

AUTUMN MEETING OF IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUM DUXFORD/NEIGHBOURS FORUM

Report to Duxford Parish Council

The Autumn meeting of the IWM Neighbours Forum at Duxford Airfield took place this afternoon, starting at 14:27.

Mr John Brown, Executive Director, while having responsibilities for all IWM establishments, is now the Accountable Manager at Duxford for all matters, including airfield operations. The agenda included (but was not limited to) the following topics. (Enumeration as the agenda.)

4. Masterplan update including storage project and hotel.

Ms Alicia Gurney reported that the masterplan is beginning, very gradually, to take shape. IWMD is:

- Concerned to try and improve public transport access (buses into IWMD) for both locals and distant visitors.
- Is planning a new document storage archive on the north side that it is hoped will be in service in 2019, with public access (for researchers etc.).
- Is planning a new storage building just north of the present location of the Land Warfare Museum.
- Has resumed planning for a 120-bed hotel in the corner where the A505 and the M11 intersect. They intend a 3-star rating. This is a bit of a tight corner in the opinion of the undersigned, but IWMD are confident that it can be done. They are aware of various issues, including that of site security, (i.e. prevention of hotel guests having unauthorised access to IWMD premises out of hours.) Visiting coaches and some cars will have to be parked elsewhere, location TBD.

5. Proposed IWM Membership Scheme (replacing Neighbours of Duxford - NoD).

Mr Brown advised that the proposals are intended to provide a better experience for members. He was expecting a range of reactions from village residents, following publication of the proposals, but adverse written responses have been very few. He informed us that the existing NoD scheme is not all that well subscribed. *[My own calculations show that NoD membership is currently less than 13% of the combined populations of the qualifying villages. - NWF]*

Mr Brown's research found that NoD members generally fall into one of the following categories:

- "Nice to have" – but rarely, if ever, visit.
- Occasional visitors.
- A few regular visitors.
- A few misusers, i.e. non-members using members' cards.

A few Parish Councillors (and the undersigned) were somewhat surprised that there had been no prior consultation with the Neighbours Forum, and Mr Brown expressed some regret about that, but explained the background to the proposed change. He remains open for comment, but as implementation of the scheme is intended to be quite soon, any further comments should be

sent to him ASAP, either directly to IWMD, or via the Parish Council, or via the Parish Council delegate on the Neighbours' Forum.

6. New Terms of Reference for the Neighbours Forum (NF).

The existing ToRs having been written many years ago, when the composition of the NF was rather different from today, they had drifted into obsolescence. Draft new ToRs will be circulated to all members for consideration at the Spring 2018 meeting. When received I will copy to Duxford Parish Council for comment.

7. Local Developments.

Mr Brown reported that the Moto proposal has gone very quiet recently. Whether or not the P51 event was contributory to this silence is not known. Mr Brown has had conversations with Gonville and Caius representatives (the landowners in the vicinity of IWMD), who have been made aware of IWMD's concerns over local development proposals both actual and potential. The college does have some unformed intentions for development in the area, but the Hinxton NF delegate (a former college master himself), introduced a note of optimism by reminding the meeting that college Fellows usually have a livelier interest in matters historical than do college Bursars with their financial concerns.

The new chimney to be erected to the west of the airfield remains in prospect. It will not go away.

The proposed development in the triangular field opposite Volvo (the sunflower field) has been withdrawn, one of the Whittlesford delegates reported.

The Duxford development to the north of Greenacres ('Sopwith Grange') will not affect aircraft manoeuvring areas.

8. South Fields Security.

The arrangements put in place for public safety and for unobstructed access for emergency vehicles worked well in 2017, and will be repeated in 2018. There was very little - if any - adverse public reaction, as people realise in the light of recent tragedies, why these measures had to be imposed.

12. Air Show Update

- 2017 was a good year for air shows, from the IWMD point of view. A satisfactory ROI (rate of return) on investment was recorded.
- In 2018, the IWMD will be an official partner to the RAF which will be celebrating the 100th anniversary of its founding.
- The Red Arrows display will be reviewed, as the IWMD noted some aspects consequent on the re-alignment of the display in the light of the latest safety regulations.
- Some complaints were received about the noise of the pyrotechnics which featured as part of the WW1 display in September. Mr Brown reiterated again, that residents should please contact the IWMD if there are any aspects of the IWMD activities that concern them. The telephone number of the Director's office is given in the Duxford Chatterbox, and it is always possible to contact the IWMD via the website.

The meeting closed at 15:30.

Norman Foster
Neighbours Forum Delegate
obo Duxford Parish Council