

The logo for the West London River Group features a stylized blue wavy line above the text "West London River Group" in a bold, blue, sans-serif font.

West London River Group

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Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the West London River Group held by Zoom on Monday 22nd May 2023 at 6.30pm

The meeting was attended by the following:

Avril Dalglish, Joint Chair of the West London River Group (WLRG), Philip Whyte, Joint Chair of the WLRG and Wandsworth Society, Diana Roth, Towpath Group, Ann Mathews, Treasurer, Roger Weston, Bishops Park, Rebecca Kendrick, Strategic Project Manager, Mark Russell, Kew Society, Caroline Whitehead, Putney Society, Dido Berkeley, Thamesbank, Angela Clarke, Hammersmith Society, Clare Graham, Battersea Society, Barbara Skorupska, Fulham Society.

No apologies have been received.

1. Minutes of the Previous AGM

The minutes of the AGM of 16th May 2022 have been circulated previously. There were no questions. The minutes were adopted.

2. Report from the Chair

The Joint Chair Avril Dalglish, reported:

Officers had attended various meetings both in person and remotely to further the aims of the group and to be apprised on any information related to the River Thames and its environs.

Thames Water has produced its draft Water Resources Management Plan.

Although there were aspects of the Plan that were to be welcomed, like many other societies and organisations we objected to the Teddington Direct River Abstraction scheme and were concerned that Mogden waste treatment plant would need to expand its facility for tertiary treatment of effluent. Given Mogden's record with sewage dumps we were not encouraged to believe that it will be able to cope with all that is required to maintain the quality of water needed in the proposed extraction scheme. Once again we raised issues over sewage and storm discharges into the River as well as the current state of the sewers in many areas.

We also made comments on LBRuT Flood Risk Management Strategy.

The application for the redevelopment of Mortlake Brewery is still unresolved, with various meetings held with other objecting groups.

Diana Roth Chair of the Towpath Group, Avril Dalglish and Hannah Gutteridge, the Thames Path National Co-ordinator met and walked a long section the River

Representing: [Barnes Community Action Group](#) | [Battersea Society](#) | [Bishop's Park Co-Ordinating Group](#) | [Cheyne Walk Trust](#) | [Fulham Society](#) | [Hammersmith & Fulham Historic Buildings Group](#) | [Hurlingham Yacht Club](#) | [The Kew Society](#) | [Thames21](#) | [London Forum of Amenity and Civic Societies](#). | [Mortlake Community Association](#) | [Mortlake with East Sheen Society](#) | [Putney Society](#) | [Strand-on-the-Green Association](#) | [Thamesbank](#) | [University of London Boathouse](#) | [Wandsworth Society](#) | [William Morris Society](#)

Thames. The prime purpose was to look at potential access difficulties to the path. The Chair stressed that it is important that members should alert officers if there appear to be any problems and this will be passed onto the National Trail co-ordinator.

3.The Thames Strategy Kew to Chelsea

Avril Dalglish then gave an update on the TSKC. The process is in place to replace Ruth Hutton, Strategy Co-ordinator and hopefully this will be achieved in the near future.

Importantly the opportunity to update our Strategy is now possible and included is a piece by Rebecca Kendrick, Strategic Project Manager who also works with the Thames Landscape Strategy, will be responsible to the TSKC Partnership Board for the Review process.

4. Thames Strategy background

Rebecca then spoke to outline the origins of The TSKC Strategy and that it had not been formally updated since its inception in 2002. The Strategy which is broken down into reaches with very specific descriptions of each area, has achieved many of its original aims and outcomes but much has changed and we have been trying to get a review for many years. An outline of the plan is attached and provides a written outline of what Rebecca discussed on line. A number of questions were posed to Rebecca. Clare Bishop from the Battersea Society asked about the City of Westminster and Rebecca responded that this stretch of the River is complicated with all the different central and local government functions to be accommodated. Clare identified a funding possibility.

5. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer reported that the accounts for the year to end May 2023 have been circulated. She explained that all outstanding matters have been dealt with. A cheque issued to the previous co-ordinator has not and will not be presented as no funds were forthcoming for the previous year. The website has been updated and this has been accounted for in the accounts.

The Strand on the Green Society have very generously made a donation in addition to the subscription. The Treasurer asked that all current subscriptions should be made as soon as possible. The adoption of the accounts was proposed by Philip Whyte and seconded by Diana Roth.

6. Appointment of Officers

The existing officers have indicated their willingness to continue for the next year and as no other nominations have been received, it was agreed. The Officers who continue in post are: Avril Dalglish Co Chair, Philip Whyte Co Chair, Ann Mathews Treasurer, Roger Weston, Diana Roth.

7. Report from Members

Towpath Group. Diana Roth advised the meeting that the group last met on the 13th March which was very well attended and a new representative of the Environment Agency Andrew Collins was welcomed.

It was pleasing to note the a second engineering team of Aaron and Robert of the PLA are now working to complement the existing team of Bernie and Nigel.

A question was raised about a small dock close to Hammersmith Bridge was being used for either the bedding out of plants or for storage prior to sale. This will be followed up.

Mark Russell of the Kew Society stated that a new litter group is being formed.

The next Towpath Group meeting will be held on the 26th June.

Roger Weston representing Bishop's Park reported that the Fulham Football Club (FFC) stand is continuing under construction with the towpath/riverside footpath closed when construction is underway.

Barbara Skorupska from the Fulham Society pointed out that continuation with building the FFC stand means the footpath is not available for pedestrians/cyclists.

Caroline Whitehead from the Putney Society said the Tideway works are almost complete with proposed plans for the improvement of Waterman's Green.

Ann Mathews Mortlake Society, the Mortlake Brewery is still in the process of being resubmitted and being considered by LBRuT.

Angela Clarke from the Hammersmith Society previously mentioned the dock area near Hammersmith Bridge.

Philip Whyte Wandsworth Society, advised of the Gas Works application towards the mouth of the River Wandle. The application is for residential development with one 30 storey building and two 12/14 storeys close to the river. The proposed structures will over shadow the River Wandle significantly and flies in the face of a previously approved masterplan.

8. AOB

Dido Berkeley Thamesbank stated that she has been engaged with the Environmental Law Foundation and other legal entities to further the cause of the River Thames having an 'entity/identity' in its own right.

Dido is seeking information on difficulties encountered with planning applications where these relate to rivers or waterways. Any contact should be directly with Thamesbank.

The Joint Thames Strategies

For many years the review and updating of the Thames Landscape Strategy, last updated in 2012 and The Kew to Chelsea Strategy, that has not been formally updated since 2002 have been a key objective for both Strategies.

An opportunity presented itself to do this along with the Thames Strategy East (overviewed by the Thames Estuary Partnership). The Environment Agency TE2100 project is seeking for all riparian London Boroughs to write a Riverside Strategy by approximately 2028. The three existing Thames Strategies: Thames Landscape Strategy: Weybridge to Kew, The Thames Strategy Kew to Chelsea and Thames Strategy East are already in existence and ideally placed to help shape this process. This has been recognised by the Environment Agency. All three Strategies are, however, in need of

updating to ensure their continued value and to take account of all the changes that have taken place.

A funding opportunity from the Thames Regional Flood and Coastal Committee, (a committee of statutory flood authorities i.e, Borough Councils) arose and a bid was made for funding that was successful and included all three Strategies. The first phase of the reviews will take place in 2023/4 with the support of the TE2100 project team. This will be to establish or re-establish contacts within the Boroughs, establishing where each Borough is on their path to writing their own riverside strategies and to collaborate on the process through experience sharing and collaboration.

This funding will enable the three Strategies to carry out a review of their Strategic Plan and to identify any updates that may be needed. Huge changes in Planning and Environmental laws, plus many others, at all levels including Local Plans have taken place since the Plans were first conceived including any updates that have taken place. This combined with climate change and all the impacts that we are and increasingly likely to be facing have all added an urgency in being able to update these Strategies.

In the first year this will involve working with Boroughs, community groups and other stakeholders including TE2100 the PLA and National Trail to make sure that current and upcoming legislation, policy and blue-sky project opportunities are captured and appropriate. TE 2100 is hopeful that the process of reviewing the Strategies will aid the Boroughs in writing theirs - to help consistency across and along the river thames - whilst also maintaining the individuality of the Boroughs and their reaches that are enshrined within the three distinct strategic plan for the Thames. Other factors will also need to be considered during the reviews such as views, vistas, recreational activity and development opportunities.

Whilst each Strategy is based on the individual character of its reaches, there are many common threads and priorities running through all three visions. This joint approach can act as an umbrella, bringing the strategies together whilst allowing for each strategy area to retain its autonomy (like chapters in a book). The aim is that by 2025 the Strategy's will be reviewed in a format that can be used to help inform riparian boroughs in the development of their Riverside Strategies. Following the completion of the Joint Review of the Thames Strategies the River will have a comprehensive handbook for the Thames from Weybridge to the sea that sets out how climate change and flood risk can be managed whilst conserving the character of each reach. This is a priority for the EATE2100 (the Environment Agency Thames Estuary flood risk scheme).

Rebecca Kendrick
Strategy Strategic Projects Manager