

Hackney Wick Fish Island | Cultural Interest Group

Minutes of the meeting on Friday 9th September 2016
Held at: Here East, Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, E20 3BS

“Working together to establish a permanent, sustainable, creative economy in Hackney Wick and Fish Island”

In attendance:

William Chamberlain (Chair)
Gill Wildman
Cclr Rachel Blake
Cclr Nick Sharman
Briony Pete
Oliver Hickmet
Simon Lynch
Patrick Hill
Abbas Nokhasteh
Kazi Arefin
Polly Hunt
Yolanda Antonopoulace
Rebecca Edwards

Travis Crowther
Katie Sheasby
Dominic Cools-Lartigue
Julian Knight
Julia Hayes
Emma Critchley
Alina Carbune
Paul Baynton
Katherine Igoe-Ewer
Minna Ruohonen
Kit Harman
Jasel Nandha

1. **Introduction**, William Chamberlain

William explained the purpose of the Cultural Interest Group and welcomed everyone to September’s meeting and gave an update on the questions from CIG August special edition.

2. **Vittoria Wharf update**

Will updated everyone about the petition which has now been signed by just over 5,000 people. He also read LLDC’s response and William can send a copy to all those who want further details.

3. **Concrete & asphalt plant update**

This petition has now received about 10,000 signatures. Emma Critchley told that 3 separate planning applications have been submitted to the LLDC. Local residents have formed a group to stop the plant development from happening and a formal rejection letter has now been submitted to the LLDC. The local residents have been able to find a company willing to do this type of work on a reduced rate. Crowdfunding was also been set up to raise money for campaigning on other

development plans on the area by the LLDC. A party / event will be organised in the beginning of October and anyone who has a venue available should contact Emma.

ACTION: contact Emma if you have a venue for the party.

4. Vittoria Wharf update (continued)...

Rebecca Feiner arrived at this point and gave further update on the Vittoria Wharf situation. She had been present on 5th September when eviction order was implemented by a company representing the LLDC. She, and the residents felt threatened and frightened by the way the eviction was carried out and everyone felt very frustrated because during the previous week the LLDC had told (on the camera) that there was a possibility to discuss things further and, at least extend the date of eviction. Security officers on site however didn't take any notice of this but instead were very heavy-handed, aggressive and intimidating. Officers didn't tell residents about their rights as tenants at any point during the eviction process.

Rebecca said that as the LLDC had given an impression that there was a possibility of not evicting the residents during the week before, and therefore security firm's behaviour felt even more unprofessional. The security firm had told the residents that they were in-situ illegally and should not have been in these buildings anymore. Rebecca said that the residents had to seek legal advice and were aware that a court order was needed to evict people and residents felt let down when they told the security officers that all they wanted was a little bit more time to get their possessions out of the building, especially as they were told on Thursday during the previous week that there was a possibility to have a dialogue between the LLDC and the residents before any final decisions would have been made.

Once again, Rebecca highlighted that the bridge, causing the need for eviction, doesn't yet have a planning permission and therefore it was strange that people were evicted before it was sure that the bridge would even be built. Vittoria Wharf residents and the Hackney Wick Fish Island residents have prepared a plan for the area, including Vittoria Wharf and its use as a hub for creative sector people living, working and studying in the area. Possibilities of getting external funding exist but the LLDC has not expressed any interest of working with the residents on this possibility. Residents wanted a dialogue with the LLDC but felt that the LLDC, was instead using a diversion technique by telling one thing and then acting on another.

Gill Wildman asked if it is possible to submit a joint letter to the LLDC and express how poorly the situation has been handled and that their practice is unacceptable?

ACTION: William suggested that a list of grievances should be prepared and this should be discussed further in the near future.

5. HERE EAST

Jasel Nandha had been in her role for a month. She is partly responsible for liaising with new tenants and partly working on the community / education outreach. HERE EAST already has 12 retail units and another 5 will be opened later this month, and a further 2 in October. These units are at the basement of the building, facing the river. HERE EAST also has a theatre space which will be available for the local residents / organisations to hire for free but additional charges might be added, such as technical support, catering and so on. HERE EAST will be open for the public on 17th September (Open House weekend).

ACTION: Jasel to email further details about the theatre space to everyone.

Cllr Nick Sharman: it is important to ensure that the local residents of the area are given opportunities to be part of the development so that they directly benefit from the changes on the area. Events which would inform local people about employment opportunities should be arranged by all those institutions which are based in the park.

Jasel updated everyone that later this month there is an International Festival and it will have 25 stalls which will give information about employment opportunities but also generally about the latest developments on the area. The public was welcomed to attend.

ACTION: Jasel to email information about the festival to everyone.

HERE EAST Innovation Centre

Kit Harman gave an update to everyone about this initiative which will bring technology companies together in sport, health, fashion and technology. The Innovation Centre will be a mixture of office space and 'civic spaces' which allow co-workers to collaborate and share ideas. There will be a media area, a makers zone, events space and different levels of memberships. People from the local area are invited to join this centre and in October a pop-up space will be set up to kick-start the centre. This will be very modest but hopefully will help to create links between different companies in order to fully open the centre in March / April 2017. Next month, 27th October there will be an open day to introduce the centre with talks and events.

ACTION: Kit to send further details by email.

6. Cause2Create:

Briony Pete introduced her project which is a 'problem solving platform', bringing together creative sector and the third sector organisations. Cause2Create works in partnership with Loughborough University London and aims to address key problems which grass-root organisations face. This might be for example help with branding and an industry-focused event might be organised which will follow a workshop style to allow participants to benefit from the session.

The specific focus for 2016 is the refugee crisis and the platform aims to raise awareness of the issue but also how people can help on a practical level. A general discussion about this took place and it was noted that although this type of work was highly relevant and had its place, it would be important to include practical implementation in all discussions and examples of this were available. For example, celebrities which had raised awareness of the refugee crisis didn't only use the media to highlight the issue but also personally got involved by visiting the refugee camps in Calais and working on these camps. This was as important as raising awareness of the issue.

ACTION: William to email further details about this project to the group.

7. FILMS FEED YOU

William updated everyone about the Creative Wick Film School which was partly funded by the Wick Award and Abbas Nokasteh's Open Vizor organisation which has sponsored many things in Hackney Wick since 2010 including Hackney Wicked, Creative Wick, Lab Film Festival, Films for Food and Fish Island Labs. The latest venture is Films Feed You which will screen monthly films in aid of the Tower Hamlets Food Bank. The key audiences are young people, the local creative community, film makers and anyone else interested in film. On 4th October first screening will take place.

ACTION: If anyone has a suitable venue, please let William know asap.

OTHER BUSINESS

Get Set for Growth, a free workshop on 20th Sept.

Beton Brut Gallery in Hackney Wick, opening with a Gavin Turk exhibition on 14th Sept.

Hub 67, Community day later this month.

Meeting finished at 11am.

The next CIG meeting is on Friday 14th September at The White Building at 9.30am