

BRA/BelSoc AGM Summary 2019: the Association becomes a Society

There were two AGMs taking place at Belsize Square Synagogue on Sunday 10 March: the final annual meeting for the Belsize Residents Association and the first meeting for the Belsize Society. During the afternoon, members voted to transfer the Association (its financial and non-financial assets, website, archive, on-going activities) to the new Society and to wind up the Association so that its work can continue as a charity.

The meeting did first consider another successful year for the Association. The Chair reported on events that were organised, the continued role of commenting on planning and tree applications, and the publications the Association had produced. During 2018, local election hustings were held; a successful theatre visit took place; and the Association's carol singing and garden party attracted large numbers. The Tradesmen You Can Trust booklet was provided to members, who were kept informed of local issues through emails, the website and the Newsletters. The Association also initiated a pollution-monitoring project.

The questions and comments raised by members then covered how best to raise concerns about transport issues such as cycling on pavements; the latest progress and next steps for the Swiss Cottage gyratory; and how members could be informed about large developments. The BRA's Treasurer reported on finances, which remained healthy, and there was a discussion about the donations made by the Association to local charities.

When the meeting turned to becoming a charity, the Chair provided some background about the decision. There was a vote agreeing to the motion to wind up the Association and to transfer the work to the new Charitable Incorporated Organisation. All BRA members were encouraged to join the Society and those attending the meeting - and none left at this stage - became the first members. There was a discussion about how - over the next months - various engagement activities would be undertaken both to encourage new membership and confirm Association members who had not attended the meeting in becoming members of the Belsize Society.

The meeting then agreed the Trustees of the Society (five of the former BRA Committee) and the rest of the Committee for the Society was elected.