

London Living Streets Group

MINUTES of MEETING 14 June 2017

VENUE: Alan Baxter Architects, 75 Cowcross St., London EC1M 6EL.

PRESENT: Michael Diamond (Lewisham), Alastair Hanton (Southwark), David Harrison (Media Secretary), Peter Hartley (Vice-Chair), Symon Knightswood (Lewisham), Richard Lambert (Head Office Living Streets), Jeremy Leach (Chair), Robert Molteno (Secretary), Andrew Orford (Lewisham), Herman Tribelnig (Kings Cross/Camden).

APOLOGIES: Amy Aeron-Thomas (Roadpeace), Michael Bach, Roger de Freitas (Hammersmith), Peter Hale (Barnet/Finchley), Mary Hogben (Barnet), Dave Irwin (Wandsworth), Charles Martin (Sutton), Susie Morrow (Wandsworth), Tony Pattison (Sutton), Tom Platt (Head Office), Brenda Puech (Hackney), Rosalind Readhead (Islington).

ACTIONS and INDIVIDUALS PROMISING TO TAKE ACTION IN RED

Welcome: Richard Lambert, Project Coordinator for London, Living Streets office: Explained his role re local impact delivery of service agreements Living Streets has entered into with particular London boroughs; notably The City, Barking and Dagenham, Redbridge. LS engages in delivering walk to school projects, another behaviour change project encouraging the elderly to walk more in Redbridge, advisory roles (e.g. some Air Quality work in the City, The Bank junction project etc).

He also explained who key relevant LS Office staff are:

Ruth Billingham is Campaign Manager for whole country; still our main contact point with LS Office.

Tom Platt is Director of Policy and Research; has for several years been lead person w.r.t TfL, Mayor, Deputy Mayor (Transport) etc.

Steve Chambers: New staffer who drafts LS responses to consultations. Doing excellent job. Makes possible for London LS to piggyback on his LS responses.

Matthew Cunningham does Social Media at LS. Happy to do a little workshop for those of us who would like some training in Tweeting. **ACTION: Any of us who would like Matthew's help in getting over hesitation about using social media, especially tweeting, please contact him** at matthew.cunningham@livingstreets.org.uk

Jeremy Leach stressed how massively positive and helpful all LS Office staff have been to London LS over past year.

1. **Minutes of 30 March 2017:** Accepted. David Harrison thanked.

2. Matters arising:

- a. **Walking Maps for Central London:** Michael Diamond reminded: TfL produced these in 2012; show walking possibilities around each Central London Station. No longer available. **ACTION: Richard Lambert to find out and let Jeremy Leach know.**
- b. **HGV Consultation:** Alastair Hanton and Susie Morrow thanked for doing London LS response.
3. **Project Coordinator for London, Living Streets HQ: Richard Lambert:** see above.
4. **Launch of London Living Streets & Manifesto – David Harrison:** Progress made; also some difficulties. Will Norman has not replied, except that he doesn't like idea of gathering in Parliament Square. Lord Tyler (Lib Dem Chief Whip) has list of MPs & peers interested in pedestrianisation of Parliament Square. Hansard Society ditto. Possible dates for an event 3 weeks away, 4 or 5 July. If to be done before Summer, needs to be before 20 July when Parliament likely to rise for summer recess.

Security considerations are new powerful argument in favour of pedestrianisation. Val Shawcross already coming to this view. **Stakeholders:** Westminster Abbey, Methodist Central Hall, Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre need to be approached; might prove supportive. Westminster Council like to be hostile.

DECIDED/ACTIONS: 1) **Responding to Mayor's Transport Plan is our first priority;** 2) **David Harrison to explore campaign re Parliament Square; date or nature of the event still to be decided;** 3) **David Harrison to try and get debate going in *Evening Standard*;** 4) **It may not be possible to have Manifesto launch connected with this event, but keep open mind.**

5. **London Borough Elections, 3 May 2018:** Tom Platt (for LS) approached by London Cycling Campaign (LCC) to join in a joint campaign, borough by borough to influence candidates re transport policy. Strong general support expressed; but we must remain aware there will be second-level points of difference between what pedestrians and cyclists want (e.g. shared use). Important that action begins to be taken right away in order to influence political parties' transport platforms. Hopefully, local LS groups (where they exist) will be taking most of the action. Possible key platform plank for LS and LCC might be around **Liveable Neighbourhoods** (which is the updated term for mini-Hollands, and stressing the pedestrian dimensions, rather than principally cyclists). **ACTION: David Harrison and Jeremy Leach to meet with Tom Platt asap to plan London LS joint campaign with LCC.**
6. **Mayor's Transport Plan:** Due out around 20 June. Discussed how to handle. **DECIDED: Next meeting of London LS to be devoted to discussing it,** our reactions to it; & what actions to take in getting responses to the Consultation. **ACTIONS: Jeremy Leach to fix DATE for 2 weeks after Plan's release; Robert Molteno to ask all London LS to RSVP (to be clear re numbers wanting to attend); Peter Hartley to book appropriate size venue.**
7. **Campaigns – Walking Routes across London:** Jeremy Leach proposed we develop proposal for 4 or 5 walking routes across Central London, notably linking major railway terminals and key places like Parliament Square, British Museum., along largely traffic free routes or routes where rat running could reasonably be stopped, e.g. Drury Lane, St Martin's Lane. Idea welcomed. **ACTIONS: 1) David Harrison volunteered to do this; 2) ALL London Living Streets participants hereby asked to send him their suggestions (dfharrison1138@gmail.com)**

8. Officers' Report- backs:

- a. **Chair (Jeremy Leach)** – Chair's Report on actions since last meeting (attached). Jeremy added that he met today with Newham Councillor (also a Cabinet member), Rachel Tripp, who is keen to set up a Living Street local group in her borough:
ACTION: Jeremy in his future reports to put in a sentence or so re each meeting if a key point of substance emerged.

- b. **Vice-Chair (Peter Hartley)**

- i. **Boroughs where no local LS groups:** Peter wrote 15 letters to local press in boroughs where no LS group. Not clear how many were published. But he has had no responses at all.
- ii. **Oxford Street: Progress report:** West End Partnership (Businesses, TfL, Westminster City Council) have produced proposals. Joint TfL/Westminster Consultation in 2 stages. First stage closes this Sunday 18 June. Living Streets has responded. Also mobilised 4,500 individuals to respond. But residents groups in surrounding streets hostile to pedestrianisation because of fears of traffic displacement, and have formed umbrella group to oppose it. 2nd stage consultation with more detailed proposals expected c. September 2017. A separate but related TfL consultation re bus routes has taken place, suggesting many bus routes terminating at Marble Arch and Tottenham Court Road, and only a much smaller no. of buses proceeding along Oxford Street.
Hanover Square, where Bond Street Station's additional entrance is being located, is currently with traffic largely excluded, and will continue as such.
ACTION: Peter Hartley to put in response on Oxford Street from London LS immediately.

For details, see <https://consultations.tfl.gov.uk/roads/oxford-street/> The actual Consultation document available at <https://consultations.tfl.gov.uk/roads/oxford-street/consultation/subpage.2015-09-03.3976631085/>

- iii. **Grosvenor Square -- Pedestrianisation under threat:** Peter explained: US Embassy (held on long lease from Grosvenor Estates) sold to Qataris who will convert it to a hotel. Currently, no vehicle traffic on western side of Square. But it seems planning permission has been given by WCC to de-pedestrianise this and allow vehicles to drive to main entrance on Square (rather than on one of hotel's side streets). A retrogressive measure. Developers won't speak to Peter. London LS ought to be able to mobilise groups like London Cycling Campaign, Sustrans, FoE, Greenpeace, Inner London Ramblers to mount protests. Andrew Orford suggested: Grosvenor Estates are developing residential 'quarters', currently the Biscuit Factory conversion in Bermondsey; might be susceptible to being persuaded to intervene. **ACTION: Jeremy Leach to make contact via attending consultation event re Biscuit Factory on 15 June; Peter Hartley to make 'bullet point' suggestions re points to make, organizations to approach in order to build resistance.**

- c. **Media coverage:** David Harrison reported that *Evening Standard* has published several of his letters, while a few have not been. Thanked. **ACTION: David Harrison to continue getting his concise interventions published.**

Social Media: Susie Morrow continues with London LS tweet. Thanked.

Importance of the visuals: very short videos: Point made that in 8 June General Election, home-made videos made with phones etc, posted on YouTube etc, attracted huge no. of hits. **ACTION: Could all of us think of people who might do this and let Jeremy Leach know.**

9. Consultations to respond to:

- a. **Oxford Street:** see above.
- b. **ULEZ (London Ultra-Low Emission Zone):** For details see <https://consultations.tfl.gov.uk/environment/air-quality-consultation-phase-2/?cid=airquality-consultation>
Closing Date: 25 June 2017

10. Interface with TfL -- Report-backs:

- a. **Better Junctions Design Review Group (Brenda Puech, Dave Irwin, David Harrison):** Operational. All 3 of our representatives active in it. Recent meetings have examined **Lambeth Bridge (north and south ends); Waterloo roundabout.** Re latter, Network Rail controls area between main steps out of Station up to Waterloo East-Charing Cross railway arches; do not propose to make improvements in same timeframe as TfL which proposes to join IMAX cinema where bus stops are. ie Roundabout will be removed.
- b. **Vision Zero Group** (formerly Road Safety/Safe Streets for London Steering Group): Not yet set up. TfL not opposed to the idea; hopefully will be, after Mayor's Transport Plan is agreed.
- c. **Bus Stop Bypass Working Group (Brenda Puech):** Operational.
- d. **London Freight Enforcement Partnership (Susie Morrow; Alastair Hanton):** Operational. Alastair reported it is working v. positively. Various enforcement agencies being brought into coordination. Prosecutions are taking place. Also re **Direct Vision HGVs**, TfL valued London LS response drafted by Susie; opposition to proposals from freight industry has not manifested itself; next stage awaited – will require Mayor to carry new regulations etc through. Technical evidence from 2 research bodies also awaited. Lorry manufacturers (in addition to Mercedes that led the way) are developing designs incorporating Direct Vision etc.
- e. **Pedestrian Town Centre Pilots in Peckham & Tooting:** No news of Peckham. Tooting Project Board operational. **Rachel Toms** represents Wandsworth LS on it. Design of specific measures being undertaken this year for roll-out next year. Not all recommended measures will be implemented because of budgetary constraints.

Unclear how much difference it will make, or how far it will constitute an innovative way forward for transforming London's other local town centres, but will be a step in right direction.

11. **Housekeeping:** Yahoo group; Website; Twitter: **Susie Morrow** thanked for keeping Twitter feed going.

12. AOB :

- a. **Operation of signalised pedestrian crossings – Research Project:** Alastair Hanton's Note already distributed. Various points made in discussion. This is a national issue. Would be useful to investigate history of delays being introduced on push button crossings; find out if TfL has any evidence to defend current system; bear in mind that 'smoothing traffic flow' considerations sometimes link periodicity of several pedestrian crossing signals on a whole stretch of road. **Decided London LS happy to encourage pursuit of this research investigation.**
- b. **Upcoming Meeting of Tom Platt with Will Norman (Walking & Cycling Commissioner):** Tom asked London LS to specify points to raise with him. **ACTION: Tom Platt asked to get Will Norman to clarify:**
 - i. **Parliament Square pedestrianisation:** We understand he is hesitant. Why? And why not consider supporting pedestrianisation of this most iconic location in London?
 - ii. **Oxford Street pedestrianisation:** are Mayor and TfL determined to carry this through, even if Westminster Council hostile?
 - iii. **Gate Closures in Regents Park/CS11:** When will decision be made on this question?
- c. **Private Cars (inc. Private Hire Vehicles) in Central London:** Rosalind Redhead congratulated on uncovering figures via FoI showing doubling outside Congestion hours. <https://banprivatecarsinlondon.com/2017/06/13/private-car-problem-solved-in-central-london-not-according-to-new-247-data/>

13. **Date and Purpose of Next Meeting:** PLEASE NOTE: Purpose will be to discuss Mayor's Transport Plan, London LS reactions to it; and what actions to take in getting responses to the Consultation. **ACTIONS: Jeremy Leach to fix date for roughly 2 weeks after release of the Plan; Robert Molteno to ask all London LS to RSVP (to be clear re numbers wishing to attend); Peter Hartley to book appropriate size venue.**