

SHAD THAMES RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION
Core Group meeting at the Anchor Tap – Monday, 5 January 2009

Present: Jilly Frisch
Julian Griffiths
Anna Hollingsworth
Anne Lynn
Nick Napier
Michael Place
Penelope Tay

Guests: Alan Blissett, Principal Environmental Enforcement Officer, Southwark Council
Mervyn Everett, Site Manager, Pyeroy
Roy Tyler, Project Liaison Officer, City Surveyor's Department, City of London
Jonathan Baldrey, Chair, Butlers Wharf Residents' Association

1. Tower Bridge Maintenance Works

STRA said they were concerned and disappointed that two additional Bridge closures had not been mentioned when local residents and businesses met with Pyeroy, City of London, etc etc in July 2008. And, the noise from grit blasting was noisier than anticipated, it being understood from the July 2008 Open meeting that noise would be around the same as traffic noise. Extract from notes of that meeting stated:

"Grit blasting creates a noise of 50/55 decibels which is less than that generated by current road traffic on Tower Bridge. This is the level of noise which will be heard by the nearest residential property, Anchor Brewhouse".

Proposed closures of Tower Bridge

Roy Tyler explained that the two additional proposed closures of Tower Bridge (2 weeks in March 2009 and 20 days in March/April 2010) were not related to the ongoing maintenance work being carried out by Pyeroy. The proposed closure in March 2009 would be to replace bearings to one bascule discovered during planned maintenance. The second closure in 2010 would be to clean the stonework. He said that a decision was still awaited from TFL on the City's request to close the Bridge. He said that the actual work in March 2009 might well be carried out much quicker than the proposed 2 weeks.

STRA said that time was now getting short, nonetheless, if TFL approved the closures, it was hoped that the STRA request for the congestion zone to be changed to allow traffic to use either London Bridge and/or Southwark Bridge, and for a ferry to be available for pedestrians would be positively received. STRA would write to TFL again to follow-up the request made on 7 December 2008. It was noted that Simon Hughes was also progressing these two issues with TFL.

STRA suggested that the non-urgent stonework cleaning might be carried out when the originally planned main closure would take place in 2011, this would avoid a separate 20-day closure in 2010.

STRA felt that Caroline Pigeon, the GLA Transport Member, should be approached to see if she would support STRA's request to TFL. Southwark's Highways/Public Realm officers might also be able to assist. As Alan Blissett would be meeting Caroline Pigeon the next day he agreed to take this up with her.

Noise levels

Alan Blissett had received noise measurements from Pyeroy while work was being done on the South West section, and Pyeroy had said that similar high noise levels when work starts on the South East section would undoubtedly elicit complaints from residents.

Mervyn Everett said that work on the under section of the Bridge would start on Tuesday, 13 January 2009 for about 2 weeks, but he anticipated that noise levels would be less than on the South West section. He said that he would like to be informed as soon as noise levels get to a disturbing level, so that he could take immediate action to deal with it. It was difficult to receive complaints some time

after a particularly disturbing level of noise, and without specific dates. He gave his mobile number to STRA so that reports could be made direct.

Alan Blissett said that the unacceptable noise levels would have to be reduced, and mitigating measures specified, reminding Pyeroy that their current permission for working times would expire at the end of January.

STRA said that local residents were likely to prefer that grit blasting is not carried out on Saturdays, which is a time when most people who have been working hard all the week want to have a quiet weekend. Pyeroy said that this would mean extending the period for working Monday to Friday by a some extra days to cover the work that would have been done on Saturdays. Alan Blissett agreed to let STRA have some alternatives before a final decision is taken on working hours for grit blasting.

“Shrouding”

Although Pyeroy had stated at the July Open meeting that the white shrouding has to be sealed in such a way that it is not possible to have a drawing of the underlying parts of the Bridge on it, STRA had received a request from the Manager of DIM-T that this might be considered in view of the number of visitors and tourists who express disappointment that part of the Bridge is obscured. Pyeroy said that if this should be done another layer of scaffolding would have to be erected on which a suitable type of sheeting could be fixed. Roy Tyler said he would like to receive information about this request.

Next meeting with all concerned

It was agreed that a further meeting with STRA would take place on 6 April 2009.

2. Shad Thames on New Year’s Day

Jonathan Baldrey said Shad Thames had been almost covered in litter on New Year’s Day (paper towels, sparkly decorations, an upturned large plant pot, as well as overflowing commercial bins, and rubbish bags piled all around them). He said he would take this up with Eliza Mann in the first instance.

Action: JB

3. STRA and BWRA to meet Pont and other local businesses

A further meeting would be on Monday, 3 February at 9.30am at Pont to review the Pont arrangement to monitor noise made by people leaving Pont in the period leading up to Xmas and over the New Year. It was hoped to get other local business involved for a similar arrangement over the summer period. JF would follow-up with Michael Clarke of Pont whether he would be inviting other local businesses, or if STRA or BWRA should do it. As STRA hoped to make a proposal for funding for a similar arrangement for the rest of the area NN would also attend the meeting.

Action: JB JF NN

4. Nick Stanton OBE and Sophi Tranchell, Divine Chocolate Ltd, MBE

It was agreed that STRA would write to Nick and Sophi congratulating them on their honours.

Action: JF

5. Shad Thames as a conservation area

Michael Tsoukaris, Group Manager, Design/Conservation, Southwark Council would attend the 2 February meeting to brief the core group on what can/cannot be expected in a conservation area.

6. Lovage signage

JG reported that Southwark planning office had almost misrepresented the pdf colour photograph which he had submitted as evidence that the newly erected Lovage red neon sign was intrusive and not suitable for a conservation area – they had scanned the photo and published it as a black/white image. JG would take this up with the planning office again.

Action: JG

Next meeting – Monday, 2 February 2009 at 7.15pm at the Anchor Tap