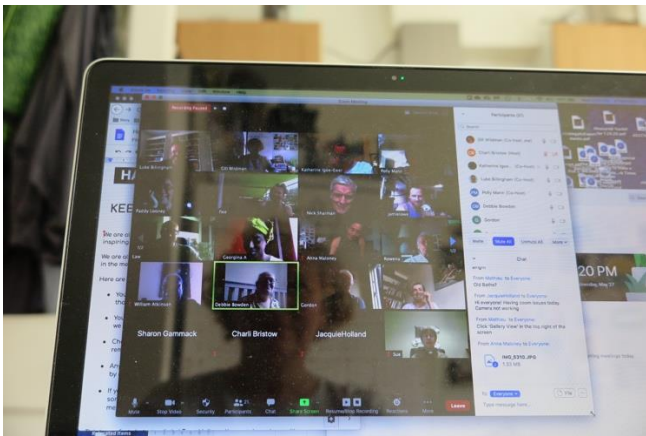




Hackney Wick Town Hall – Minutes 27.05.2020

Present organisers: Katherine, Polly, Gill, Georgina, Charli, Luke

Present participants: Debbie Bowden, Kerry Sheldrick, Paddy Looney, Nick Sharman, Jim Lowe, Mathieu Rogers, Flee, Law, Gordon, Rowena, Jacquie Holland, Melissa Butcher, Anna Maloney, Sharon G, Sue Makin, Chris K



TOWN HALL DISCUSSIONS & OVERALL ACTIONS AGREED

ACTIONS ON GAIA/OLD BATHS SITUATION:

- Invite Stour and Yolanda to next Town Hall
- Yolanda is taking legal action, so it might need care
- Send a message of support to Yolanda

ACTIONS ON TRAFFIC/POLLUTION/PEDESTRIANISATION:

- **ACTION:** group to compile list of traffic/pollution issues in the area that Mathieu is examining to inform the brief for addressing these issues. (Area: tru A12 down to the lea (North Hackney Wick)). Jim to work with local business and residents to send through to Mathieu.
- **ACTION:** Mathieu to set up meeting between street engineers, Jim, Flee. Mathieu to link Dave Pilkington in. For discussion about pedestrianisation of Felstead St.

ACTIONS ON GOOD STUFF:

- Those who want info on Old Baths Youth Hub development can email Mathieu/Polly/Luke for latest
- Opportunity to explore why people are volunteering, find out the reasons, in order to help sustain this kind of activity?

- There should be training available for volunteers, to reward and further encourage them, and also to help them with their skills and their careers if they are at-risk of losing work

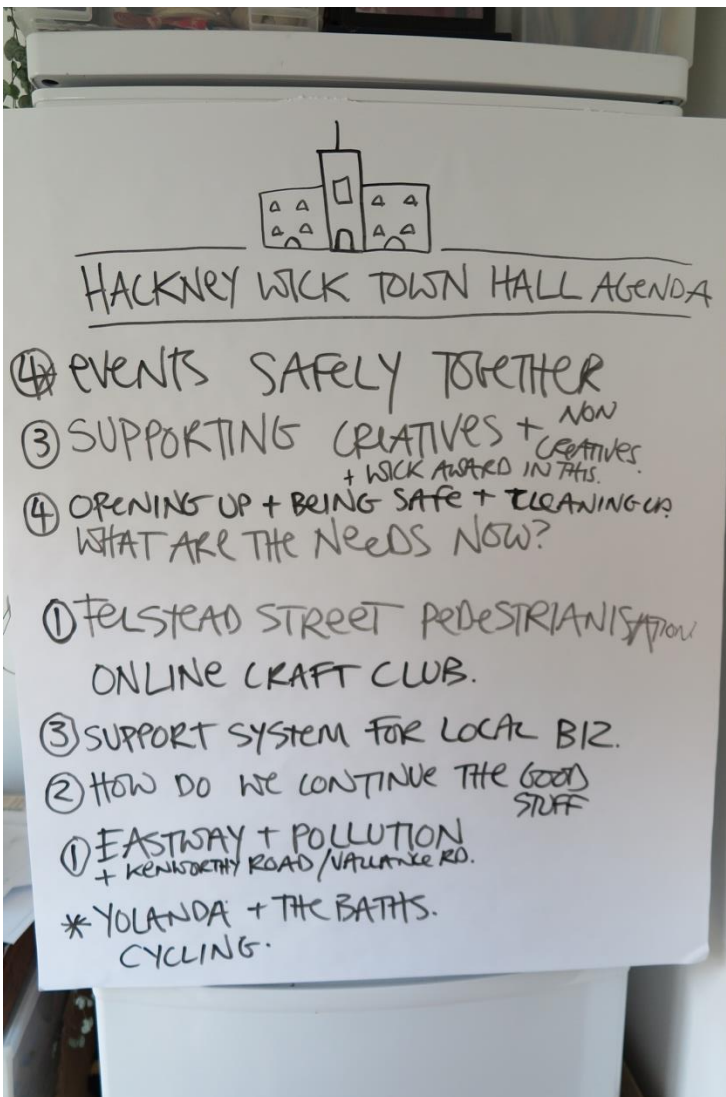
ACTIONS ON EASING OF LOCK-DOWN & REOPENING OF BUSINESSES

- If gatherings are happening outside, toilets are an issue. Could the Old Baths machine be used to produce green, environmentally friendly, compostable, sustainable portable loos?

ACTIONS ON SUPPORT FOR BUSINESSES

- More info needed from council about support available for businesses
- Liaise with local businesses to talk about being more sustainable during the pandemic
- More signposting support for local businesses to reach the help they need

SETTING THE AGENDA



SETTING THE AGENDA: BIG CHAT ALTOGETHER PRIOR TO BREAK-OUTS

The first stage of the Town Hall is setting the Agenda

Discussion of agenda topics for break-outs

- Greening ideas to share
- Pedestrianisation of Felstead st → high street/town centre kind of thing
- Ditto above, plus more cycle lanes, trees and plants, more people-friendly, plastic in the river

- Traffic, exhaust fumes on Eastway
- What are the needs in the immediate community in wick, how could we support each other? Cycling for wellbeing
- Systems of support for local service providers and businesses who've been affected by COVID, as lockdown easing begins
- Will 2020 be the year that hackney wick changes for good?
- Advice and inspiration for re-energising our whatsapp craft club
- How do we keep up volunteering that have happened during the crisis, and keep everyone together as they have been during this time (keeping up neighbourly energy)?
- Ballance Rd and Kenworthy Road crazy-busy, pollution issues
- How can we make outside space around Hackney Wick work for everyone?
- It is sad about the wonderful community café in the Old Baths, Yolanda's eviction
 - A WickEd alternative? Events in the absence of physical events? Focused on people meeting others in the area, sharing artwork
 - How do artists and creatives get through this time?
 - Supporting the work of Old Baths & Gaia Pulses?
 - How do we reduce loneliness?

Gordon's thanks!

- Gordon thanks Katherine, Polly and all for being legends at getting food to the Trowbridge members!

Throughout these minutes you will see the potential actions in red.

Session 1: OLD BATHS AND YOLANDA ISSUE

The whole group felt that this issue needed its own session.

- Consensus among the group that Yolanda having to leave the Old Baths is a significant disappointment for the local community
- Mathieu briefing on Yolanda:
 - Old Baths managed by London Coaching Academy til 2017. Mismanagement of the building, rents not paid etc. In 2017 returned to council with Temporary licenses put in place with a few tenants. Offered space out to various workspace providers at low rents. Stour won a bid to take over the space, took over the building on 1st October 2019 and have the lease for 7 years. They have to manage and operate the building, including all sub-tenants
 - Mathieu is working with Yolanda to get her some grants, help her look for other places, etc.
- Someone expressed concern about Yolanda putting a lot of work and love into the Old Baths over the last 6 years, so it's sad if all that is lost. She made the Old Baths a welcoming space, she ran all kinds of wellbeing events etc. A big loss for the building and for the local neighbourhood.
- Cameraworks will still be in the Old Baths (the organisation who manage the hall in the Old Baths)
- Someone – a councillor told him that Yolanda had agreed to everything that she was asked to by Stour, but was still turned down
- Someone raised concern about conflict of interest among those running and in the old baths
- Someone highlighted that Yolanda had supported Stour's bid, suggests Yolanda and Stour come to a public meeting / Town Hall for discussion on the topic, as there are limits to what he can say on their behalf
- Mathieu and Cllr Chris K say avenues have been exhausted – it's now happening, need to look for future solutions:
 - LBH supporting Yolanda as an individual
 - Finding a new space for Yolanda

- History of being a café in the Old Baths – Sharon worked there!
- Need to look for lessons going forward
- A very close neighbour, concerned about a return to antisocial behavior that was happening
- Real respect for what has been built – and pity for what looks likely to be lost.

ACTIONS ON GAIA/OLD BATHS:

- **Invite Stour and Yolanda to next Town Hall**
- **Yolanda is taking legal action, so it might need care**
- **Send a message of support to Yolanda**

Session 2: BREAKOUTS

Group 1: Traffic, Pedestrianisation & Pollution

GENERAL

- Public realm improvements strategy happening in pressure areas. Pressures areas identified by us as:
 - A12
 - Crossing near junction of Osborne
 - Berkshire Road
- Temporary pedestrianism following COVID means a good time to have these conversations.
- Concerns about drug running might also be alleviated
- How do we get involvement in the plan council's plan. Would be great to have public consultation in this (parents, children) - particularly on the risk areas identified.
- Mathieu from Hackney Council thinks this would be need to happen in conjunction with wider work. First, understanding needs and putting together a brief. Then consultation and engagement work to follow.

FELSTEAD STREET

- Felstead St is key in linking old and new communities - a key area for investment.
- Could Felstead street be a pilot area to test working collaboratively to improve streets. Jim and Flee have been looking at ideas - have some ideas that might be low budget
- Got a good in with the work happening on the Trowbridge Centre - good moment to push with the council.
- Can 'we' bring plans to LBH (Jim has intimate knowledge of the road!)
- Government has just released some funding for high streets - moment to use this!

LORRIES

- Articulated lorries going past schools/shops etc – signage not clear going to Raimhs and constructions sites – can we do something here?
- Mathieu is trying to meet lots of people and there is an engagement process planned - how to get involved.

CYCLING

- With new movements in government - is this the time to strike on cycling in HW. Creating space for cyclists to be safe and not in the way of pedestrians.
- Not enough space for the cyclists on the Eastway - dangerous! Can we make the Eastway one-way.
- All the cyclists on the canal mean you can't walk around there. Is becoming a challenge route. This could be rectified by better cycle routes.

POLLUTION

- Can we get pollution monitors at the Eastway junction? That might lead to some evidence about the phasing of the lights and potentially more support for cycle infrastructure around the Eastway.

THINGS TO DO:

- **ACTION: group to compile list of traffic/pollution issues in the area that Mathieu is examining to inform the brief. (Area: from A12 down to the Lea (North Hackney Wick) to send through to inform the brief - Jim to work with local business and residents to send through to Mathieu - overgroweast@gmail.com**
- **ACTION: Mathieu to set up meeting between street engineers, Jim, Flee. Mathieu to link Dave Pilkington in**

Group 2: How do we continue the good stuff?

- Lots of good stuff has come from covid- people talk to each other, TRAS and MA groups have responded very swiftly to look out for each other and vulnerable people, ++ reciprocity, people have had time to notice and have had licence to start conversations - what help do I need? what can I do?
- As people go back to work there is a danger that contact will be lost with the new volunteers who have stepped up in the crisis.
- importantly- relationships between different groups have been initiated
- Need to consider people's motivations for volunteering and address these to retain the local volunteering offer - invite these people to stay involved - make sure they know they are needed/valued.
- Need to share a different vision for HW
- volunteering could be a way into a different kind of job for people who need to find new work in the future
- Need to consider potential £72m hole in council budget - community will have to take more action to do differently to address local need
- People in need are slow to ask for help. Need will continue (or increase) so offer has to re-stated time after time. People need time to trust an offer and to take it up
- Need for socially distanced contact now, especially for vulnerable, older people. People will need lots of support to re-emerge from lock-down - Young people too
- People need an opportunity to share their experiences and stories. Should try to find a mechanism for doing this locally as a community
- Anticipate need for long-term mental health support for all groups. Need to consider how, as a community, we can support people recover from trauma and build resilience

Re-think traffic

- Mayor of London urging move towards cycling and walking
- Now have a good opportunity to re-think local traffic issues
- can't change fact that HW is a route to A12 but room there is scope for improvements
- current road blocks near Homerton Station to create space for social distancing has offered an opportunity to explore a different type of flow
- General support for the idea to consult on making some/all of Felstead Street pedestrian/bike access only. Participants thought this would work well

Old Baths

- **People want update on development of youth hub behind old baths**
- Want to find out more about what's gone on with Gaia Pulses and Old Baths. Concern to support local businesses at this time

Group 3: Supporting business, organisations and arts initiatives during this time

It would be interesting to know how the council will support local businesses, organisations and initiatives during this time? Added plastic waste from take away containers. Can't take reusable coffee cups to coffee shops anymore during this time. Feels like we're going backwards. During lockdown, it was only supposed to be locals using the canal, but that doesn't necessarily happen, however it does generate revenue for local businesses. One vegan food shop owner did get more customers during lockdown. Perhaps liaise with businesses to talk about how might we be more sustainable during the pandemic

Pinpoint and direct people to what's available, HWTH can be another platform to support businesses to get funding It would be interesting to know what the council is doing about business rates. Would they suspend it during this time.

Are the council going to do anything, I know they have tried to do some things?

- Would non-independents see this as an opportunity to move in as smaller, more local businesses collapse ?
- There were new shops that opened just opened before lockdown. How do we keep the momentum up?
- Hackney Wicked was good to promote the area, but will this go ahead online?
- If we don't have Hackney WickEd as a festival, is there a way to still do it - perhaps online
- Concerns around businesses boarding up, as more and more boarded up shops emerging
- There was a grant scheme for organisations that get business rates
- How do you get support if you're a freelance artist?
- The markets, like broadway market, put all of their traders online, so people can still buy from their favourite traders
- Retailers are open on the 15th of June, are local businesses ready for the demand?
- If you get business rates under a certain value, you can apply for a grant

Will everyone just head to the nearest pub or restaurants?

- 15th of June - for non-essential retail
- Pubs and restaurants are undecided
- A night-time economy was developing in Hackney Wick before the lockdown

Cultural Interest Group (CIG) have a monthly meeting and a newsletter. They are focused on the creative businesses in Hackney Wick Fish Island.

Well Street market was ceased before lockdown, but was a hub for some businesses. Chatsworth market is also of concern.

Group 4: The loosening of lockdown & businesses re-opening

- Promoting virtual experiences
- Talked about the difficulties balancing off licenses wanting to be open; people wanting parks open; residents not wanting disruption (people urinating in the street etc.) Promoting virtual experiences.

Businesses are going to use off-licenses to sell alcohol. Within their rights to do so, but causes problems. They're selling to people who are gathering out in the sun. Public toilets had to be closed, so led to a lot of public toileting. London Fields toilets are going to open. Notices about washing hands, about using toilets at their own risk. One of the group raised concerns about cultural venues – there's an opportunity for them to run events outside, though, because as long as social distancing is observed, the consensus is that it is safe. But there's still an issue there with toileting. It is possible to hire in portaloos, council have some portable urinals.

- **Venues in Hackney Wick who have off licenses and want to serve alcohol could chip in together and rent portaloos for people to use, or work out how to mitigate the public toileting issue in general?**

One of the group works at DCMS and could feedback to central gov't the need for more public toilet provision, given that so many events etc are going to move outdoors

- **WickAward lead green toilet revolution in Hackney Wick? Compost-led?**
- All the venues in Hackney Wick are using their off licenses currently. Good that they're re-opening, but raises issues in terms of people gathering etc.
-

Session 3: WHOLE-GROUP FEEDBACK FROM BREAK-OUTS – Potential actions in red

Group 4 – re-opening events etc [Chris fed back]

- **Wick businesses are using off licenses. Raises issues with toilets – idea was raised for the Old Baths machine to produce green, environmentally friendly, compostable, sustainable portable loos**

Reiterated importance of toilets being environmentally friendly, rather than plastic portaloos. Knows how to make compostable loos! They just have to be safe and possibly on shopping streets if health and safety covered?

Group 1 – Traffic and congested areas [Katherine feeding back]

- Osborne Rd, Eastway, Berkshire Rd crossing, A12 slip road all tend to be congested and cause issues. The current situation could actually lead to positive changes in terms of increased cycling, decreased driving etc. Felstead St could be an interesting pilot in terms of pedestrianisation, encouraging walking and cycling etc.
- **Work is happening on bringing together Dave Pilkington, Jim etc. to look at the plans for Felstead**
- Now is a great time to experiment with this, and Jon Burke in the cabinet would definitely be keen on it
- **The traffic light timings all across Wick need looking at. They seem to be much better for cars than for pedestrians**

Group 2 – keep up good stuff! [Polly feeding back]

Lots of good stuff is happening, lots of spontaneous organising and mutual support. How do we keep this going? Some people struggle to accept help. Main thing that people are looking for – both volunteers and those they help – is meaningful relationships

- **Opportunity to explore why people are volunteering, find out the reasons, in order to help sustain this kind of activity?**
- **There should be training available for volunteers, to reward and further encourage them, and also to help them with their skills and their careers if they are at-risk of losing work**

Group 3 – Business support [Georgina feeding back]

- **More info needed from council about support available for businesses**
- Concerns about going backwards on environment issues – lots of plastic etc
- **Liaise with local businesses to talk about being more sustainable during the pandemic**
- **More signposting support for local businesses to reach the help they need**
- Noticing shops boarding up
- Need to support new shops that had only just opened prior to lockdown
- Could Hackney WickEd go forward in a different way – online?
- More support needed for creative businesses and freelance artists
- What's going to happen to Chatsworth Market?