



Wigan Local History & Heritage Society

Minutes of the Members Meeting held on Monday May 17th 2021 via Zoom at 7:00pm

1. Number of Members present and Apologies for absence:

14 members were present.

Apologies were received from Jim Meehan, Sheila Ramsdale, John Gostellow, Ashley Brogan, Lynne Sahar, Eric and Ann Curless.

2. Minutes of previous meeting April 19th 2021:

The minutes were circulated via email prior to the meeting.

The minutes were agreed as an accurate account of the meeting:

Proposed by Andy L and seconded by Richard S.

3. Matters Arising:

Completed:

April AP1. Send Wigan Pier Information link to Ashley. Neil

April AP2. Contact Neil Harris to inform him of Derek's proposal, and a suggestion that it may be displayed within the Pier Complex. - Clare

Ongoing:

Feb AP3. Investigate if any buildings within KS HAZ were once used as industrial buildings. Ashley B, Bill A

Feb AP4. Arrange to set up Internet Banking and PayPal facilities to enable members to pay for future subscriptions directly online - Sheila R

March AP2. Set up a Local Listings Meeting: agree letter to Council - Clare K, Ashley B, Andy L

May. AP1. List an item on June meeting agenda to appoint a Treasurer. Clare K

Andy L gave a brief update on progress made regarding a report to Wigan Council of the demolition of a listed wall at Beech Hill Farm

4. Projects update:

No progress due to Pandemic restrictions.

Gidlow Sisters project:

The search to find the missing paintings of the sisters and the stained glass window continues.

Plantation Gates:

HLF2 Wigan Council has announced a successful bid. A consultation meeting with key stakeholders has been arranged.

Common Seal Stonework:

No further progress to date. It was suggested that a good site for this will be within the KS HAZ area.

5. Working Group Reports:

King Street Cultural Consortia:

Following the concerns expressed at the April meeting regarding duplication of research by different parties, a joint meeting was arranged between Rosie Scudder the Project Manager for the Cultural Consortium, Phil Machin Project manager for King Street HAZ, Peter, Neil, Clare from WLHHS on Friday 30th April. An agreement was made between all parties on the best ways forward to avoid duplication of work: it was agreed that

Rosie will provide a list of people/artists who will need access to historical research to inform their work, and on that basis they will be given access to our Dropbox files on a read only basis and will also use the excellent finished research articles uploaded onto WLHHS site and on Wigan Buildings.

It was clarified that the WLHHS will be the lead partners on historical research and own intellectual rights to this and the Cultural events provided by the Cultural Consortium will put a cultural spin on the historic research in which to create footfall and interest onto the street.

Meeting 12th May discussed press launch and logo. Old Courts is offering an opportunity for groups to apply for a community radio license – they will run 10 community radio channels.

King Street Heritage Action Zone:

Two meetings since last member's meeting: 29th April and 13th May.

Historic England asked the group to consider taking part in the High Street Festival of Archaeology 17th July to 7th August. We agreed we should and are currently meeting up tomorrow morning in Believe Square to plan a route for a guided walk. This will be delivered both virtually and physically but is still in the early planning stages.

To act as a pilate forerunner to the heritage tours planned for the Heritage week in September.

A bid for a Wigan Council Community Recovery grant for the sum of £500 was successfully made.

An award of £500 towards the cost of a video recording camera to assist in the delivery of the Street That Was project.

Marketing resources in the form of 30 golfing umbrellas with different logos of all concerned for use in the guided walks will also be arranged.

WLHHS named as the lead partners for The Street That Was and that the Society will own all intellectual rights to the research. This will culminate in the publication of a book at the end of the project in 2024. This will be a legacy archive document for future generations of Wigan People. The publication of the book will help to promote the Society locally and nationally.

WLHHS is to be given a place on the HAZ Board and Richard has agreed to represent the Society at their quarterly meetings starting with a live meeting in the ex TKMax building in Grand Arcade on Tuesday 25th May.

Grimes Arcade: Council are in discussions with the owners of Grimes Arcade Tony Callaghan and Neil Kay about the possibility of opening it up for guided walks. They have stated it is their intention to maintain the heritage on the ground floor and in the cellars.

A press release is to go out around 26th May.

Group to review content on KSHAZ on WLHHS website before it links up with the Council website 26th May launch

It was suggested that we highlight a building each month and any hidden gems we may come across.

A meeting with the HE Listing Team is to be set up. Date to be arranged.

Richard is writing an article for the June edition of Past Forward on the Leader Building.

Archives:

Peter reported:

Pilot volunteers completed forms, visit to Local Studies arranged for 25th May, followed by virtual trading session 27th May.

Peter has produced a training programme on how to use scanner. PC ordered. Equipment is to be kept at Local Studies following completion of necessary paperwork regarding ownership rights and insurance.

Wigan Pier Project:

Neil L reported on a need to research an accurate historical record. Derek reported he was in the process of drafting an accurate chronological list of maps and diagrams to understand the development of hydrology in the Wigan area.

Working Groups are open to all members, more volunteers are needed to assist with research.

Please inform secretary of your interest.

6. Websites and Social Media Reports:

Peter F reported on the numbers visiting the WLHHS website and the recent updates:

History of Jireh Chapel presentation by Pam Thomas.

Memories of Whit Walks by Tom Walsh.

80th Anniversary of Liverpool Blitz and memories of Wigan people affected by this. By BETA

1811 Census provided by Ron Hunt and Wigan World.

KSHAZ:

Lost Buildings

Research on KS buildings and families uploaded: Meeks, Grimes, Minorca

Update on process of integrating websites between Wigan Council/Historic England/WLHHS/BPT

Ongoing dialogue is taking place with Conservation Officer regarding buildings missing from unadapted BLint List.

Clare K reported on the success of the FB and Twitter Pages with the number of new followers growing every day. 2157 followers on FB and 572 on Twitter.

2 posts about the KS HAZ project The Street That Was and asking for memories – introductory post very popular, reached over 8000 within a few hours and eventually went up to 15.5k, second post on Faggy Lane Bridge 20.5K and lots of personal memories and pics.

From a Twitter follower Brian Groome a national reporter and writer got in touch offering to do a talk on his new book Northerners for the society on January next year.

As a result of this combined success membership has continued to grow with a total of 100 members.

7. Eckersley Mill:

Andy L reported concerns about recent developments on-site and that Wigan Council had issued a Section 78 notice to the owners to demolish an unsafe building.

The site has deteriorated significantly over the years through lack of necessary maintenance and resulted in the need for demolition of Grade Two listed buildings.

A discussion took place regarding an appropriate response from WLHHS, bearing in mind that the Society has significantly raised its profile with Wigan Council.

May AP2. Continue dialogue with Wigan Council Planning Officers and report back to next meeting to inform a decision on going forward. Andy L

8. Any Other Business:

New member William Sharp is planning to research Council Housing in Beech Hill. Andy L offered to meet up with him and to assist where he can.

May. AP3. Share contact details between the two members. Clare

Jan T asked if hard copies of the Wigan Historic Environment Strategy were available. Clare offered to print a copy and send it out to her.

May. AP4. Print off copy of Historic Environment Strategy and post to Jan T. Clare

KSHAZ group members to meet at Believe Square to plan out a route for a walking tour. Tuesday 18th May at 9.30am.

Change to June presentation:

A talk on the Rise and Fall of Thomas Taylor will not take place, instead Jim Meehan will present his latest research on the History of the Timberlake family.

9. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Monday 21st June at 7pm via Zoom