced about 80% of the post it notes. The council will be meeting on 13 October.
- **AB:** The Neighbourhood Forum run by Becky White and Rachel Salter was a mini local strategic partnership of all public sector workers in Ham & Petersham. It was a very effective organisation of all paid professionals getting together, plus George & Zoe Varnava and Andrew. It was then down to the council to respond. There needs to be input from the local community on money being spent.
- **MB:** This is to be dealt with more in the next meeting.

Allotments

- **JL:** Our allotment is becoming quite social, starting to have visits from people in not involved with HUG, coming in for produce and giving donation for it.

Library Garden

JL: This has intentionally been let be but in the autumn there will be a makeover.

- Richmond received a Silver-gilt Award for Britain in Bloom, for a first time entry. The judges were very complimentary about HUG's involvement, stating in their report: "...are encouraging by example the gardeners of the borough to engage in community gardening on a wide scale..." and "...of special note were the allotments at Manor Road, the involvement of the Ham United Group and the work to restore the Terrace Gardens, together with the nature conservation work done at Crane Park. Well done."
- Eleanor, Tibor's wife, will take over the Library Garden.

Eggs

JL: Sales over the summer were very good, £120+

Trees

JL: The trees at St Richard's are OK but those at Ham Close have been mowed over! The apple trees are doing very well at the allotment & the Library garden. In March Grey Court students & members of HUG grafted some root stock apple trees as part of Grey Court "fruitful schools" project. They will be available in the New Year, let me know if you are interested.

5 Resignation and Election of Officers

- Founding member Michael Derks has resigned.
- Understand that no one else is intending to stand down.
- We should ask for nominations, to be proposed and seconded for the posts.
- We need to have notice and a form that elections are coming up and say when the forms have to be in by, at least a couple of days before.
- **BM:** suggested that candidates and returning directors should prepare a 100 word statement.

6 AOB

- **JH:** Reference paper (send with minutes), very concerned that the Sustainable Development document sounds wonderful but it is defined in terms of growth and economics. There are vast references to economics and not much reference to wildlife. If this document goes forward without changes, it will result in lots of changes to our area. Wildlife will disappear due to "sustainable" development and it seems that only the development aspect is being considered. If council guidance is inadequate, or in any respect ignored, there will be enormous growth in expensive properties going up everywhere. What would be the status of our commons in this procedure?
- It would be nice to think that there is a measure of protection for future generations but it seems just to be about growth.
- **AB:** Think Richmond should be OK as it is likely that the development framework will be adopted as core strategy.
- **BM:** It is likely that land is protected. We are better placed than many.

- **MB:** What force in law exists over and above the existing safeguards?
- **BM:** Any contravention of planning policy goes to the (?) Secretary of State.
- **MB :** Protected land looked after by Natural England was a protection, but who is looking after it now? The environmental impact on brownfield sites is not taken into account.
- **JH:** A very important wildlife site across the river has been ruined by development, and allowed by an inspector.
- **BM:** If a plan is approved, then objectors should have a right to appeal.
- **DW:** Some unpleasant developments have happened but Richmond's record has been pretty good over the years.
- **MB:** Is there anything we can do as a group?
- **JH:** I am left with a feeling that it's going to be impossible to be taken seriously, that there just isn't the staff that there was at Natural England.
- **MB:** Understand that the council has a duty of care over these issues, but we could engage with other enthusiasts, eg badgers, to work on these issues. Drivers of this kind of thing are always voluntary organisations who could work with HUG.
- **JH:** Think we are fortunate with badgers in this area, there are two societies who would deal with it. **The main decline has been in insects and invertebrates generally. The whole structure of dealing with waste products will just disappear. We will notice that plants are not being pollinated. It is very doubtful that documentation will help. HUG could get people interested in the Opal (?) project.**
- **BM:** Best thing would be, like H&P Assn, to get copies of planning applications and HUG could then feed in to the process.
- **DW:** We should get a statement on biodiversity and how it is being dealt with on planning applications.

New members

- **CW:** We should put an item on next agenda on how to get new members in.

Achievement

- **JL:** Let us recognise the award which Zoe and George won in the recent Richmond in Bloom competition. It was the Serco Environment Award and their way of living is an example of what HUG is all about.

Date, Time and Place of Next Meeting

Extraordinary General Meeting Plus 3 November 2011 at 7.30pm. Venue tba