



Wigan Local History & Heritage Society

Minutes of the Members Meeting held on Monday 21st June via Zoom at 7:00pm

1. Number of members present and apologies for absence:

12 members were present.

Apologies were received from Richard Simpson, Sheila Ramsdale, John Gostellow, Ashley Brogan, David Fox, Pam Thomas, Rita Fell

2. Minutes of the previous meeting May 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 Neil L

3. Matters arising

The secretary went through the action points:

Completed:

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

Ongoing:

April AP2. Continue to contact Neil Harris to inform him of Derek's proposal to create a piece of art work from wood to commemorate the cotton workers of Wigan, and a suggestion that it may be displayed within the Pier Complex. - Clare

4. Eckersley Mill

Andy gave an update on Eckersley Mill and the demolition work taking place.

Asbestos has been discovered on site so all works have been put on hold.

Andy has requested a site visit with the Conservation officer and he has requested that WLHHS is kept in the loop.

June AP1. Continue to monitor the situation at Eckersley Mill and to update the group at next meeting.

5. Nominations for Treasurer.

Clare Kenyon nominated Neil Linford for the role of Treasurer

Lynn Sahin seconded the nomination

Neil Linford accepted the nomination for treasurer on condition that the banking system is changed over to internet banking

June AP2. Arrange to set up Internet Banking and PayPal facilities to enable members to pay for future subscriptions directly online - Neil L

6. Proposal to change the day of members meetings from Monday to Tuesday.

A discussion took place

A decision was made to bring it to the attention of all members including those unable to make it to the meeting this evening.

June AP3. Write to members and ask for their preferences. Collate and bring back to July meeting for further discussion. - Clare

7. The Galleries Redevelopment

The secretary detailed a virtual meeting that had taken place between WLHHS and the Developer of the Project. The Society had been approached by Wigan Council to formally meet with the Developer as part of the consultation process. They had asked that we provide written questions in advance of the meeting. The secretary had asked the wider membership to send in any questions they may have of the Developer. 9 written questions were sent to them prior to the meeting.

The meeting consisted of a presentation which took up 50 minutes of the allocated time, leaving very little time for discussion at the end. They showed slides and explained that the planning application was a hybrid application consisting of two parts:

Part one is a full planning application which includes plans to demolish 8 acres of the town centre along with the Galleries and Market and to construct four blocks of flats, a hotel, a pavilion and a scaled down market hall, which is to be moved to the site of the current Marketgate building.

Part 2 is for outline planning only and consists of a further four blocks of flats, 10 townhouses, and a multi entertainment complex with a multiplex cinema, a bowling alley and indoor mini golf.
Because this is outline planning there are no details of design or an acknowledged occupier or building owner or investor.

The Developer sent copies of the slides outlining the proposed redevelopment and these were shared with members at the meeting.
A discussion took place and certain points were raised:

1877 original market canopy, need to know what is proposed for this.

Original market hall clock needs to be saved.

As much heritage and local character as possible should be preserved.

It was observed that the designs looked more akin to a student campus with halls of residence rather than a market town centre.

Wigan has an ageing population which needs to be considered.

If it is passed there should be some beneficial spin off such as funding to help other crumbling buildings in the Town centre.

It was suggested that in addition to the Society response there should also be individual responses sent in too.

It was proposed and agreed that the Society should set up a response group and write a response.

Jan, Derek, David, Clare and Jim volunteered to be part of the response group.

June AP4. A response group will meet to discuss a WLHHS response to the Planning Application. Secretary to organise via Zoom.

8. Working Group Reports:

Archives:

Andy reported:

A research timetable has been set up for 6 members of the KS HAZ group.

King Street Cultural Consortium

No update this month

King Street Heritage Action Zone:

Clare reported briefly:

There is to be a meeting arranged with Historic England Listings team to discuss a future training package for members of WLHHS.

Jim, Neil and Clare will attend and report back.

A building of the month will be featured each month.

There is an urgent need for more research volunteers. Jan volunteered to join the group.

Jim discussed the Timberlake research he'd uncovered and said that a potential archaeological project by members of the Archaeological Society was to be undertaken.

Wigan Pier Project:

No update this month.

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

Please inform secretary of your interest.

9. Website and Social Media Reports:

Clare reported

FaceBook Page now has a following of 2317

Twitter 638 followers

Jim's talk on Timberlakes has been very successful with 45 people at the live talk and it had a further 306 views on You Tube

10. Any other Business

- There will be no presentation in July but instead there will be a series of guided walks Coccium to Coal Miners
Jim has produced a slide pack and it is hoped that this can be used virtually for those members unable to access the walks.
- Derek has kindly agreed to do a presentation in August on the Douglas Navigation.

11. Date and time of next meeting:

Monday 19th July at 7pm via Zoom.