

EASTCOTE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Draft Notes on 91st ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING St Thomas More Church 32 Field End Road Eastcote Wednesday 25th May 2022 at 7.15 for 7.30 p.m.

Present: ERA Committee (10), Residents (22) and 2 Councillors

Eastcote Ward: Councillors Nick Denys and Ian Edwards.

Welcome to the 91st AGM of the ERA. As a residents' association we are very fortunate to have the strong support of our local councillors. The recent Ward boundary changes mean that most of our area is now covered by one ward, Eastcote. We are privileged to have with us this evening Councillors Nick Denys and Ian Edwards who have very kindly agreed to answer questions later this evening. I would also like to welcome our President Catherine Dann and to take this opportunity to thank her for her continued support throughout the year.

Apologies for Absence: ERA Committee (6), Residents (10) and Cllr Becky Haggar.

Meeting Notes for 90th AGM, which was held by Zoom on the 1st June 2021, - no amendments – **accepted by unanimous show of hands.**

Matters Arising - The Accounts, which were provisionally accepted last year, have been signed off.

Committee Reports, including Treasurers Report and accounts.

Chair - Despite the pandemic ERA has managed as last year to continue to engage with other organisations on your behalf. The committee has taken it all in their stride and carried on under very challenging circumstances we've got quite used to zoom which in some cases has actually allowed more people to participate.

In brief, we continued to attend meetings, many of which are now virtual: Eastcote Flood Action Group, HARA (Hillingdon Alliance Residents' Associations), H4ALL, HS2 Community Engagement, Hillingdon Community Traffic Working Group (HS2/LBH), Residents' Planning Forum (LBH), Ruislip Woods Management Advisory Group (RWMAG), SNT Ward Panels, London Green Belt Council, and Federation of Metropolitan Users Committee (FOMLUC).

H4All is very interesting and informative as it is also attended by local health professionals. It is intended to become a regular on-going engagement with residents and regularly updates RAs with meetings, seminars, and consultations on health matters so it would be nice to have someone volunteer to receive this information and put it on our website.

Others remain in touch via email: Eastcote Conservation Panel, Friends of Eastcote House Gardens, and some deferred their meetings.

RAF Northolt has invited ERA to attend a briefing meeting about Stage 2A of the Royal Air Force Northolt's Airspace Change Proposal to be held in June.

HS2 main works have now started, and they are holding visits to a viewing platform at West Ruislip

ERA continues to receive weekly updates on road traffic management related to HS2 works which are included in our weekly email.

In case you need to contact HS2 I have included details for the HS2 Helpdesk: Freephone: 08081 434 434 Minicom: 08081 456 472

Email: hs2enquiries@hs2.org.uk

On a cheerier note, the daffodils received when the trees next to the War Memorial Garden, in Bessingby Park and at Newnham School were planted by ERA in conjunction with the Faiths Forum for London have flowered. Hopefully others who attended those events also saw their daffodils bloom and smiled.

In March ERA attended the Eastcote Family Food Fun Day in the High Street. An event organised as part of the Welcome Back initiative to encourage residents back to shopping centres. ERA produced a business card which was handed out along with ERA balloons for the children and Eastcote bags supplied by the organisers. Interestingly many believed they were members and paid the 'nice person who comes to the door'! They were surprised it was 2 years since that had happened and appeared to understand why we would like them to pay online. I believe a small number did go home and do so! Hopefully this means that we should be able to recover our previous membership.

RWMAG still hope that the extra 30 acres of Copse Wood purchased by the Council last year will be incorporated into the existing National Nature Reserve in time for the announcement to be made for its 25-year anniversary.

The Eastcote Flood Action Group continued to meet until September when it was suggested that meeting on a quarterly basis may be more appropriate as more meetings could be arranged when necessary.

The absence of a newsletter meant the article on fatbergs was not published so it has been decided to put it on an "Environment" page on the website.

Please encourage any local residents with flooding issues to come forward and join the group and remind them that in order to create a safe space for residents to discuss their issues the information around specific locations given at meetings and in the EFlag meeting notes are treated as confidential.

Added post meeting: Please remember to contact Thames Water to record **every** single event. Questionnaire link:

<https://www.thameswater.co.uk/media-library/home/help/emergencies/flooding/sewer-flooding-questionnaire.pdf>

Environment - At least year's AGM ERA reported on the Council's consultation on its draft Strategic Climate Action Plan urging residents to reply. Eastcote Residents' Association sent a response. The Council published and subsequently adopted a revised

version of the Plan: https://hillington.gov.uk/media/7171/Strategic-climate-action-plan/pdf/Climate_strategy_adopted_July_2021_1.pdf

In November, the Council adopted a motion for a People's Assembly on Climate.

Work on recycling continued and a report was produced comparing information from different sources which appear to be causing confusion. It is hoped that this will enable ERA to ask the right questions in order to achieve more clarity on what can and can't be recycled. It is hoped that a mechanism for ERA to publish "tips of the month (or even week)" on both recycling and carbon footprint, can be found, which can hopefully be expanded to other RAs across the Borough.

Parks and Open Spaces – During the last year work to maintain Eastcote House Gardens, Long Meadow and the River Pinn between Cheney Street and Joel Street to a high standard, has been carried out by the Friends of Eastcote House Gardens group of volunteers. A number of volunteers have worked along the River Pinn in Long Meadow to ensure that the back waters are functional, and the river kept clear of rubbish. Just recently a safe, child's bicycle, Tesco shopping trolley and a number of ladies handbags have been removed to avoid restricting the river flow.

To celebrate the Platinum Jubilee a new area has been planted near the entrance from Field End Road, and a seat will be installed around the tree on the site of the original house.

The area either side of the steps at the west end of the café has been replanted.

Two wild flower areas near the boundary with Field End Road have been planted and the Council has provided a new path from the Field End Road entrance and along Pamela Gardens boundary making a permanent walkway all around the Gardens.

Judging the various areas of the Park for London in Bloom is scheduled to take place on Thursday 14th July.

A Jubilee Picnic is being organised by the FEHG taking place on Saturday 4th June 10-00am to 4-00pm with Stalls and activities for all the family. ERA will be attending – we've even invested in some bunting.

Planning - As always, throughout the year, ERA has continued to review planning applications in our area, to support residents and to submit comments where required. As usual we have worked closely with Lesley Crowcroft, Chair of the Eastcote Conservation Panel, and once again I would like to thank her for all the knowledge and support which she gives.

I never comment on individual residential planning applications as part of this report but, if you would like to discuss something, do come and speak to me directly or get in touch at any time after the meeting.

Last year I mentioned that the government had put forward radical new initiatives in a document entitled Planning for the Future – ERA and the ECP collectively submitted a number of concerns. Many negative issues were raised from a whole raft of different quarters, including MP's, and it is not currently being progressed in its original format. We shall continue to keep an eye on this and other planning changes.

Another large change is that last year the Council brought Planning back 'in house' having outsourced it for 10 years. There is therefore a whole new planning department and whilst there have been a number of teething problems it is believed that the level of service will be improved as things bed down.

We have continued to attend regular resident association meetings on planning issues with the Council.

The London Green Belt Council - The last full Council, held via Zoom was in December last year and other than the request for annual subscriptions there has been nothing this year so far. It is thought to be safe to say that there have been no threats to Green Belt land within ERA's catchment area, nor any developments concerning previously reported threats in those areas adjoining our own

The Safer Neighbourhood Team Ward Panel - Has continued to meet on-line throughout the pandemic, although will move back to physical meetings this year with the next meeting scheduled for 1 June. Eastcote and East Ruislip remains a relatively low crime area compared to other Wards across London. At each meeting we agree a set of priorities; in the new system the first priority is set by the Basic Command Unit and at least two others are set by the Ward Panel. The BCU continues to prioritise violent crime; the Ward Panel have suggested Drugs, Anti-social Behaviour and Motor Vehicle Crime as priority areas. Following the recent boundary changes, we are expecting a re-organisation of the Ward Panels so that Cavendish Ward and the bulk of the Eastcote and East Ruislip Ward will become a new Eastcote Ward Panel but this has not yet been confirmed

FOMLUC - A virtual meeting was attempted last December but failed due to connectivity problems. Any FOMLUC related information has been obtained from social, TfL and local media sources. Have already reported on the new platform lifts at Harrow on the Hill Station and more recently the problems (with wheels) on the Metropolitan Line (now resolved). Funding issues due partly but not entirely to the Pandemic have affected the timetables of major projects such as the new signalling system for which there is now no start (or finish) dates for our sections of the Underground network. As has been widely publicised in the media, The Elizabeth Line (Crossrail) is to be opened in sections from 23 May 2022 with the full integrated line being operative from about this time next year.

The pandemic prevented Road Stewards from conducting their usual collection of subscriptions, so, ERA is looking to encourage those who wish to be members of ERA to pay via direct debit or by payment via their bank. Cash will still be accepted where members wish to continue to pay in that way.

ERA will be arranging to have a flyer delivered to all homes in Eastcote area with the aim of re-generating our membership and, we hope, to create new interest.

The annual subscription currently remains at a nominal £2 per household. For ERA to be able to continue to act on behalf of the community we do need to have the backing of a large membership.

Our most appreciative thanks go to our team of Stewards who are still "waiting in the wings" and for the past endeavours of those who have needed to stand-down or who have moved away. We will be arranging an Afternoon Tea event on Tuesday 2nd August for our Stewards to gather with Committee members so we can all re-connect

Website - ERA is looking for someone to help improve the look of our website – I am told this is not overly technical you just need to be able to use word and presumably and some idea of layout.

The business card has been reworked into a Flyer and is awaiting resizing and a new QR code to link it to the 'Join up' button.

Treasurer's Report – 21/22 Accounts (unaudited)

The accounts show a deficit of £600 the same as last year, as further reduction in expenditure compensated for reduced income.

Even though our income was seriously compromised the committee still voted to continue its support of the Eastcote Conservation Panel by donating £100 a year and to pay the community contribution to LBH for the lights. Fortunately, the cash position remains very healthy and ERA had £in the Current account and £in the Savings account as at 31/03/22.

HSBC have introduced bank charges and the committee has therefore decided to open a community account at NatWest which currently does not charge voluntary organisations. Cheques are rarely used so it no longer seems necessary to have 3 signatories. It is therefore proposed that there need only be 2 people with internet access - agreed unanimously

The committee have debated the possibility of raising subscriptions – many believe it should remain as it is for the time being and many think it should be increased. We would be very interested in hearing your views. Please either email or leave your comments on the slips at the back of the room.

Questions about reports

1. Treasurers Report - none

Treasurers Report – unanimously accepted by a show of hands.

Unaudited accounts - unanimously accepted by a show of hands.

2. Committee reports - none

Committee Reports - unanimously accepted by a show of hands.

Committee Nominations were circulated ahead of meeting (copy on request from chair@eastcotera.co.uk).

1. Auditor re-elected - unanimously accepted by a show of hands.

2. 2 members have resigned, and we thank them both for their time on the committee.

The Secretary role has been split into 2. 1 Secretary - responsible for booking halls, risk assessments etc. which has been filled and 2 Meeting secretary to take notes still vacant.

The rest of the Officers and the current Committee members have all very kindly agreed to stand for re-election to their present roles - unanimously accepted by a show of hands.

If anyone would be interested in helping, either on a regular or one-off basis then please volunteer – many hands make light work.

If you're not sure then perhaps the following excerpts from message received may help to encourage you to give it a go: "I have enjoyed being on the committee, it is rewarding to point residents in the right direction, often simply to lend a sympathetic ear.

The meetings always proved stimulating, especially Open Forum allowing us to hear councillor's views on specific issues."

As well as those roles already mentioned we are looking for people to

- Liaise with Community groups and Updating Events Diary on Website.
- Cover Environmental issues
- Edit twice yearly Newsletter.
- Be Road Stewards – liaising with committee about local issues and delivering Newsletters twice a year.
- Refreshments
- Updating Road closures /transport on eweekly – filled post meeting

Please feel free to email chair if you would like to discuss these or indeed any other roles you may like to take forward.

New Resident issues.

1. Will the roadside trees in Barnhill Eastcote which were removed be replaced when the season allows? Cllr ND to investigate. Cllr IE Priority is to get more street trees but if removed because of disease or damage to property cannot be replaced.

Answer: Cllr ND If there are no underground issues officers are aiming to plant new saplings to replace those removed in Barnhill during the next planting season (November 2022 to March 2023).

2. Some roads in Ealing have high profile notices about road closures for Jubilee celebrations. Will LBH also be posting signs and, if so, when?

Answer: Cllr IE the signs will go up at the end of this week or beginning of next week.

LBH delighted to support the Jubilee, supporting residents who want to hold street parties and are giving £250 for road parties plus 2 large scale events. Total cost is miniscule compared to LBH running costs – saved over 100K by reducing the size of the council, 40K by reducing cabinet size. Annual savings of 300K overall and every year hereafter.

3. The verges along Eastcote Road which were left wild last year have been mown.

Answer: Cllr BH some residents of verge along Eastcote Road have found the wild area obstructing their visual field coming out of the road and also looking " very weedy" They all have requested that the verge should be grass and cut rather than have wildflowers.

4. What was the outcome of the wilding experiments last year and what decisions have been made going forward?

Answer: see below Q5.

5. Is LBH planning wildflowers on Pinn Fields.

Answer: Cllr IE: wilding saves money and very keen to have more areas. Will answer later about specific areas.

This year mown early because flowering didn't take well. The scheme has been expanded and now mainstreamed as Council policy

6. Please can you update us regarding flood mitigation in Bessingby Park.
Answer: Cllr IE - Cllr Lavery continues to be the Cabinet Member responsible and he is developing the amelioration scheme and it has been funded. Some preliminary work has been done.
7. Broadhurst Gardens and the kerbs of the Open Space were 'missed' when Greencroft Avenue pavements, crossovers and kerbs and the kerbs of the east side of Broadhurst Gardens Open Space were replaced last October. This oversight is a serious problem with which the Councillors are fully conversant.
Answer: Cllr IE All roads and pavements are inspected every year, rank ordered; unfortunately, Broadhurst is not near the top. Can't give the undertaking of when it will be done. Would like to increase the budget.
8. Do you have any input into decisions about banks and building societies that are being closed in Eastcote.
Answer: Cllr ND – no but make Eastcote attractive.
 Post meeting note: ERA wrote to NatWest HO in July 2021 and, as expected, received a standard non-committal response!
9. Oak Grove and Elm Avenue junction issues – could parking issues be addressed.
Answer: Cllr ND there will be a consultation.
10. 1. Why is there no weight limit on Oak Grove bridge (discussed at previous committee meeting – there is a weight limit but it is advisory). Cllr IE will investigate this, but the bridge probably belongs to TFL
Answer: Oak Grove – no weight limit on bridge but it is not suitable for HGV (Traffic order from 1980s on Chelston Road).
 2. There are weight and width issues (danger to pedestrians because of narrow pavements). IE will find out about safety issues.
Answer: Pavement cannot be widened – (Resident suggested metal pedestrian bridge alongside road bridge. Answer - very unlikely due to cost as cheaper options available - could be made one-way but residents unlikely to support this.)
 LBH is a member of the London Lorries Scheme so could consider width restrictions. LBH have had some success at another location with width restriction across a bridge enforced by CCTV and fixed penalties. CCTV will soon be available to be moved from elsewhere in Borough.
11. Lime Grove: speeding petition; residents not keen on traffic calming measures but a width restriction may help or a flashing sign. **Answer:** Cllr IE Low on policing priorities but Council can take powers, but fines go to Treasury rather than local Councils.
Action: ERA to raise at Ward Panel.
12. Large tree outside house in lime grove pushing over wall.
Action: Cllr ND will look into it.
13. Problems over availability of allotments – some vacant and not being allocated.
1. **Answer:** Cllr ND Allotments over-subscribed – LBH conducting a borough-wide review.
 Cllr IE reported:
 1. Council have purchased Broadwater Lake with HS2 money – HOWAC will move there from existing facility.
 2. Plans for Uxbridge Golf Course (restitution of 6 holes lost). IE 9-hole golf courses are becoming more popular, so Ruslip and Uxbridge likely to remain as 9-hole.

AOB

Chair congratulated Councillor Becky Haggart who was recently appointed Mayor for the coming year and Councillor Ian Edwards, who continues as leader of the council,

Dates for future meetings are on our notice boards and website. 29th June, 28th September, 26th October (Open Forum at which we hope to have a speaker- please let us know who you would like to hear from) all here in St Thomas More Hall. 30th November, 1st February by Zoom. Please can I remind you that these meetings are open to all residents.

Chair thanked all the committee members for their part in making this evening run smoothly and most importantly the residents for coming out, for being involved and showing their support.