

Minutes Mixed Pond Association Annual General Meeting Thursday 11th October 2018

The meeting began at 6.55pm

Attendees

Mike Sands (co-chair)
Margaret Dickinson (co-chair)

Committee Members:

Felicity Moir
Ana Szerwo
John Weller
Kasia Sikora
Lola Culsán
Janette Rutterford

MPA Members:

Rita Smith
Rodney Adams
Charles Marks
Jackie Risman
Christine Maddy
John O'Connor

Apologies:

Comittee Members: Julia Dick, Briony Fain, Rachel Douglas

MPA Members: Caitlin Davies, Ray Long, Frank Trentman

1) Minutes and matters arising

The previous minutes were read and approved which led to further questions about the result of the Hampstead Heath Community Vision consultation and what had happened about the suggestion for a bike compound. It was reported that the shower in the public area had been screened from public view with piled up vegetation.

2) Chair's Report

The equal importance of the mixed pond (MP) with the men's and ladies pond was raised. It was pointed out that the MP does not have the same electricity or water pressure and that the new aerator that had been installed for water quality and Conservation purposes doesn't work due to inadequate power supply.

It was reported that the recent desilting had been done properly due to pressure brought to bear by the MPA and that this was an achievement. The importance of recruiting new members who would become involved and attend the Swimmers Forum was raised as a means of keeping up the pressure for recognition of the MP.

It was reported that despite the lack of rain in summer the water quality had been maintained and that the banks were now looking much better. There had been many more visitors due to the hot weather and the lifeguards had risen to the challenge.

There was a suggestion that a depth marker gauge be installed because of depth changes during the Summer Season which could prove dangerous to divers.

The ongoing issue of water quality was discussed and it was reported that tests had been carried out but, as yet, there were no results. It was suggested that this information could be added to the MPA website and that pressure should be applied at the Forum to get the City of London to install an aerator/power supply that is fit for purpose.

The location for a cycle rack in the MP had been agreed, but the City of London were dealing with this as a single contract and they could not proceed until they had reached agreement on the siting of cycle racks at the men's pond.

The City of London's Conservation Team were developing a Heath wide design for Wheelie Bins that would prevent squirrels getting stuck when foraging in the bins.

There was a request for showers in the changing areas. This is particularly important in the summer when silt sticks to the body. The present arrangements led to people having to undress in the shower in the public area. During the winter season, Marc Hutchinson the Chair of the HHWSC had provided a hose shower for the ladies' changing area, but had been asked to remove it by the lifeguards during the summer season because of the risk of flooding the Ladies Compound. It was

suggested that adequate showers could be provided and fixed above the drain. It was agreed that the MPA should push harder for this at the Forum.

Regarding recent transgender issues - it was reported that lifeguards had been sent on training and the City of London would issue guidelines.

Women would be taking over the Mixed Pond for a few weeks in Oct/Nov 18 during works to the ladies' pond. HHWSC members would be able to use the men's pond until 9.30am. The question of why that couldn't happen at the MP was justified by the need to preserve female exclusive access on at least one of the Ponds for a small minority of religious women.

The Swimmers Forum had agreed to develop a protocol to formalise what should happen in future when one pond was closed and this would provide the MPA with the opportunity to push for the preservation of at least one mixed session in the MP per day.

Beginning and End Season Tea parties were agreed to be a good way to gain members and it was proposed to add a mid-season tea party during one of the late Wednesday evening sessions in July 2019. Permission should be sought at the next Forum.

3) Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer gave the report which stated that income was growing, meaning it would be possible to book a room for the next meeting, should that be necessary. Current funds in the bank account are around £495.

4) Membership Report

It was reported that there was currently no Membership Secretary but that the Association had 200 members and that it is important to maintain a large membership in order that the MPA voice was properly recognised by the City of London.

It was suggested that the MPA hold more events and a larger AGM in a public room.

It was raised that there is currently no system for collection of membership fees apart from cash at the beginning/end of season

parties. Rodney Adams suggested setting up a paypal account, but it was pointed out that the problem would then be where the money would be paid into. It was suggested that people could pay online through their bank account.

After discussion it was agreed that the membership list should be better organised and maintained.

There was a suggestion to sell t-shirts, mugs and hats using third party merchandising and that there could be a competition for a logo which would raise the profile of the MP and the MPA.

It was proposed that John Weller and Rodney Adams could be responsible for merchandising.

It was proposed that the membership fee be raised from £2 to £3 for the 2019 swimming season. This was voted on and agreed 12-4.

The need to get the membership more engaged was discussed and a monthly newsletter was proposed. Margaret said she would be happy to take responsibility for the newsletter if Kasia would be prepared to replace her as co-chair.

5) Modernising maintenance of the MPA Membership list.

Charles Marks briefed the Committee on the improvements that have been made to the Highgate Mens Pond Association website that included an integrated membership app that new and renewing members can use to check their membership by signing in with their email address and then pay the annual subscription by paypal, credit, debit, BACS or even by standing order.

The MPA Treasurer Briony Fane responded by explaining that she had set-up the Mixed Pond Association bank account at the NatWest Branch in Crouch End and Hornsey to get things going with a basic account for annual subscriptions back in 2006 and that Rachel Douglas the previous Chair of the MPA was the other authorised signatory.

Mike Sands thanked Briony for her long-standing assistance and proposed that the Nat West account be updated so that online banking be made available for all account signatories.

Margaret Dickinson reported that Rachel Douglas wished to stand down from the Committee and this meant that she should be removed as signatory from the Nat West association bank account. Briony Fane said that once the new arrangements were in place with the bank she would like to stand down as Treasurer and to be removed as a bank signatory as well.

Charles Marks and Mike Sands offered to be added as signatories to the Nat West bank account and to apply for online banking access for the association bank account and make a request for both to be granted account signatory rights with the proviso that only one be required to sign off items (ie: either can sign/approve transactions etc). This was unanimously approved by the Committee.

Mike Sands asked Charles Marks to set up a PayPal account for the MPA in order that membership payments can be processed online. This account to be connected to the MPA bank account so that funds can be transferred into the MPA account.

Charles Marks also offered to setup online membership management by using MemberMojo so that annual payment can be made automatically by members and email reminders sent out. This will incur an annual fee of between £30 and £60. The proposal was approved by the Committee.

Mike Sands thanked everyone for their contribution and asked Briony to make contact with Rachel to initiate matters with Nat West to get things sorted out in time for the May 3rd opening of the 2019 Summer Season to make it easier for new and existing members to pay their £3.00 Annual Subscription.

6) Transition to Winter Swimming Season

Kasia raised the fact that, during the winter, the lifebuoy ring at the MP is locked up and that if people overstay in the water and develop hypothermia or get into trouble it is irresponsible not to have access to a lifebuoy ring. It was agreed to raise this issue with Marc Hutchinson of the HHWSC.

Margaret also suggested another lifesaving session for winter swimmers and that swimmers should be advised to always take a phone in case of emergencies.

7) Committee Elections

It was agreed that Briony and Rachel should continue as treasurer/account signatories for the time being with the intention of handing over to Janette Rutterford as Treasurer and Mike and Charles as account signatories when the new arrangements were in place. Mike thanked Briony and Rachel for all their hard work and dedication.

The following elections were proposed and approved by the Committee:

Lola Culsán - Secretary
Margaret Dickinson - Newsletter and Web Content Editor
Charles Marks - Membership Secretary/Bank Signatory
Julia Dick - Committee Member
John Weller - Website Development and Merchandising
Kasia Sikora and Michael Sands - Co-Chairs
Michael Sands – Bank Account signatory
Janette Rutterford -Committee Member

Felicity Moir and Ana Szerwo - Events Team

8) Any Other Business

It was proposed that Mike Sands and Kasia Sikora take the opportunity of the forthcoming HHWSC AGM to ask Marc Hutchinson to ask the City Of London to install the same sort of rope wraps around the handrails as are present at the WP and MP to stop skin sticking to them during the winter months and that there should be access to the lifebuoy ring and lifesaving training. Winter swimming members should be sent links to lifesaving videos and there should be pictures on the noticeboards.

It was also proposed that the HHWSC be asked to provide an accessible receptacle with a foil blanket for use in the case of hypothermia.

There was a suggestion that the next meeting might include an outside speaker or learning event.

Rodney offered his house as a venue for the next meeting.

It was suggested that another committee meeting should be held at the end of April 2019 to provide feedback on all the suggestions raised and set future targets.