

Kenwood Ladies Pond Association Annual General Meeting – Draft Minutes
Friday 17 March 2017 @ 7 pm Highgate Literary & Scientific Institution

1. Chair's Welcome and Apologies

Jane Shallice welcomed everyone to the AGM particularly the lifeguards present. She confirmed this would be her last AGM as KLPA Chair.

Apologies were received from Vanessa Barker, Diane Burridge, Sally Davey, Eliza Kaczynska-Nay, Vicki King, Anne Lynn, Maria McCoy, Liz Szewczyk, Liz Valentine, Sarah Williams and Fiona Willis.

2. Minutes and Matters Arising – the minutes were accepted as an accurate record of the 2016 AGM and no additional matters arising were raised, all were covered in the agenda.

3. Chair's Report:

- a. **Ponds' Project** – this is now effectively finished, and the changed Heath landscape is emerging. The new buildings at the Ladies' Pond are generally appreciated, though it has been a difficult adjustment for some. During consultations the KLPA made it clear we wanted something modest and functional. There has been the loss of the old courtyard, but some good things too. Drainage has been an issue; there is a running list of repairs that the City is aware of and gradually addressing.
- b. **Water House** – there was a good outcome to the planning process though the new buyer is likely to want to make some sort of mark so we need to be watchful and ready to react.
- c. **Outsourcing Concerns** – The City will look again at the café lease, and the contract is up again at the Lido. Do need to be ready to respond to any threat to the nature of the café. One positive outcome has been to challenge the City's use of zero-hours contracts for summer lifeguards. The City has agreed to offer fixed-term contracts instead of ZHC, with the additional employment benefits. For some staff the day to day offer of work at a higher hourly rate is preferred but the fixed-term contract is on offer again. Members need to be alert to such issues as they arise and be ready to respond.
- d. **Media requests** – these arise during the year and are considered on merits. The committee takes into account the peace and privacy of swimmers, and favours those requests which are reasonable and respectful in tone. Even if approved, conditions apply including female crew and respecting those who do not want to be filmed or photographed. The KLPA has given in principle consent to a film project this year which will involve about 3 days' access, looking at the swimming ponds over the course of a year. This project is being led by a regular Heath swimmer Patrick McLennan. All such access should minimise disruption and can be stopped by lifeguards if too disruptive. Will give swimmers advance warning of when it will be happening. When looking at media requests committee does consider the tone of the content as well as impact of the activity. Actual permission comes from the City, but they do consult and defer to the KLPA. Location fees we understand do come back to the ponds

4. **Treasurer's Report** - The report has been circulated. There was a small discrepancy of 72p. There is again a significant surplus of income over expenditure. This is largely due to book sales, though this will reduce. The KLPA is now selling mugs. Life member numbers continue to grow so this will have an impact on yearly income in future. More members are paying by standing order or direct transfer, so it is important to include a name. KLPA expenses are generally on the same things e.g. breakfast events, though there was a one off significant purchase of a projector. A bequest of £500 was received in respect of 2 sisters who had swum at the pond since the 1930s. This has been spent on a cherry tree and bench. In late May there will be a plaque installed when family members are in London. KLPA has also made donations e.g. a retirement present for Terry Turner and donations for Margaret Hepburn and Glyn Roberts' funerals. It is possible that the Co-op bank we use may close so it may be necessary to change in future.
5. **Membership Report** - Membership has grown to about 500, of whom over 60 are life members. KLPA now being more "ruthless" in data cleansing its list of those who have not paid for 2 years. Emails and letters are sent first. The winter register has about 800 names, so there is plenty of scope to recruit more members. Members were urged to keep contact details updated.
6. **Thames Water Keeper** – Report circulated. Theo Thomas is developing this role which has been seen elsewhere in Europe, seeking to make the Thames swimmable in more places. This includes seeking more information about what goes into the water. There will be an informal swimming event at Marble Hill on 1 May 2017, at 6 pm.
7. **Digital Archive Project** – Report circulated. Sarah Saunders gave a slide presentation about the progress that had been made so far with the digital archive project, as well as providing a short history of activity at the Ladies' Pond. This included the campaigns to keep the ponds open and oppose charging for access. Many entertaining photographs from our past were greeted appreciatively by the meeting.
8. **Newsletter and Website** – There have been 3 regular newsletter issues and one special edition in memory of Margaret Hepburn. Generally the newsletter is of 4-6 pages and contains news, campaigns, events and member contributions. Suzanna thanked members for their contributions and encouraged them to send in more. She asked members to forward the newsletter to other swimmers and encourage them to join the KLPA. Sally Davey looks after the website though is currently rather preoccupied with a new baby, so Mary Powell will be deputising and also asked for content.
9. **Committee Elections** – the following were elected unanimously:

Julia Dick (Co-chair)	Anne Burley	Eve Featherstone
Nicola Mayhew (Co-Chair)	Sally Davey	Ray Long
Ruth Hallgarten (Vice Chair)	Suzanna Dolata	Juliet Rodgers (new)
Mary Powell (Secretary)	Valerie Doulton	Sarah Saunders
Anne Elton (Treasurer)	Ruth Draper	

10. Mary Cane

Mary Cane spoke to the AGM to mark her standing down as Vice Chair, thanking the lifeguards and members for everything that they do. She exhorted the members to cherish our lifeguards and be ready to defend them. Members were also encouraged to keep campaigning for swimmers' rights, and most of all to be persistent. Mary stated that we do need to extend the demographic of swimmers at the Ladies' Pond so that it reflects London's population better. She thanked everyone present for the joy, adventures and friendships she had experienced thanks to the Pond and the KLPA.

11. Jane Shallice

Jane Shallice addressed the AGM in a wide ranging speech to mark standing down as Chair of the KLPA, a position she had held since 2004. She stated that we are all united by a love of the Pond; it is what we all have in common. Jane read some extracts from a diary she kept in her first year of winter swimming, which had previously been included in the Hungry Swimmer Cookbook (2002). Members present were entertained by descriptions of the sensations of cold water swimming, and the lasting effect after those swims. Jane recalled the inspiration she experienced from Margaret Hepburn, in particular Margaret's reference to her lover when she was in her 80s, a comment which had delighted Jane at the time. She went on to describe some of the campaigns she had been involved in as KLPA Chair, and the impact of united action by the Heath swimmers. Returning to the theme of protecting the employment rights of the lifeguards, who are currently local government employees, she emphasised the huge debt that we owe to them all. She also referred to the growing numbers and popularity of winter swimming, highlighting some new groups of women appearing at the Ladies' Pond in recent years. There are more, younger swimmers now but we still need to keep recruiting a wider range of women to the joys of the Ladies' Pond and to the KLPA.

12. Presentations

The incoming co-chairs Nicola Mayhew and Julia Dick spoke of their inspiration from Jane and Mary, and thanked them for all of their hard work on behalf of the KLPA. In particular their campaigning efforts and support for the lifeguards were praised. Jane and Mary were each presented with life membership and personalised hand drawn cards, by Sue Hellard. All present joined in with lengthy applause.

The Ladies' Pond Mermaid Boudicca Choir finished off the evening with a special song dedicated to Jane and Mary, "The Queens of the Pond".