

THE RIVER THAMES SOCIETY : UPPER TIDEWAY BRANCH
MINUTES of the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

held at 7.15 pm on Wednesday 21 February 2024 at the Eel Pie Island Museum

PRESENT were Hilary Pereira (in the Chair) and Committee members, John Maguire, Scott Pereira, Pat Spaight, Miranda Vickers and Elizabeth Wood; also Branch members Peter Banks, Ian Boyd, Richard Brittlebank, Lizzy Danckwerts, Derek Garnet, Penny Jones, Angela & Patrick Kidner, Jane & Neil Parkinson, Tony Schiemann, Trish de Villiers and Nicky Wood.

APOLOGIES were received from Alexa Bailey, Jack Betteridge and Rex Leyland.

1. MINUTES of the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING held 22 February 2023 were approved.

There was one matter arising: **Recording traditional plying places along the river:** Elizabeth was keen to pursue this and she and Hilary will meet to agree action.

2. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT The written report (attached) had been circulated and Hilary expanded on this and responded to questions.

3. FINANCE The Treasurer reminded members that the Branch no longer has its own bank account, any large expenditure being met from central funds which receive the subscription income. Some cash is held, however, and in the year ended 31 October 2023 a donation of £35 had been received and £12 had been spent on posting the AGM papers to those few members who still do not have email. This left a cash balance of £23 at the year end. The accounts were approved.

4. ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE

Officers

In the absence of any other nominations, all current officers were re-elected, unopposed:

Chairman	Hilary Pereira
Vice Chairman	Jack Betteridge
Honorary Treasurer	Scott Pereira
Honorary Secretary	Patricia Spaight

Committee

Current members **John Maguire**, **Miranda Vickers** and **Elizabeth Wood** plus one new nomination **Patrick Kidner**, proposed by Jack Betteridge and seconded by Scott Pereira, were all elected unopposed.

5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- A report on activity since October 2023 had been circulated, with a further update being renewed activity on the **PLA's proposals for changing their Act**.
- Peter Banks drew attention to renewed interest in the proposal to develop the **old Barnes railway bridge** into an accessible garden walkway and asked members to register their support on <https://www.theviewatbarnesbridge.org>
- Scott mentioned the **Venetian Parades** which had been held on the river in years past, and there were plans for a talk about these in 2025.
- Hilary answered questions about the **River Thames Scheme** and drew attention to the joint RTS/Richmond Society meeting on Flooding on 25 April.

The meeting closed at 8.15 pm

OVERVIEW

As has become usual, the branch had a mixed portfolio of **events** in this year, ranging from pub drinks, a riverside picnic, attendance at a jumble sale and a talk. A select group of us visited Mogden Sewage Works on the 2nd March. There were two foreshore walks, one in late November 2022 at Richmond during the annual drain off, where excess river water meant there was less foreshore to explore than expected, and the other in September 2023 near Brentford Ait, where we met some challenging mud. We also had a presence at events organised by others, such as the Great River Race. The RTS cutter remained stationed with the branch, but was little used.

The year in question was dominated by concerns over the river, stimulated by Thames Water's plans as outlined in their **TWRMP24 (Thames Water Resource Management Plan 24)**. The main interest locally was the proposals to extract more water from above Teddington, replacing it with treated sewage from Mogden. A detailed critique was prepared of the plans, various meetings attended, and a response submitted from the branch on behalf of the RTS as a whole. All details were shared with members through the RTS website. Other consultations responded to during the year were the **Environment Agency's long-term plans for flood risk in the estuary (TE2100)** and for flood control in the lower non-tidal river, the **River Thames Scheme**.

We work closely with other organisations and none so close as the **Thames Landscape Strategy (TLS)**. The RTS is represented on the TLS community advisory group and we attended several TLS-sponsored meetings during the year. Several local RTS members volunteered during this year with the TLS, including in a hydrology investigation covering the riverside lands of Richmond Golf Course and the Old Deer Park relevant to their rewilding initiative.

The branch continues in dialogue with the **Port of London Authority (PLA)** which has responsibility for our local river. Questions raised on behalf of local members at the PLA public meetings are shared, with answers, on the RTS website. Responsibility for the tidal Brent has been one recurring topic of correspondence and discussion with the PLA.

Planning by the river remains a key issue for the branch. The future of Twickenham Riverside has been a recurring issue, supposedly resolved during this year but not in a way that met with the approval of the RTS representatives on the local stakeholder group. Also in this last year the RTS has opposed plans for building right by the river at Ranelagh Drive, just below the half tide lock.

Among **other issues** which have kept your committee busy have been the future of moorings at Watermans Park, Brentford and various discussions about residential boats, including with the GLA member for SW London.

As well as communications to members by email, in this last year there has been increasing use of the **RTS website** (www.riverthamessociety.org.uk), so look at the branch section for updates on the current key issues.