

LEE MANOR SOCIETY



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Please consider changing to our email distribution - write to: leemanorsociety@gmail.com

Next Meeting: 7 30 pm Wednesday 12 April 2023
12 Micheldever Road, SE12 8LX

Open to all residents in the area. Formalities end at 9.00 pm with refreshments afterwards

NOTES OF MEETING WEDNESDAY 8 MARCH 2023 AT THE COMMUNITY CENTRE

Present

Ralph White (Chairman), Stephen Kieft (Treasurer), David Plumer, Mary Donovan, Barbara Bird, Karen Pratt, John Robson, Charles Batchelor, Anne Fisher, David Ford, David Dannreuther, Frances Mignuolo, Mina Andrade (notes).

Apologies for absence

Sylvia Ling, Cllr James Rathbone and Helen Carr

Matters arising from Minutes of 8 February 2023

250th Anniversary of Ice House: Charles displayed a celebratory banner which he had arranged to be manufactured. It was agreed the banner was striking and contained all the information needed. The agreed date for the 250th Anniversary event is **Sunday 18 June 2023**. Charles said an edited copy of anniversary celebrations was sent to Lewisham Council but he was not hopeful of getting a reply.

Based on last year's rota for supervising visits to the Ice House, a draft was circulated with provisional dates. Please [contact us](#) if you are able to assist: openings are from 3 - 5 pm on the first and third Sundays from April to September with special openings for Party in the Park and Open House London. We do need one volunteer to help us on 16 April.

Reminder to Respond to draft Local Plan

Please try and respond to the draft Local Plan - Consultation open from 1 March to 25 April 2023 and can be done [online](#).

Planning Applications in the Conservation Area including update on Leegate

Alterations and Extensions planning guidelines: Charles said we objected to an application for a rear roof slope extension - a dormer - at 53 Manor Lane. The proposed extension took up too much of the roof slope creating a boxy appearance out of sympathy with the original house. The applicant reduced the size of the dormer but it was still larger than permitted under the council's own guidelines. The planning officer asked if we would drop our objection. We said no. The applicant reduced the dormer to within the size guidelines and, finally, we were able to drop our objection. It remains a puzzle why planning officers do not insist from the outset that plans meet the guidelines.

Leegate: Just as we expected the application was not tabled at the March Strategic Planning meeting. Gaillard is having to redraft their proposal in the light of new government restrictions whereby two stairwells are now required in buildings greater than 30 m high..

Commentary on the value of attending LBL planning meetings: Are Lewisham planning committee meetings worth giving up an evening for? Is it worthwhile for residents or community group representatives to attend Lewisham Council planning meetings in person? No, is the answer from a survey by the Lee Manor Society of two years' worth of planning sub-committee meetings.

Just 3 per cent of planning applications to which residents or a conservation group objected in person at a planning meeting in 2021-22 were rejected by councillors.

Subsequent decisions on 'deferred' applications increase the figure to 10.5 per cent.

These disturbing figures emerged from a Freedom of Information (FOI) request filed by the Lee Manor Society. The council replied to say that the information requested was 'readily available by other means' so it did not have to provide any detail. However, helpfully, it did provide online links to the minutes of the four planning sub-committees – A, B, C, and Strategic – for the two years. But these are not comprehensive, with the Strategic Planning Committee being particularly poor in making its minutes publicly available. Nearly half, (4/9) of its meetings, lacked minutes from which the Information would have been available.

Objectors turned up in person to voice their concerns over 62 planning applications out of a total of 97 applications dealt with in 2021 and 2022 (from the minutes available). Just two of the 62 were refused by councillors although, unusually, a further one was also objected to by the planning officer involved so his objection will have been the deciding factor. Another five applications were deferred for further consideration though all were subsequently approved. (Three with objections met, one partially met and one not met). This gives a 'success' rate for objectors, including the two immediate refusals mentioned above, of 10.5 per cent.

Consultation on the council's Statement of Community Involvement: This document explains how Lewisham communicates with residents about planning decisions. It aims to give residents and community groups like us 'a meaningful role in shaping their places.' The unfortunate reality is that too often the views of local residents are ignored - Leegate is a case in point. In our response we were critical of the role of the Design Review Panel; called for often lengthy planning documents to be made available on paper; and called for the planners to be obliged to notify objectors when plans are revised.

Opposition to proposals for improved access to Hither Green Station: There are advanced plans for putting in lifts and a new bridge at Hither Green Station. The initial plans were withdrawn after opposition by a local resident but it is expected to be resubmitted shortly and it has the support of Lee Manor Society. We noted that the current entrance via the ramp will continue to be the main access and that the new entrances and lifts will be secured out of use when the station is closed. **Note added:** Now approved.

Plant Mart and Garden Party - date agreed

With the permission of the home owners, this year's Plant Mart and Garden Party will be held from 2:00 pm on Saturday 13 May 2023 in the front gardens of 2 - 6 Micheldever Road SE12 8LX



AOB

Date of next meeting - 7.30 pm on Wednesday 12 April 2023

We thank the Community Centre for hosting the meeting