The Bedford Park Society Charitable Incorporated Organisation
(Registered Charity no: 1198788)

Minutes of the 2nd Annual General Meeting of The Bedford Park Society Charitable Incorporated Organisation (the "CIO") held at The ArtsEd, 14 Bath Road, Chiswick, W4 1LY on Wednesday 3 June 2025 at 7.30pm.

1 Welcome by the President

The President, Nigel Woolner, welcomed members to the meeting and thanked the Executive Committee for their work during the year.

2 Members Present and Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from:

- Barbara Boehm
- Tess Canfield
- Kevin Teed Cummings
- Peter Gorle
- Frances Hall
- Wesley Henderson-Roe
- Janet King
- Peter King
- Martin Landy
- Alison Watson
- David Watson
- Michael J Wilson

3 Chair's Report, Questions and Receipt of the Annual Review

Helen Jameson, the Chair of the CIO, explained the structure of the meeting, noting that this is the second AGM of the Bedford Park Society CIO, the new entity through which the business of the Society is now conducted in accordance with the resolution passed at the 2022 AGM of the Bedford Park Society.

The evening format included a review of the activities of the Bedford Park Society during 2024, followed by questions, and a financial report by Treasurer Libby Bassett, followed by questions.

Chair's Review

The Society was established with the main objective to preserve and enhance the architectural heritage of Bedford Park, and this remains at the centre of its work. However, The Society also covers a very broad portfolio of work on behalf of Bedford Park and its residents/the community. All these activities are covered in some detail in the Annual Review which had been delivered to members.

2025 was the 150th anniversary of Bedford Park, and The Society had begun a year of celebrations with the launch of an exhibition focussing on the communities in Bedford Park since 1875. This, together with a special publication to be distributed to all homes in Bedford Park later that month, would showcase Bedford Park during the celebratory year. Much of The Society's time in 2024 was taken up with preparing for this celebration, planning, researching and producing these two projects, and securing funding.

Helen noted her delight that 12 people volunteered to research material for the exhibition under Nick Bueno de Mesquita's guidance, many of them first time volunteers, and between them they had unearthed much new and interesting material. She was also grateful to Knight Frank, Savills and Whitmans for sponsoring the exhibition and publication, to Hounslow Thriving Communities Fund for grant funding, and to St Michael & All Angels and Chiswick Auctions for supporting the exhibition by providing exhibition space. Special anniversary merchandise had also been produced and would be available to purchase at Green Days on the following Saturday.

The Chair noted The Society's core role of commenting on planning and listed building applications submitted to the Local Authorities. The number of planning applications considered in 2024 was 72, higher than in 2023 (63). Of these, the local authorities approved 60, 10 were refused, and two were not determined. There were four appeals. One was allowed in full; one was allowed in part and two were dismissed in full. The trend for oversized and unsympathetic extensions or garden buildings had continued, as well as unsympathetic alterations to roofscapes and the loss of period detail in listed houses. The Society was working with both local authorities constructively to address these issues.

Not all unsympathetic extensions were approved during the year. An application for two extensions to a house which had already undergone substantial development was a case in point. It was refused by the Council in their words because of its "alien design and excessive scale which would cumulatively lead to incongruous additions which over-dominate the property" …. "deviating from the original design and character of the listed building to the detriment of the Conservation Area."

Information to help householders undertaking work on their houses was available on the Society's website. The planning team is very happy to offer advice and guidance at the early stages of a design project, and several householders consulted the Society in this way during the year. This often results in better outcomes for the householder as well as for Bedford Park's heritage. The Society is very fortunate to benefit from the extensive knowledge and experience of a strong team of heritage architects who give their time voluntarily in considering each application very carefully, and the Society was extremely grateful to the individuals involved.

The Society was delighted that Barbara Boehm joined the team during 2024 and as of January 2025 had taken on the role of Chair of our Planning Committee. Barbara spent her professional career working as an architect in London and is a long-standing resident of Bedford Park. Carol Woolner remains a member of the Planning committee. The Society is exceedingly grateful to Carol for her tireless work for 17 years as Chair of the Planning Committee, and as a member of the Ealing Panel for 12 years prior to that. Carol had brought a tremendous depth of expertise and knowledge of architecture, heritage and Bedford Park, and Bedford Park has been very lucky to have benefitted from her tremendous work in these roles.

Local issues and streetscape

The threat of a third runway at Heathrow returned during 2024 with renewed Government support. The Society continued to monitor developments closely and began working again with the No 3rd Runway Coalition and CHATR and would alert members to consultations when they happen and offer guidance for members and local residents to submit their views. This is a major threat to Bedford Park and Chiswick, and the Society would welcome additional volunteers to help make the campaigning more effective.

The Infrastructure team continued to engage actively with residents and borough teams to highlight streetscape issues and seek solutions. These related to excessive use of tarmac to replace damaged paving, the build-up of weeds due to the councils not using weed killer, heavy autumn leaf fall, the management of street trees and care for new trees, and the selection of locations for bike hangers. They worked hard to maintain good working relationships with the teams in both boroughs. The Chair asked members to please continue to submit individual feedback to the local authorities on any local matters of concern, and report problems to the councils via their online reporting tools. The Society continued to work hard tackling issues, but it was clear that individual feedback has more impact than a single response from the Society.

Events and showcasing Bedford Park

During the year the Society held its annual Betjeman lecture as well as the annual members' party and participated in the Bedford Park Festival's Green Days.

The annual Betjeman lecture was delivered by respected author and leading textiles authority Mary Schoeser. Mary is an archivist, curator and historian and for many years the custodian and curator of the Sanderson's archive. Members were treated to a whirlwind tour of the history of the Sanderson family, their Chiswick connections and the complex technological developments in wallpaper and textile production, all illustrated with images of beautiful arts and crafts style designs produced by Sanderson in the 1890s.

The Green Days stall stocked a variety of merchandise and publications and provided an opportunity for members and local residents to drop by for a chat.

During the year the Society also launched two new items of merchandise: Limited Giclee prints of the Maurice B Adams map of early Bedford Park and two new mugs to celebrate the 150th anniversary featuring the Bedford Park Daisy. The map and mugs have proved popular. The annual party again provided a most enjoyable opportunity for a record 120 members to meet over copious wine and delicious canapés laid on by our Events Committee and other volunteers. The ArtsEd School provided special entertainment by four talented students from the 2024 graduating class and a highlight of the evening was the unveiling of the original Tabard sign in its vibrant conserved state, hung in its permanent home in the Michael Room of St Michael's. Local architect John Scott outlined the history of the sign's rediscovery and conservation and the role the Bedford Park Society played.

The Chair noted that The Society maintained contact with its members through regular E-news, continuing to include updates on relevant developments and fabulous photographs contributed by members. The annual Bedford Park Journal again celebrated the architecture, people and history of our suburb and this year included an article first published in 1899 which revealed fascinating insights into Bedford Park's earliest inhabitants and their customs, Sanderson wallpaper designs chosen by the aspiring middle class householders of early Bedford Park, and a feature on Maurice B Adams, architect, editor and local resident.

Governance and Finance

The Chair was pleased to report that the Society's finances remained strong. The Hon Treasurer Libby Bassett would provide an update after questions on the Annual Review of Activities.

Membership and volunteers

The work the Society undertakes on behalf of Bedford Park would not be possible without the Society's many volunteers. The Chair recorded thanks to them all for their time and tireless enthusiasm. It was particularly pleasing that about 14 new volunteers became involved in 2024, most inspired to join the team researching material for the 150th exhibition.

During the year Nick Mesquita stood down from his role as Hon Sec, an office he had held since 2012. The Society was very grateful to Nick for his tremendous work as Hon Sec, strengthening the Society's governance and guiding through the complex process of converting to a CIO which had modernised the Society's governance. Nick remained a valued member of the Executive Committee, retaining particular responsibility for heritage projects. Many of the members would have seen the culmination of Nick's recent work curating the 150th exhibition, which had involved a huge amount of work.

The Society was delighted to welcome new volunteer Anya Nikoulina who had kindly agreed to take on the role of Hon Sec. Anya was co-opted to the EC in 2024 and the Chair hoped members would support her election to the EC at the AGM.

In addition to Carol Woolner who was mentioned earlier, the Chair expressed particular thanks to John Bailey who stood down from his role as Membership Secretary at the end of 2024. The Society was very grateful to John for keeping the membership records in very good order for the past five years and was delighted to welcome Rhoda Avanzado Phillips as the new Membership Secretary.

This was also a good time to thank Simon Hillyard for his very many years (at least 12, possibly more), as Minutes Secretary. Simon had decided that this AGM was the time to stand down, and the Society was extremely grateful to him for managing meeting agendas and minutes so efficiently for such a long time.

Membership numbers increased to 651 at the end of 2024 compared with 640 the previous year, a net increase of 11. 46 new residents in 30 households joined the Society.

The Chair asked members to encourage neighbours to join the Society and support its work, especially those who had moved to the area in the past few years. The Society would be very pleased to hear from any members who would like to be involved as a volunteer.

Questions from the floor

- Gill Golding commented on an unsympathetic garden extension by one of her neighbours. She asked The Society to double efforts as "the modern box next door has escaped Hounslow". The Chair thanked Gill for her comments and noted that it was not entirely clear if what is being constructed was in line with what had been approved and The Society would continue its work with the council to understand and challenge the rationale for this and similar approvals.

4 Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer, Libby Bassett, provided a short overview of the financial position of the Society and presented the first set of annual financial statements for the Bedford Park Society CIO. Within these, the 2023 comparatives were for the previously unincorporated charity.

The accounts shared were prepared on the same receipts and payments basis used in previous years, meaning that any money received or spent was recognised at that point in time. The Society continued to keep management accounts to ensure it at least broke even and hopefully made a small profit on day-to-day activities including events and sales of merchandise, as this provides a welcome source of income to support the activities of the Society which the Chair outlined in her presentation.

For one-off projects which straddle more than one financial year it can mean that income and expenditure is recorded in different years, as in the case of the restoration of the Tabard sign where the majority of the grant income for the work was received in 2022, the majority of the restoration work was undertaken in 2023 and the restored sign was hung in the Michael Room at SMAAA in 2024. Given the income and expenditure relating to this significant project straddled three financial years, the Society included an explanatory note 2 to the financial statements showing that the Society funded £3,736 of the total restoration costs from unrestricted reserves.

Income

The total annual income of £21,113 included £1,058 from the Pilgrim Trust, which was the final instalment of their grant for the aforementioned Tabard sign which was payable once the sign was hung, and £500 from Hounslow Council as a grant towards the 150th exhibition launch event held in May 2025. These are both considered restricted funds.

The £500 from LBH was expended in the same year, as The Society had to pay a deposit of the same amount for the hire of the event venue, the Boston Room.

In terms of 'routine' income: subscription income had remained steady and the 40% increase in events' income was welcomed. The Society had record attendance at the spring party at which the Tabard sign was "unveiled" as well as a sell-out at the Betjeman lecture in the autumn.

Merchandise sales were much higher due to the popularity of the Adams Map print and the 150th anniversary mugs which began selling in December 2024 as a warm- up to the special anniversary year for the society.

The Treasurer also mentioned and thanked those members who very kindly add a donation to their annual subscription each year for which the Society is extremely grateful. Gift Aid income relates to two years - 2022 and 2023; as was mentioned last year the 2022 claim was made before the 2023-year-end but there was an issue of which the Society were not aware as the Society did not receive the letter HMRC apparently sent. This was resolved early in 2024. Thankfully, the 2023 claim was made and paid during 2024 and The Society hoped to be back on track and that HMRC would not change the process again.

The Society also benefited from the higher interest rates in the last couple of years.

Expenditure

The Society's expenditure in 2023 was £21,170 which included the final costs of the Tabard sign restoration mentioned earlier.

The apparently large costs in merchandise (costs of good sold) related largely to the purchase of the 150th anniversary mugs and the costs of producing the Adams Map prints both of which were now available. The costs of events related to venue hire and speaker costs. The other "one off" expenditure in the year related to the production and distribution of the Energy guide.

Year on year other expenditure remained reasonably consistent although there had been an increase in a number of areas due to inflation which the Society tried to manage.

All expenditure was consistent with the budget which was agreed by the Trustees. The Society continued to manage the Society's expenditure very carefully.

Balance Sheet

The total funds available at the end of 2024 were £54,812 which was consistent with the prior year. Included in these funds was a Strategic Reserve of £30,000 which the Society continued to maintain. The purpose of this reserve was to deal with any exceptional expenditure that might be needed to protect the architectural heritage and amenities of Bedford Park. The Trustees had reviewed this reserve and believed it remained adequate and appropriate.

The Society also held £14,184 of accumulated income from capital held by the Charities Aid Foundation and donated by the late Eleanor Greeves in memory of her late husband Tom. The purpose of this fund is the appreciation and preservation of Bedford Park, including historical and present day architectural and design matters. The Fund is administered by an Independent Advisory Committee, and the accumulated income was therefore shown as a Restricted Fund on the Society's balance sheet. There was no income or expenditure from the Greeves Fund during the year.

Questions from the floor

The following questions and comments were put to the Treasurer:

- Peter Haigh asked why cost of goods sold were higher than proceeds? The Treasurer clarified that this was due to timing of the purchase of the mugs (cost) and proceeds (income), which occurred during different reporting periods.
- Peter Haigh asked why the interest rate benefit was not larger? The Treasurer clarified that as a charity the Society is restricted on where money can be invested, and this interest is what is available through Lloyds bank.
- Another member asked about Tom Greeves' money and whether an independent committee or Bedford Park Society Executive Committee members control how it is spent? The Treasurer clarified that The Society agrees any expenditure with Peter Murray who was named by Eleanor Greeves as her successor with regard to management of these funds.

5 Adoption of the Accounts of the CIO for the year ended 31 December 2024

It was agreed by a show of hands to adopt the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2024. All in favour, no objections.

6 Approval of the appointment of George Hay & Co, accountants, as independent examiner of the CIO

The Treasurer thanked Colin Airey of George Hay Accountants who had independently examined the financial statements. It was agreed by a show of hands to re-appoint George Hay & Co as the independent examiner for the BPS CIO going forward. All in favour, no objections.

7 Election of Members of Executive Committee of the CIO

Anya Nikoulina was elected by a show of hands. All in favour, no objections.

The Chair closed the meeting with thanks to members for taking the time to hear about the work of the Society during the year and the continuing support.