

## Friends of Richmond Green (FoRG)

# ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2026

(contact details: Chairman – tel: 020 8948 3384 / email: [mail@FoRG.org.uk](mailto:mail@FoRG.org.uk) )

Date: **Tuesday 28 April 2026 at 7.30pm**

Venue: **The Cricketers pub** (upstairs room), Richmond Green

Attendance: The total attendance was **40** individuals (according to several head-counts by PG). This total comprised **9** committee members in the room (chair Vivien Harris [VH], treasurer Diana Billingham [DB], Peter Willan [PW], Peter Griffiths [PG], Gemma Fumagalli [GF], Juliet Bramwell [JB], David McKenzie [DM], Gemma Warrillow [GW] and Karineh Grigorian [KG]); plus **31** other residents who were observed to have attended (some arriving after the meeting had started, etc):

NB. An attendance sheet was circulated on the night and, of the total people in the room, **28** names were collected on it: Brian Pailin, Karineh Grigorian (committee), Peter Willan (committee), Maeve Willan, Gemma Warrillow (committee), Gemma Fumagalli (committee), Peter Griffiths (committee), Gill Bromley, Laurence Bain, Peter Fisher, Judith Fisher, Richard Peirson, Vicky Peirson, Andrew Morgan, Harmit Kalsi, Bobbie Kalsi, Anthony Russo, Helen Boteju, Manoj Boteju, David Singer, Tony Winslade, Tamla Anderson, Steve Smith, Maggie Smith, Julian Paxton, Keith Parker, Marillyn Maklounf, and Carolin Lennertz.

And among those in attendance who did not sign the sheet were Vivien Harris, David MacKenzie, Graham Stewart, Bob Harris, Frances Bouchier, Laurence Fumagalli, Anna Newton Dunn and Julian Lennertz.

## AGENDA

1. **Apologies**
2. **Minutes of last AGM (23 April 2025)**
3. **Matters arising**
4. **Report of the Executive**
5. **Financial Report and adoption of FoRG Accounts for 2025**
6. **Election of Officers for 2026-27**
7. **Any Other Business (general discussion)**

## MINUTES of the FoRG AGM 2026

Meeting began at **7.31pm**

VH: Welcomed everyone and introduced the committee members present, thanking each them for their contribution over the past year.

### 1. Apologies

Apologies in advance of the meeting were received from: Lord Lee, Jill Green, Charlotte and Robin Andrew, Laurence and Neil Monnery and Petina Hauptfuhrer.

## **2. Minutes of last AGM (23 April 2025)**

VH: Copies of the 2025 AGM minutes had been distributed to last year's attendees, and made available on the FoRG website; any comments? None. VH asked for approval...

Proposer: Brian Pailin  
Seconder: Tony Winslade

The FoRG 2025 AGM Minutes were approved.

## **3. Matters arising**

VH: there are very few matters arising that won't be covered later in this meeting... except to note that, since we last met, the set of chimpanzee sculptures have gone from the town.

## **4. Report of the FoRG Executive**

VH gave a detailed report on issues and on-going activities as set out in the recent FoRG Newsletter for April 2026. Some highlights were summarised as follows...

- **Defibrillator** – It's been another very busy year, but the big news is that a defibrillator for the Green is to be installed by the end of the week. At last year's AGM people gave their support for acquiring one for the popular open space of The Green. Since then, we've explored various options and in the end we decided to go with the Paul Alan Project charity, led by Clare Parish. They've helped us identify the piece of equipment that best suits our purpose, and they will maintain and manage it for us. Installation is expected to be done this coming Friday 1 May.
- **Crime, ASB and Policing** – Gemma F will update us later, following the latest Police Liaison Meeting that she attended last night. Of note it that fact that our local Police team is now based at Holly Lodge in Richmond Park, rather than at Twickenham.
- **Fountain** – we arranged for a professional clean to be done recently; the contractor is coming back soon to check some points raised since it was done, but basically they've done a nice job
- **Grass wear and tear** – we are concerned about the state of the grass on The Green and have been working with the council to find ways to make improvements, although there is more to be done.
- **Heathrow** – concerns over expansion and other changes continue to occupy the time and energies of Peter Willan; in line with his report in the Newsletter, FoRG recommends support for the so-called '2R+' option which would lead to a better not a bigger Heathrow, more integrated with other UK airports;
- **Old Deer Park** – there is an active working group on which FoRG is represented and we're party to various initiatives to improve the open space there;
- **Gates from Green to A316 car park** – we have supported the refurbishment of the pathway surface itself, but we're not totally sure that opening the gates won't be problematic, leading to the pathway over the railway line being used as a rat run between the Green and the A316 car park. The gates are actually shut at the moment, but the policy around when to open and close them again is not clear;
- **Climate action** – it appears that our council LBRUT is among the more proactive when it comes to tackling climate change locally; David M is working with the council to understand options, particularly when it comes to making environmentally-friendly improvements to the structure of listed buildings in Richmond;
- **Licensing** – it's been another busy year at local and London-wide level – notably, the draft strategic policy of the Mayor of London has resulted in a two-year pilot aimed at saving the hospitality sector from the damaging impacts of additional taxes, but the deregulatory nature of this policy does carry the risk of increased ASB in the town;

- **Events** – the May Fair back on Saturday 9 May, as is the May Ball on the Friday night before. When we went to print with the Newsletter, the Orange Tree Theatre was expected to bring some theatrical activity to the marquee on the Sunday, but this element has since been cancelled.

There were no questions from the floor, and that concluded the report of the FoRG Executive. Any of these issues can be discussed in more depth later if people want to.

## **5. Financial Report and adoption of FoRG Accounts for 2025**

FoRG Treasurer Diana Billingham summarised FoRG's accounts (1st Jan to 31st Dec 2025) as follows:-

- **Income to FoRG** – film production revenue was significant last year, in particular with activity around the filming of the fourth series of Apple TV's *Ted Lasso*. With an additional donation since the end of last year, we have received more than £6k from this filming project. Currently, therefore, FoRG has a total of around £15k in the bank for use on local projects.
- **Investments** – we've invested in cleaning the stonework of the Victorian drinking fountain, purchasing a defibrillator for The Green, and contributing repairs to damaged areas of grass on The Green, and also, more recently, we are making a contribution to restoring the telephone boxes on The Green (see below). Each year we say we're open to ideas of how best to spend FoRG money on local amenities, and these investments seem a very good use of funds.
- **Other expenses/costs** – these are low, for example on the work of Richmond Heathrow Campaign (RHC), and the Old Deer park working group.

Questions offered from the floor:-

- Julian Paxton asked: what is the 'Legal Fees' item? DB: last year we paid Kings Chambers for some legal advice that helped us challenge proposed plans for the Onslow Hall building.
- Tony Winslade asked: how exactly does the receipt of film revenue work? DB: it first goes to the council and then they distribute some to us and to other local charities, and we get approximately half of it. VH: to be exact, aside from charging film companies a location fee and for suspended parking bays, the council asks the film company to make a 'discretionary donation' to compensate local residents for any disturbance (such as the suspension of parking bays, etc). Our local councillors decide how the discretionary donation is distributed between FoRG and local charities, and if we continue to get the lion's share of these donations then we're happy. And this is the income that allows FoRG to operate without charging residents a membership fee.

FoRG's Accounts for 2025, as presented, were agreed and adopted:

Proposed: Brian Pailin  
Seconded: Tony Winslade

## **6. Election of Officers and Committee members for 2026-27**

VH: the members of the FoRG Executive Committee have agreed to stand for re-election for the coming year 2026-27. A vacancy in the role of Secretary remains.

Firstly, the positions of Chair and Treasurer:-

- **Vivien Harris** – as Chair
- **Diana Billingham** – as Treasurer

VH asked for approval and it was received:-

Proposed: Richard Peirson  
Seconded: Anna Newton Dunn

Then, rather than take multiple votes on other individual committee members, it was proposed that the room re-elect them as a group, including one new member, Karineh Grigorian, who had been co-opted since last year's AGM. Those standing were:-

- **Peter Willan**
- **Peter Griffiths**
- **David MacKenzie**
- **Gemma Warrillow**
- **Gemma Fumagalli**
- **Juliet Bramwell**
- **Karineh Grigorian**

VH asked for approval for this whole group to continue.

Proposed: Gill Bromley  
Seconded: Maeve Willan

Therefore, Vivien Harris (as Chair), Diana Billingham (as Treasurer), Peter Willan, Peter Griffiths, David McKenzie, Gemma Warrillow, Gemma Fumagalli, Juliet Bramwell and Karineh Grigorian, were duly elected to serve as the FoRG Executive Committee for the coming year 2026-27.

*(NB. since the meeting, Gemma Warrillow decided to step down from the FoRG committee.)*

VH: the formal business of the AGM is now concluded, so let's move to general discussion of any issues people want to raise...

## **7. Any Other Business (general discussion)**

VH: questions from the floor on any topic are welcome...

**Traffic hazard** – Q. Anna Newton Dunn: the corner where Old Place Lane meets The Green is becoming hazardous, owing to a lone tree on the small triangular island that obscures the view of traffic coming from the right. It is dangerous; can something be done about it?

VH: we'll take this issue to the Parks and Highways teams

**Telephone boxes** – VH: Diana referred to this in passing (under 5. 'Financial Report'), but to add some detail... a new development has emerged since the FoRG Newsletter went to print. Peter W has been in conversation with the leader of a new project to restore and revive the telephone kiosks on The Green and elsewhere in Richmond.

PW: a bit of background – there have been years of uncertainty over the future of the twin red telephone kiosks on The Green, and indeed those elsewhere around Richmond Town and Hill. When they were no longer active as public telephone points, BT neglected these grade II listed kiosks and allowed them to gradually deteriorate. Maintenance and restoration has always been an issue, and yet they remain part of our architectural heritage and remain iconic for people and communities. Our focus has been on the pair of kiosks on the corner of The Green near the Princes Head pub. In an attempt to ensure their preservation, while keeping them from being put to any inappropriate use, Andrew Morgan helped by buying one of them from BT, and the council bought the other kiosk, although the council does not devote any time to maintaining the structure.

Then, very recently, PW met Emma Howcroft, a local resident who last year co-founded a registered charity called 'Box Walks'. Some months ago, she entered into agreements with the council to restore the kiosks and use them for community purposes based around the theme of sustainability in the environment (in which she is something of a specialist). Her plan is to raise funding, clean and restore the boxes to the highest standard of their original specification and appearance, and then organise a network of themed walks in the borough. The eight Richmond walks she's mapped out feature kiosks as "destination points" along varying routes. Each box is given a name (e.g. Cara, Walter, Ted, Freddy, Tilly, Wendy, etc.) and houses information and app links (via QR codes) to unlock educative messaging (e.g. quizzes or "gamified" content) based around sustainability themes. The two boxes on The Green are called Bertie and Sophie. Emma Howcroft plans to launch this scheme on Saturday 13 June, beginning at the kiosks on The Green. For more detail, visit the Box Walks website ([www.boxwalks.com](http://www.boxwalks.com)).

PW: Basically, this is all very good news for us and represents the best option so far for bringing these iconic kiosks back into circulation and a good state of care. For those reasons, FoRG has recently decided to donate some money to help restore the kiosks on The Green. To get the practical rambling/walking activity in shape, Emma is looking for local 'guardians' to help arrange the walks activity. So if anyone here wants to get involved, let us know and we can pass it on – or please get in touch with Emma directly via the Box Walks website.

Andrew Morgan: in my view they've done a really good job so far. All BT specified standards (e.g. paint colour, glass panels) have been properly researched and are being used. It's all good and is exactly what I wanted – i.e. to avoid the kiosks becoming used as coffee shops or something else inappropriate, but instead being restored with a good purpose. VH: the standard of work does seem excellent so far.

PW: Emma said she is also looking for anyone with good painting and engineering skills who might help, so if we know of anyone locally it would be good to offer a suggestion. And incidentally, Emma said that the Box Walks ambition doesn't stop at Richmond alone; they have ideas of going London-wide and eventually UK-wide, but it all starts here.

VH: FoRG is still in dialogue with the Council about future ownership of the kiosk on The Green that they still own. Should FoRG buy it? There's been lots of discussion over some time, but the price has to be right for FoRG to get involved and so far the council's figure is simply too high. So we think Emma's Box Walks project is the best option yet, and we're happy to support that.

**Crime, ASB and Policing** – VH: yesterday evening, Gemma F attended the latest Police Liaison Group meeting and she can update us...

GF: some headlines... notably, the three robbers who recently broke into Gregory's (the jewellers in Paved Court) have been caught, arrested and charged. This is all because of good police work but also help from residents who offered telling eye-witness details and even CCTV footage of their own. The police also caught the perpetrator of a nasty daytime assault on The Green last summer.

We need to be aware there have been five burglaries in the last ten days, although they tend to be up towards Sheen; Sgt Wright says they're an unpleasant bunch, talking their way in by claiming to be checking on utilities. Car crime continues to be a problem locally, but there's no significant change.

Overall crime figures have settled down... for now, although we expect the regular mount of ASB across the summer ahead. But it's encouraging that Sgt Wright's team is now up to strength – with 3 PCs and 3 CSOs – and they're very focussed on the tasks ahead. Having stretched resources diverted to other areas of London remains an issue. Because of funding cuts, we no longer have the Friday-Saturday patrols that particularly look out for women and children. And there's no 'Safe Space' at the railway station on Saturdays, although it will remain in place of Friday evenings.

Sgt Wright says he'd clear that the local crime 'hot spot' is The Green and the immediate surrounding area. Consequently, he'd like the 'Safe Space' effort and presence to be based at corner of The Green for the summer (rather than at the station), but this is still under discussion and it's the Council that needs to agree to any rearrangement. VH called for a show of hands on this move and there was strong support in the room to do it as Sgt Wright suggests.

GF: One of the major focal points is high volume crime in Richmond town – including shoplifting and ASB. The new police base at Holly Lodge in Richmond Park is now up and running, and they're hoping to stage an open day next month so local residents can see how their planning to operate from here.

In terms of tackling crime in the town centre, radio comms units have been reintroduced for town centre shops so that stores can communicate with each other when a shoplifting issue occurs that would be of concern to everyone. Also, motorbike delivery drivers are to be stopped and their licenses to be checked in case criminals are using that disguise to operate freely around the town.

The two facial recognition cameras have been very successful, when they're available.

There is a gang conducting parking meter fraud that they're trying to catch, and better signage is to be put on the machines to warn people of the risk.

GF is still doing regular Link updates and reporting to David Noakes at the council – intended to capture any crime or incidence of ASB so that as much of it as possible gets logged. So as before, if anyone sees anything suspicious then please report it – the more the better, no incident is too small.

**Lime Bikes** – GF: there's been constant irritation about the chaotic leaving of Lime Bikes for hire around the town, the hill and riverside, and the council is aware of residents' concerns. At last night's PLG meeting LBRUT confirmed plans to end the licence held by Lime Bikes, and give it instead to rival company Forest Bikes.

PW: While the process of negotiating the new contract (to be in place by June) proceeds, there has not been a chance for residents to express their concerns and views in detail. And yet the new contract is to treble the quantity of bikes that Forest will be allowed to deploy in Richmond. To try to deal with the chaotic nature of where the bikes get left, they plan to install 100 docking bays around the town. Whether this will work satisfactorily, who knows? Further accountability could be improved if the council were to take additional measures, but it's not clear if any of these will happen.

Graham Stewart: Docking bays for the bikes will take a long time to get in place, and a bike stand on every street corner is simply not practical, so coping with the drastically increased number of bikes in the meantime is going to be problematic. When it comes to Lime vs Forest – the companies, and the issues arising, are much the same, but the impact of three-times as many users is entirely predictable – some will obey parking rules and many will not.

At last night's PLG meeting, Graham Stewart asked about bringing in some stricter controls – including something to deal with obstruction of the highway (which includes the pavements) – already an offence, or the giving out of tickets for enforceability. The Council said the question had been posed to 'someone' negotiating the contract, but there are no grounds for optimism here. They haven't even captured the data to understand the full extent of the problem. It's all driven by their transport agenda, and takes little account of good practice. We'll have to wait for a better response.

Anna Newton Dunn: Old Palace Lane is so often afflicted with a profusion of discarded Lime bikes – often making a real obstacle in front of entrances to homes. It's an appalling problem, and we really do need more effective enforcement. Graham Stewart: if you write to the council, you get no response. But the reality is that if a negotiation over a new contract is already in process, then we have a very short window in which to ask the council to do the right thing by embedding stricter enforcement measures.

VH: I was party to some community engagement conversations a year ago – some residents at the top of Richmond Hill were affected more dramatically, with 40-50 bikes being left in front of entrances, and obstructing access, etc. So the problem is not unique to this area around The Green.

Harmit Kalsi: bikes get dumped by my surgery in Sheen all the time – also its not rare to see bike riders travelling against the flow of traffic, and they get really aggressive when challenged – surely it's a form of ASB.

VH: Lord Lee also said they ride the bikes the wrong way along King Steet, but pedestrians are not expecting to look out for traffic coming from the wrong direction., so there's a real danger of accident. We'll raise it with council.

Harmit: we need to insist on personal ID being part of the booking process. They fine car drivers and they should be able to do the same with bikes.

VH: Returning to crime and ASB...

**CCTV cameras** – GF: since our last AGM, two CCTV cameras were mounted on The Green and since then, as tools to help tackle crime, they've proved amazing – footage has helped catch arsonists and various other ASB culprits. But as we're regularly reminded, these cameras are "temporary". We've been campaigning for them to be made permanent, but the response from the council has been difficult and frustrating to say the least. David Noakes tells us they've put in 'a paper' to ask for 6 or 7 permanent cameras, but this has to jump a variety of bureaucratic hurdles – it goes to a steering group, then there's a (borough-wide) consultation to gauge public opinion, a step they say they are 'duty bound' to make... and so on and on. It's all very frustrating. So, if you call 999, please remind them of the cameras on The Green to underline their importance and usefulness. We carry on campaigning; it's a long haul, and we'll keep working on it, but the council really are making it more complicated than it needs to be.

**Graffiti** – Q. Brian Pailin: what about graffiti that still seems to be a problem locally? GF: incidences of graffiti are buried in there among ASB; there is a link to report graffiti to the council and everyone is encouraged to take a photo and upload it; so far, the council has responded quickly to get graffiti removed where it has appeared.

**Pedestrianisation & town traffic** – Richard Peirson asked: what is the status of the mad idea of paving over George Street? It's a plan that never seems to quite go away even though it would cause a traffic nightmare in the town and especially around The Green. PW: at the recent council hustings, I am almost sure that they said they would not send traffic around The Green, although they were still looking at pedestrianisation options in general. So I'm not quite clear where we are with this. There has been lots of traffic modelling done in the past, as well as input from expensive consultants, etc., and the answer seems to be to keep through traffic away from the town. There are ways of managing this but, despite asking, the council won't answer until after the 7 May elections.

Graham Stewart: I used to be chair of school governors on the Hill and remember the tortuous discussions on this issue the last time it reared its ugly head... and the notional outcome then is the same as it will be now... to divert traffic away from the high street, the obvious way to go is to take incoming traffic up Star & Garter Hill and then away down Queens Rd to the Sheen Road. If they resort to the pedestrianisation option, then literally the only solution is to actually send traffic around The Green. We've been down this route before and the options are well understood. Or... controversially, they could make Red Lion Street into a two-way route again, as it was 40 years ago. Officially the council deny that's what they're thinking, but given the limited space involved and route options, we have what we have. But asking consultants for fresh ideas is a complete waste of money.

Other comments from the floor included reference to a question put recently to Lib Dem council leader Gareth Roberts – about the idea of through traffic going around The Green – and he thought that sending traffic around the Green would be "bonkers". By contrast, another resident reported that GR had also been heard to say that sending traffic around The Green would be "the gold standard".

**Licensing** – PW: with the government having decided to help the hospitality sector against the impact of additional taxes, they've been reviewing the Licensing Act; a National Licence Policy Framework has been added to the Act; then the London Mayor introduced his London Licensing Policy strategy, to try and promote 24hr hospitality activity throughout the city. So, against this tide, we're fighting a battle because of the potential knock-on effects including increased ASB and disturbance, etc. And this tide is being led by the policy direction taken by the London Mayor and not by local government. So, in other words, we are at some risk and, against this background, we're doing what we can to keep track of applications as they come up.

**Litter & bins** – Harmit Kalsi: who has been cleaning up all the bird poo on the quayside at the river? Someone is doing the job, and doing it effectively. I also saw someone with a uniform and a badge, "litter patrol" (probably paid for by Be Richmond), going round The Green and fining people! It's a great idea. David Singer referred to a piece in *The Guardian* – reporting a youth having been fined £500 for dropping fag butts. Harmit

Kalsi: but they should actually be out and about at the times when litter is actually being dropped – eg. Friday night, Saturday night.

VH: Jill Green wrote to draw attention to the issue of the bins on The Green being inadequate, a view many will share; the size and style of the bins do not seem to meet the need as The Green becomes busier each summer; by and large the litter collection company does a good job, but we have now asked for larger ‘event’ bins on The Green to help tackle the problem of overflowing litter. Or we need an increase in collection shifts to empty the bins more often.

**Boggy ground in Old Deer Park** – Graham Stewart: the southwest corner of the park has been allowed to get into a very boggy state. It’s good that a large portion of the Link Path has been remade, but here we are three years on and the outlet of the boardwalk under the road into a bog seems to defeat the object, and people are simply dumped into a wet, muddy mess. The causes of the boggy corner are years of neglect by the council, who’ve allowed the drainage channel of the ha-ha ditch to become hopelessly clogged up... all exacerbated by the regular flooding of the river and resulting in a semi-permanent bog. No wonder people are reluctant to use that route. What’s the update on it? Graham gets no traction from the Parks department, and it’s just getting worse.

PW: unfortunately, the Head of Parks, Yvonne Feehan, who has been very effective, is no longer on the case, which is a shame. Flooding is getting worse, and the boggy corner is an issue because the path is unfinished... it needs to curve around to the right to reach higher and drier ground. We’ve been trying to get action on this... and will continue to try to push them on with this essential last extension.

GS: also, the graffiti on the railway viaduct walls is extensive. VH: that graffiti is actually a Network Rail problem, not a council one. And although we have a good working relationship with the council about getting graffiti removed, we’ve yet to develop a similarly fluent dialogue with network rail.

*General discussion ended*

VH thanked everyone for coming and concluded the meeting.

Meeting ended at **8.46pm**

**END**

*(wine was served)*