

West Ealing Centre Neighbourhood Forum

2016 Annual General Meeting

CHAIR'S REPORT

The Government designated the West Ealing Centre Neighbourhood Forum (WECNF) in March 2013. The current Management Committee (MC) has met four times since being elected in July 2015. There have been many informal work group meetings during the year. Minutes of all formal MC meetings can be found at www.wecnf.org. There are currently 327 registered members of WECNF.

Forum progress has again been slow these last 11 months. Immediately after the 2015 WECNF AGM on 7 July we had a progress meeting with RCOH, the planning consultants we had hired the previous month. We agreed to send all our member feedback data and our draft policies to them and they were instructed to create their version of our policies. We also set up Working Groups on heritage, enterprise, culture and retail.

On 30 July WECNF met with developers Southern Grove in connection with its plans to demolish the BHS building at 104-110 Broadway W13 and redevelop the site. WECNF objected to the residential density (136 flats rising up to 11 storeys), the drastically reduced retail space and lack of car parking on the site. (At the 24 February 2016 Ealing Council Planning Committee meeting I objected in person to Southern Grove's plans. However the plans were approved even though the housing density was almost double that permitted in The London Plan).

In August WECNF wrote to all the land/property owners in Ealing Development Sites EAL16 and EAL17. These sites contain Sainsbury's, the West London Islamic Centre and Chignell Place. We wanted to talk /meet with them. We received no replies.

On 12 November the Management Committee (MC) met and discussed a revitalised Vision Statement and Concept Plan both crafted by RCOH. Extensive changes were identified in an intense meeting of 10 MC members spanning some two hours. We also reviewed a pictorial, panoramic view produced for Sudbury high street and we decided to attempt the same for our high street. In addition we endorsed publishing as part of the draft plan the details of the Heritage Assets which had been designated at a WECNF public meeting in November 2013.

On 12 December WECNF manned a stall at the West Ealing Christmas Fair in Melbourne Avenue. We met existing WECNF members and signed up some new ones.

In January 2016, WECNF submitted objections to a Planning Application in Lancing Road, W13. It failed to sway Ealing Council Planning Committee.

On 30 January 2016, we presented our draft plan to the Board of the West Ealing Business Improvement District (WEBID). Some key issues were discussed including

high street parking, the food hygiene rating scheme, Ealing Pubwatch and temporary use of vacant business premises.

In February we pulled together all final plan changes and charged RCOH to produce a draft for public exposure. On 9 February WECNF presented the plan to Ealing Labour Party (Northfield Branch).

On 14 February a new version of the plan was produced and placed on our web site. Published with this was our latest WECNF Heritage Assets document, our WECNF Neighbourhood Plan Data document (our Evidence Base) and the WECNF West Ealing: Our High Street document (the pictorial, panoramic view with accompanying Use Class summary).

On 15 February WECNF launched an informal public consultation on the published draft plan. On 2 March we mounted a public meeting at which we presented the plan. 30 people attended and there was some useful discussion and feedback. Although initially there was a four week consultation period, we extended the period in order to receive written feedback from Ealing Council, WEBID and West Ealing Neighbours. 90 substantive written comments and objections were received, Dave Randles produced an invaluable spreadsheet summarising each of the comments.

On 12 April in a 2 hour 50 minute meeting of 10 MC members along with Brendan O'Neill and Max Taylor of RCOH all 90 comments were reviewed. The decisions are documented on the 10 page Meeting Minutes and summarised on the updated spreadsheet.

During May and June extensive discussions were held within WECNF and with RCOH around final edits and about the Dean Gardens proposals specifically. Late in the day Pathways – the land owner/developer/charity to the south of Dean Gardens - gave us some useful feedback.

We now have copies of the final draft version of the plan which will be submitted for formal, statutory 6 week public consultation (Regulation 14) in early July 2016.

During the year I and others have represented WECNF at numerous meetings concerning safety in Dean Gardens, various proposals for St James Avenue, Canberra Road and the space behind West Ealing Library. We have vigorously supported objections made to Ealing Council about their decision to licence 20 car a parking spaces sale in Dean Gardens car park to the operators of the Holiday Inn Express hotel.

Two successful financial grant applications were submitted during the year. £8,000 was received from Ealing Council – the last remaining National Government FrontRunner funds ‘won’ by WECNF way back in March 2012. £2,700 was also obtained from National Government via Locality.

As for the future, as soon as feedback from the July/August public consultation has been evaluated and applied to the plan (by law only deletions and no additions) the plan will be submitted to Ealing Council. It will check that proper legal process has been followed. The Council will then arrange for the plan to be independently examined, and will then arrange two referendums – one for local residents and one for local businesses. If 50% or more who vote in both referendums say yes then the WECNF Neighbourhood Plan becomes part of the statutory Development Plan for the area. .

I want to thank the members of our Management Committee for their work this year and also to thank WECNF members for their support. I must also thank RCOH staff for their invaluable help and responsiveness. Thanks to you all for attending this meeting tonight.

Eric Leach
Chair, WECNF
27 June 2016