



Minutes

Merton Heritage Forum

Tuesday 16th February 2016

Merton Heritage Centre, 2nd floor, Morden Library, Merton Civic Centre

Present:

Cllr Nick Draper (Chair), Cllr Ian Munn, Cllr John Bowcott,
Cllr Geraldine Stanford, Cllr Abdul Latif
John Strover, Tony Burton and Sandra Vogel (MCGC&H),
Joyce Bellamy (MCGC&H, Mit.Soc, LHP>),
John Hawks (Merton Priory Trust), Louise Crothall (LWLPS)
Norman Plastow (Wim. Soc & Wimbledon Windmill)
Nicholas Hart (Wandle Industrial Museum)
John Mays (Wimbledon Society), John Veale (John Innes Society)
Louis Blair (Communities First), Tony Scott (Merton Historical Society)
Cypren Edmonds (High Path Community Association,)
Teymour Sursock (Izi Travel,UK)
Anthony Hopkins (LBM), Sarah Gould (Minutes), Jil Hall (LBM)
and Jill Tyndale (LBM)

Apologies:

Tony Michael (Wimbledon Society),
Cyril Maidment (Museum of Wimbledon & Merton Priory Trust)
John Davis (Mitcham Tree Wardens Group)

Item	Actions
<p>1. Multimedia Guides / Tourism App. Teymour Sursock, Business developer of Izi Travel, gave a presentation to the group introducing his company and the multimedia travel guides that it can offer to local attractions and community groups. Izi travel is an established Dutch company working across Europe and has recently opened a London office. It is privately backed and has developed a range of interactive software to support the creation of multimedia guides to promote and raise awareness of cultural attractions, collections, regional stories, tours and heritage. To date this is being used by a network of 700 museums and cultural representatives worldwide and the company is keen to extend their work to feature UK institutions / organisations.</p> <p>Izi offers free, simple to use software as part of a multimedia platform – including a content management system used to produce tourism /</p>	

heritage information for access via smartphones, apps and online. This can be used for promotional work, regional / city based networking and to create self-guided audio tours. This material is currently publicised via cultural institutions, promotional booklets, websites, posters, banners and social media. Izi is now also seeking to extend its reach by working with tourism support networks including Airbnb, TomTom, Google Maps and Booking.com. This will enable visitors to get advance information about tours and places of interest when booking tickets and accommodation.

Teymour is keen to include Merton museums, societies and cultural organisations on the Izi platform. The company can provide free software, training and support. They may also be able to help with printing costs and content advice. Izi is currently self-financing. In the next 3 – 4 years the company will open up the system to alternative sources of funding- primarily advertising (including ads on tours or content.) In this instance clients could receive a share of any advertising income linked to their pages.

JV and NH raised the issue of content control, access if you do not have a smartphone and whether clients would be able to vet potential advertisers. TS explained that the Izi software can be locked on to hardware devices including pcs. Clients have complete control and ownership of their own content. It may be possible for cultural organisations to vet advertisers before ads appear on their tour / page content. They can also decide whether to opt out of hosting adverts. Clients may also choose to generate funds through sponsorship.

JM said that the Museum of Wimbledon would be interested in the Izi system. TS confirmed that he is happy to be contacted by any interested parties and can also arrange site visits if required.

ND asked for feedback from the group regarding the Izi system and whether there was Forum interest in taking this forward – the Wimbledon area would seem an obvious choice for this type of guide.

SV said that there are many companies offering similar guides and software. MCGC&H already has an established and successful audio-guide for the Cricket Green area and intellectual property needs to be considered. TS confirmed that the Izi platform would allow groups greater exposure and that all intellectual property would be fully copyrighted. Organisations may also choose to remove material from the Izi system, at which point it would no longer be searchable or available.

TB asked how clients ensure that they are happy with the content on the Izi platform. TS explained that cultural partners have control and are gatekeepers of their own content. Izi guarantees to supply software that is regularly maintained and updated for various devices (Google, apple, Windows phones, tablets and ipads.)

IM – if the system is free, what have Merton stakeholders got to lose?

ND – in view of the Forum’s commitment to promote Merton tourism, it would seem appropriate for LBM to work with Izi, particularly on the Carved in Stone project, to ensure that trails and associated material are circulated more widely. The group can then decide whether to extend their involvement with Izi, or seek alternatives.

2. “Working Life in the Historic Heart of Merton” Louis Blair, Communities First.

LB gave a presentation on the HLF project currently being undertaken by Communities First.

Communities First is a charitable organisation working on community engagement, often with housing estates, residents associations and youth groups. The organisation has 20 years of experience working in Merton. Over the past year it has been working with Circle Housing, Merton Priory Homes, LBM (Heritage Service), Wandle Industrial Museum and local heritage groups. The focus is local industrial heritage, particularly that based around the Merton Abbey Mills area.

To date Comm.F has worked with people from the Glebe Court, Saddlers Court, Watermeads, Phipps Bridge and Cherry Trees estates. The team is hoping to do more work with residents from the High Path and Ravensbury areas. The “Working Life” project has involved staging walks, oral history interviews and exhibitions at Glebe Court and Vestry Hall, supported by project partners (Merton Historical Society, LBM, Wandle Industrial Museum.) The Museum has also assisted the team in working with 4 Primary schools doing block printing and teaching the children about local history. As part of the project LB is keen to arrange youth film workshops to produce short heritage films – this is proving tricky to organise but Comm.F is working with youth clubs and hoping to do some major promotion in the Phipps Bridge area in the near future. Special walks along the central Wandle area have already been staged with local schools, including Merton Abbey Primary.

In the coming months the project team will be arranging film workshops, further walks and the circulation of project resources. LB is also keen to for the project to have a legacy – including the installation of signage raising the profile of Merton’s industrial heritage, particularly in the Ravensbury Park area. The team has already spoken to LBM and the Friends of R. Park on this subject. The project is due to finish by the summer of 2016.

ND – praised the project and emphasised the need to record and raise awareness of this aspect of Merton’s heritage.

CE – asked what happens to the material gathered by the project after the summer of 2016.

LB – material will be lodged in an appropriate place to ensure that it is publicly accessible. Circle Housing has been considered for this but access is under question. The Library and Heritage Service may be a better option. Material can also be accessed via the project website.

SV – asked about intellectual property. Who will own the project

SG to circulate Izi contact material with the minutes. Any group members wishing to get more information should contact Teymour.

SG to attach copy of Comms First presentation with minutes.

Anyone with knowledge and / or experience of Merton’s industrial heritage – please contact Louis or his colleague Chris Hearn if you would like to be interviewed for the project.

LB is also keen to hear from youth organisations or anyone with appropriate contacts, as part of the Comms First drive to arrange youth film workshops.

material (oral history and printed resources)? Will this be available for use by other Merton community groups? What permissions are required for use of the oral history material?

LB – Materials produced by the project will be owned by the project. He does not see why the material should not be used by other organisations and is keen for it to be accessible – however the details of this have yet to be confirmed and procedures need to be formalised.

SG - NOTE: Oral history remains the copyright of the interviewee unless this been transferred to another person / organisation, or licensed for use in specific ways.

ND hopes that such material will be shared wherever possible.

3. The Canons Project update, Jil Hall (LBM)

JH informed the group that 2 open days were held on 23 Jan (for families) and 27 Jan (for heritage representatives) – these are designed to offer further information about the project, to discover more about The Canons and surrounding area and to contribute towards the conservation management planning process. A local contributors event staged on 8 Feb was well attended and proved very useful in generating further information regarding the history, layout and usage of the Canons during previous decades. A follow-up event is now planned for 23 March. The Heritage “Merton Memories” collection holds several Canons pictures but the project team is keen to find other photos, particularly interior shots which can shed light on how the property has changed over time.

The project consultants Southern Green are working to produce a timeline for the property and Jil has circulated a number of questions posed regarding this. Local heritage stakeholders have already been extremely helpful on this point (Merton Historical Society, MCGC&H.) Wade Brice a volunteer working on the Carved in Stone project has been particularly helpful, answering several questions using information gleaned from council minutes. In addition to researching the Canons, Southern Green also need to develop business plans and to identify a sustainable purpose for the building. As part of the HLF project, community involvement needs to be increased – this will include cultural and community events to promote the project and raise awareness of the history of the site.

16 December is the deadline for the Stage 2 bid. The Design team need to produce the draft conservation management plan by the end of February to allow for community to review / input. The final plan will then be issued in April and will be very important to the future development of the site. HLF require around 6 weeks to review / authorise plans before contractors can be appointed and work can start on site.

NH – says the property has historic links to Clive of India.

If Forum members can supply any further info on the history of the Canons and its post war use, please contact JH

SG to verify this, as is not aware of such links –

JB – project could be hugely beneficial as the Canons is not only historic but the estate includes a nature conservation area.

4. **Adopt a Monument**

SG gave a presentation to the group about a proposal for a pilot scheme planned for the autumn of 2016. The “Adopt a Monument” scheme would enable us to engage the public directly with the historic environment, helping to research, interpret and protect historic structures across the borough, from churches and historic buildings, to ancient monuments and free standing material such as tombs, street furniture, dovecotes, etc. By getting schools, community groups, residents associations and / or interest groups to monitor, document and interpret monuments, we will not only be helping to promote and preserve local heritage, we will also be building on existing talents, developing new skills and creating important support networks for local heritage. The pilot scheme will involve local history research, site visits and monument promotion. Volunteers will also play an important part in monitoring for vandalism and structural changes which can then be reported to an appropriate contact in order to arrange treatment.

SG referred to monuments such as the Bazalgette tomb at St.Mary’s, Wimbledon, as an example suitable for adoption.

JM informed the group that the Wimbledon Society had recently adopted the local war memorial and funded improvements – this has been highly beneficial with the introduction of new lighting, better ground maintenance and planting. The Richardson-Evans war memorial could also benefit from similar support.

TB – recommended that rather than focussing on monuments which already have statutory support / monitoring in place e.g. listed buildings and scheduled ancient monuments – that the scheme should involve those structures which may be lesser known or currently lack protection. SG agreed and suggested that the Forum could play a part in identifying appropriate monuments for inclusion in the scheme.

SV – asked about the reporting lines for adopting groups - these need to be clear and will be particularly important if a monument suffers damage of any kind. SG agreed and emphasised that careful work needs to be undertaken to ensure that appropriate agencies are involved if the scheme is to prove effective (LBM, English Heritage, landowners, diocesan authorities, archaeological units.)

5. **Carved in Stone / Merton Heritage Discovery Day 2016.**

SG gave an update on the Carved in Stone project (slides attached to minutes.) To date 28 project volunteers have completed over 4000 hours of work. (Following the scale supplied by HLF, this is the equivalent of over £80K of work.) The project has funded the purchase of new reader printers, film and recording equipment. The project team has undertaken a wide range of training to enable volunteers to

nothing in Eric Montague’s book.

See attached outline showing details of the scheme, potential participants and issues to consider.

Forum members to contact SG if they have recommendations or feedback.

conduct, film and transcribe interviews with the descendants of wartime combatants (18 to date.) Good relationships have been formed with other collection holders, many of whom are happy to share resources and historical records with the CIS project. 44 First World War items have been conserved to a very high standard and 350 of the target combatant biographies have been worked on so far. Townsweb Archiving is working with the team to develop special webpages, scheduled for launch in May and stakeholders will be asked to help out with user testing in early April.

Project volunteers are about to have training in the use of a content management system and will then start to upload data for the new website. The team has also produced a Merton at War heritage trail and staged a guided walk which was very well received.

The Carved in Stone web launch and 2016 Merton Heritage Discovery Day will now be held on Saturday 28 May. The morning will be used for the CIS launch and buffet reception (10.30am – 12) to which all stakeholders will be invited. The Mayor will be in attendance. The public Discovery Day will take place during the afternoon (12.30 – 4.30pm,). This will involve the following:

- London Screen Archives Kinovan cinema will be outside the Civic Centre.
- There will be photographic displays and a St. Helier estate exhibition on show.
- A range of bite-size local history talks and the Heritage marketplace (stalls from museums and societies) will be on the second floor of the library.
- WW1 film will be shown in the council chamber.
- A range of children's craft activities and interactive displays will be on the ground floor.

SG has already emailed the majority of stakeholders to see if they wish to take part but is still waiting to hear from some groups. There will also be some additional groups attending that have not been involved previously e.g. the Friends of Wimbledon Park.

The JC Deceaux boards have been booked to promote the event and the Heritage team will organise extensive promotion.

SG will be organising 1 – 2 planning meetings in due course but asked Forum members and anyone wishing to have a stall, offer a talk, or run an activity to contact her asap, so that space / layout can be determined. SG would also welcome promotional support from stakeholders (as per previous years.) Copy will be provided that can be used on / in social media, stakeholder websites / newsletters, at meetings and by word of mouth.

ND congratulated the Heritage team on the Carved in Stone project and praised those representatives who had given presentations at the Forum meeting – these show what can be achieved and the high standard of work being undertaken to showcase Merton's history.

Group members to contact SG asap if they wish to be involved.

6. Heritage Strategy (Objective 1) – due to time constraints discussion

of this item was deferred to the next meeting.

7. The Local List

The Local list was adopted and signed off on 31 December 2015 and was well received by Forum members.

AH then outlined to the process involved in producing the list and proposed changes as follows:

Current approach : Decisions on properties to be included in the local list are a local choice function i.e. a Council function properly delegated to the Chief Executive by Council. The Borough Plan Advisory Committee considers the local listing every five years as part of its consideration of the Local Plan. Recommendations are made to Council via Cabinet. This process has been questioned because a decision on whether to include a property on the Local List was taken by the Chief Executive under delegated powers, without prior public consultation or discussion with the Borough Plan Advisory Committee.

Proposed changes: A minor amendment to the terms of reference for the Borough Plan Advisory Committee has been proposed. This will allow more regular review of the Local List, taking into account the results of public consultation undertaken by officers.

Process:

1. Annually – LBM seeks suggestions on Local listings via Conservation Officer and Heritage Forum
2. Officers assess suggested listings against agreed criteria.
3. Officers consult on all suggestions via the LBM website, with officer assessment and recommendation for each listing available online.
4. If public consultation shows that something has been missed during the assessment process, officers will re-assess.
5. Consultation response summary and final recommendation on listing will be reported to the cross party Borough Plan Advisory Committee, who will then make recommendations to full Council. BPAC recommendations can go via Cabinet if required.

SV – under the new process, how long would it take from receipt of a recommendation, for a property to be adopted for inclusion in the local list?

AH confirmed that this should take a maximum of 1 year (ideally less) depending on consultation.

IM – suggested that in view of the pressures facing the authority on this matter, that the Local List could be a standing item on the Forum agenda.

AH – it will be important to assess the volume of recommendations. If the authority is inundated with requests, it may be necessary to increase the frequency of decision-making with regard to inclusion on the list.

JB welcomed the fact that local war memorials had been added to the list in time to coincide with the centenary of the Great War and asked if the additions had been brought to the attention of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and English Heritage

JT to check this.

8. Matters Arising / AOB.

JT – is working with Historic England on an annual review of conservation areas (28 in Merton.) This involves extensive survey work to gauge how people feel about the existing conservation areas, how the areas have changed and how they can be protected.

If anyone has feedback on this subject, please contact Jill Tyndale.

JT – Referred to the Historic England review of areas of archaeological importance at the last meeting. There was some suggestion that changes should be made to the zone including the former site of Merton Place. This has now been reviewed and Jill brought the revised plan to the attention of the group.

LC - The Living Wandle Partnership project currently has an underspend and is therefore seeking project ideas from groups and organisations **within the Living Wandle area** (roughly 1.5km from the River Wandle.) These proposals can range in size and cost.

LC has supplied an associated expression of interest form and a newsletter that members may find interesting.

Interested parties should complete and return the expression of interest form attached to the forum minutes. Forum members to contact LC if they wish to take part and / or promote an event.

Living Wandle will also be running a River Wandle based fortnight (September 10th – 25th) to include a river clean-up, Open House event and World Rivers day. A promotional campaign is planned and LC is also happy to include events being run by other heritage organisations during the relevant period.

Date of next meeting: 7 – 8.30pm, 21 June 2016, Merton Heritage Centre, Morden Library