

EASTCOTE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Notes on 93rd ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Held on Wednesday 15th May 2024 at 7.30pm St Thomas More Church, 32 Field End Road, Eastcote

	Present: ERA Committee (11), Residents (26), 3 Councillors, ERA President Eastcote Ward Councillors: Nick Denys, Becky Haggard and Ian Edwards
1.	<p>Welcome</p> <p>The Chair for the evening, welcomed those present to the 93rd Annual General meeting of the ERA. Our three local councillors were thanked for attending and for their ongoing strong support of our association. A welcome was also extended to our President who was thanked for her continued support through the year. Thanks were expressed for the use of the Church Hall.</p> <p>A welcome was extended to two local GPs who were going to talk about the North Connect Primary Care Network, this would be followed by a refreshment break for those attending to talk to councillors and committee members before the start of the formal part of the meeting. The Chair thanked the person organising the interval refreshments and also those helping to serve them.</p>
2.	Apologies for Absence: ERA Committee (4), Resident (1)
3.	<p>The Meeting opened with a talk 'Taking Care of You' led by Dr Diviash Thakrar, GP partner at Northwood Health Centre and Dr Martin Hall GP Partner at Devonshire Lodge. They are both Clinical Directors of the North Connect Network and they told us about modern Primary Care and the wider range of clinicians that are now working at our GP surgeries, what services are being delivered and how your local health service is working to take care of you, prevent, diagnose and treat illnesses and support you to manage your health and wellbeing. They also gave some insight into the constraints put upon them by the dictates of the NHS.</p> <p>The doctors were thanked for coming along this evening and providing such an informative talk. Post meeting: It is hoped more detail will be available in the Autumn 2024 issue of 'era news'</p>
4.	Meeting Notes for the 92 nd AGM which was held on 23 rd May 2023,- No amendments – accepted by unanimous show of hands.
5.	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>There was one outstanding question from last year regarding a serious water leak at the site of the allotments on Field End which exploratory works failed to resolve. Response: Cllr BH matter was resolved.</p>
6.	Committee Reports
6.	Introduction- Future of the ERA
1	<p>After the last AGM the Committee met to consider the future of ERA, its aims and objectives, how it should be organised and administered to move forward into the 21st century. When it was first founded it was necessary to have a set day, time and place to meet as most people did not have access to a phone and local information would have been found in the local weekly newspaper. Today almost everyone has access to the internet and email. Most organisations now expect to communicate via email and receive immediate responses so new competences need to be acquired and practised. How to operate a democratic organisation under these circumstances is an ongoing challenge and will in time require changes to our constitution. For example, it has been suggested that the current Aims and Objectives of the Association be updated to a Vision and Mission statement along the following lines:-</p> <p>Vision- Ensure Eastcote remains a vibrant community and a healthy and attractive place to live</p> <p>Mission- To work together with residents to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Engage in local democratic processes, representing residents' views to external organisations with local impact (Council, Police, TfL, NHS etc.)• Support local charities• Work in partnership with other local organisations to amplify our voice <p>Please encourage your friends and neighbours to join us, as a thriving Residents Association is important to local democracy</p> <p>ERA now has at its disposal three means of communicating with local residents with varying frequency, and albeit overlapping, different content. We have our weekly email which we use for information which can't wait, our noticeboards for those who don't use email and our twice-yearly newsletter 'era news' delivered by Road Stewards. The</p>

	<p>weekly email has limited circulation but is nevertheless a useful tool and needs greater publicity. The aim is that this should be the place to go to see what is happening in Eastcote in the same way as once residents read the local paper. ERA currently has five noticeboards but would like to have more. A survey of Council Community Notice Boards is to be made with a view to usage, location, and visibility. A number have become 'fogged' and need repair or replacement and others are significantly underused. It has been suggested that ERA might consider taking over some of the boards identified within the ERA catchment area. The printed newsletter is edited with a view to promoting community by featuring articles on local clubs and societies and celebrating the many volunteers who give up their time to making Eastcote a good place to be.</p>
6. 2	<p>Road Stewards</p> <p>Over the past twelve months we have been working on building up our membership base – delivering a flyer about ERA, followed in some roads by Road Stewards calling door to door or delivering letters encouraging residents to join.</p> <p>We are glad to say, recently 3 new Road Stewards have joined the team, but we still need more support. Although we are trying to move to direct debit payment of subscriptions, it is proving to be a slow process. At present the best way to reach potential members remains having someone local to gather in cash payments. For those wishing to contribute but reluctant to call on doors we still need Stewards to deliver our twice-yearly 'era news' to members and leaflets to roads with no Steward. Please let us know if you can assist in some way as our ultimate aim is to have at least 1 road steward in every road as we believe that being able to have direct contact with representatives from each road in our area is very important in keeping in touch with what is going on locally and ensuring that 'Working Together on Local Issues' continues to be relevant. Road Stewards will be essential to achieve ERA's vision and mission statements but not necessarily for collecting subscriptions! We must continue to press for subscriptions paid via the bank to take account of the increasing cashless society and relieve the burden of collecting cash subscriptions. Last year's social event to thank our Road Stewards for their great support was a cheese and wine quiz evening in September at St Thomas More Church Hall. Everyone who attended enjoyed the event and the fact it was good to be able to socialise with Committee members and other Stewards. An advance copy of the Autumn 'ERA News' was available for perusal. This year we are planning to have an Afternoon Tea in The Stables, Eastcote House Gardens with a provisional date of July.</p> <p>We are currently wanting to have a presence at the FEHG Summer Fete & Picnic on the 1st June but as most of the ERA committee are already committed to helping with the event, we really do need some help on our own ERA stall in order to be able to attend. We are therefore looking for volunteers to give us some time, say about 1.5 hours, on the day.</p>
6. 3	<p>What ERA committee did during the past year</p> <p>In brief, we continue to attend meetings, either virtually: Hillingdon Alliance Residents' Associations (HARA), The councils Residents' Planning Forum, HS2 Community Engagement, Hillingdon Community Traffic Working Group (HS2/LBH), Eastcote Flood Action Group (EFlag), or in person: Safer Neighbourhood Team Ward Panel (SNT), Federation of Metropolitan Users Committee (FOMLUC), RAF Northolt, Friends of Eastcote House Gardens (FEHG). Whilst others hold hybrid meetings: London Green Belt Council (LGBC), Ruislip Woods Management Advisory Group (RWMAG), or remain in touch via email: Eastcote Conservation Panel (ECP) and H4All which continues to inform us about talks/events on health matters and also funding/training opportunities for Hillingdon Residents. It would be very helpful to have someone interested in Health and wellbeing who could receive this information and as most of it is time sensitive to post notified events on the eweekly email.</p> <p>ERA has been asked to circulate a link from the NHS asking for voluntary and community organisations to fill out a survey to gather the community's thoughts and feelings on healthcare in the borough to help inform their new charter.</p> <p>https://bit.ly/48UZx90</p> <p>Link for residents/members of the public: Hillingdon Community Health Charter :: North West London ICS (nwlondonicb.nhs.uk).</p> <p>HARA- This year the speakers were the new borough Superintendent Bennett who is overseeing a shift back to local policing and the CEO Citizens Advice Bureau, Hillingdon.</p> <p>Safer Neighbourhood Team Ward Panel meets on a quarterly basis- our most recent meeting was on 13 May when we were informed that Sgt Althea Thomas is our new Ward Sergeant. Eastcote is a relatively low crime area. The SNT hold regular community engagement activities which are posted on the ERA website. The current priorities for the SNT are violence, anti-social behaviour and motor vehicle crime. The Knife Bins have been temporarily removed from Car Parks as they were been deemed "not fit for purpose" as it was possible to retrieve the deposited knives!</p> <p>We also support The Federation of Metropolitan Line Users Committee who liaise with London Underground to improve our local Underground services. TFL earmarked 10 stations including Eastcote for step free access though this is subject</p>

	<p>to funding being available. A local resident raised a petition for a lift at Eastcote which now has over 1000 signatures and will be emailing shortly to TFL.</p> <p>Walking, Wheeling, and Cycling Report- Moving on from the June 2022 survey report about the accessibility of Cavendish/Pine Gardens/Bessingby Park Recreation Grounds, we are now looking at the accessibility of Eastcote Medical Centre. Please email any observations/suggestions to chair@eastcoteria.co.uk. We would welcome residents' suggestions of other places where a survey of current conditions would be useful.</p> <p>Friends of Ruislip Woods have kindly expanded the 'Getting to Ruislip Woods' section of their new website to include accessibility and more information on public transport. See https://ruislipwoodstrust.org.uk/</p> <p>One of the wellbeing activity sessions that Hillingdon Council offers to people living with dementia and their carers is a cycling session in a safe traffic free area. There are two groups, one is for early-onset and the other for older ages. They are sociable and relaxed one-hour sessions where people can try out an electric assisted tricycle, either pedalling on their own or on a two-seater with a carer or an instructor. Everyone gets a chance to stop for a chat and to swap around and try the different cycles. Guaranteed to cheer up anyone who takes part!</p> <p>All activities are free and open to Hillingdon residents living with dementia and their carers.</p> <p>To book or for more information about the dementia groups, please email sdurner@hillingsdon.gov.uk or call 01895 277137. You can also visit the council website at www.hillingdon.gov.uk/dementia-activities</p>
6. 4	<p>Planning</p> <p>Throughout the year, ERA has continued to review planning applications in our area, to support residents and to submit comments where required. If you have something you wish to discuss, please contact planning@eastcoteria.co.uk at any time after the meeting.</p> <p>ERA has continued to attend the regular Council Planning Forums which they hold with residents' associations.</p> <p>Local Plan</p> <p>There was a recent consultation by the Government on planning changes to increase the number of applications that can be made under Permitted Development Rights rather than needing Full Plans Applications – ERA reviewed and responded to it.</p> <p>We now have a very important Hillingdon Consultation regarding a new Local Plan which will inform our local area for the next 5 years. ERA will be responding and encourage asll of you to take a look at it and put in a response – it really is such an important document. The consultation ends at 5pm on 17th June.</p> <p>The council are hosting two information sessions to introduce the Local Plan and the purpose of the consultation, and to gather views from stakeholders on what the Local Plan should contain.</p> <p>An online event via Microsoft Teams- Wednesday 22 May from 2pm to 3:30pm A short introduction to the Local Plan and topic- based discussion.</p> <p>And a Drop-in event at the Civic Centre- Thursday 23 May from 6pm to 8pm (Committee Room 4) when Council officers will be available to answer questions and facilitate discussions around the Local Plan and topics.</p> <p>If you would like to attend either event, please email localplan@hillingsdon.gov.uk with your details.</p> <p>ERA also responded to the Flood Strategy Consultation in March 2024, in the form of a letter of support for Hillingdon, which as Local Lead Flood Authority, nominated Eastcote to join the London Community Flood Action Programme (CFAP) which was set up by the National Flood Forum (NFF) to support communities at high risk of surface water and/or sewer flooding to become more resilient to these growing risks, and, had the opportunity to make some feedback to a study of 'Understanding perspectives on 'good' engagement from communities across the Thames Region which is part of the Thames Flood Advisors' Community Engagement Project. This was an opportunity to shape a policy.</p>
	Committee Reports – no questions- accepted by unanimous show of hands.
6. 5	<p>Treasurers Report</p> <p>Treasurer was delighted to report an increase in income for the last financial year. Some of this (£175) is because we now have a Community Account with NatWest and receive interest on our reserve funds unlike our previous bank account on which we had to pay monthly bank charges. The rest is due to an increase in Subscriptions and Donations. The delivery of the recent 'era news' resulted in 48 new direct debits during the first 2 weeks in May, bringing the total to 262 – still a long way to go to convert members to this way of paying. The extra income allowed us to make some donations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £230 previously agreed for the tree, Quercus palustris Green Pillar, planted in the Deane Croft Planter as ERA's contribution to the High Street face lift. • Balance left from monies received from the Faiths Forum of London initiative, plus a small extra contribution of £50 for stakes etc., to replace the Betula utilis jacquemontii 'Snow Queen' trees planted at Newnham School –

	<p>these originally arrived the day we all went into lock down and consequently 2 of them died. Post meeting: these have been planted and are doing well.</p> <p>We continue our affiliations with pressure groups that we believe could be useful in preserving and improving the lives of our residents. National Organisation of Residents Associations, Open Spaces Society and The London Green Belt Council which works with CPRE, The Countryside Charity, and maintains its vigilance in preventing the erosion of Metropolitan Green Belt land in our communities within our Borough and other local areas with some success. Currently, CPRE London is working towards increasing the woodland in London's Green Belt and a major initiative under this project is the <u>Tree Ring Community Forest for London</u>.</p> <p>The £4000 increase in expenditure over the previous year is mainly accounted for by the cost of producing and delivering the Spring issue of 'era news' and an increase in hall fees due to resuming face to face meetings and the increased cost of catering.</p> <p>It is unclear what will be expected of ERA this year regarding the lights as we received the following message from a Council Officer: "In past years the Eastcote Residents' Association have generously made a contribution towards the cost of the Christmas Lights which is always very much appreciated. We wanted to contact you to see if this is something that the Residents' Association would like to continue this year. Going forward we have been looking at ways to make the Christmas Lights programme more financially sustainable which will include offering significantly more corporate sponsorship opportunities. This approach to income generation is being carefully planned now ready to fully implement in 2024/25. We are collaborating with colleagues within our Communications Team to come up with a 'menu' of sponsorship opportunities, which we very much hope will be of interest to the Residents Association. For this year, we can confirm that the 'ERA' Christmas banner can be displayed subject to your confirmation."</p> <p>Finally, many residents see litter picking as a positive way of improving their environment. To do this ERA would need to add this activity to our Public Liability Insurance which will increase the premium from £96 to £157. It will also need a risk assessment (guidance available from insurer) and safety equipment. Our local councillors have very kindly suggested that we can apply to the Ward Budget for this extra cost and we will be doing so. Please let us know of any areas that are particularly littered.</p>
	<p>Treasurer's Report- no questions- accepted by unanimous show of hands.</p> <p>The reports being concluded and accepted the Chair thanked all of the committee members who put a lot of time and effort looking after the interests of and supporting Eastcote Residents.</p> <p>Thanks were also given to the member responsible for keeping our noticeboards smart and up to date.</p>
7.	<p>Elections</p> <p>In accordance with our Constitution we have to re-appoint the auditor and re-elect the Officers and members of the Committee. Nominations were circulated before the meeting. Meeting Chair proposed to re-elect on block all the members who have very kindly agreed to stand for re-election to their present roles. Agreed by unanimous show of hands.</p> <p>One committee member stood down after more than 10 years on the committee – Keith has been an incredible member of our committee for a number of years now, and we're very sorry to see him go. His dedication to preserving green spaces and to Eastcote House Gardens in particular has been exemplary. We thank him for his service and support and hope that we will still be able to call on him from time to time for the invaluable advice and guidance he is able to offer.</p> <p>Those who very kindly agreed to stand for re-election to their present roles were re-elected by unanimous show of hands.</p> <p>Three new committee members were elected by unanimous show of hands.</p> <p>As well as the roles already mentioned we are looking for people to:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with Community Groups and Update the events diary on the website • Environment issues including the London Green Belt Council • Road Stewarding – delivering Newsletters twice a year • Refreshments • Parks and Open Spaces • Updating road closures/transport on weekly email • Attending Federation of Metropolitan Line Users Committee and/or Northolt Community Engagement Meetings <p>Please email the Chair If you would like to discuss these or any roles you would like to take forward.</p>

8.	<p data-bbox="167 197 375 224">Any other Business</p> <p data-bbox="167 230 1412 257">Dates for future meetings are on our notice boards and website and the meetings are open to all Eastcote residents.</p> <p data-bbox="167 293 1428 387">The Open Forum will be held at St Thomas More Church Hall on 25th September. This will be an opportunity to discuss issues with other residents and committee members. It will be followed by a Q&A with local Councillors. Please send questions in advance via email to give Councillors the chance to gather information for useful responses.</p> <p data-bbox="167 423 1444 517">ERA would like to thank the Friends of Eastcote House Gardens for all they do to maintain these beautiful surroundings for the local community to enjoy and organising the Summer Fete and Picnic. This year it is takes place on 1st June from 11am to 4pm.</p> <p data-bbox="167 553 1396 616">Finally thank you to all the committee members for their part in the evenings meeting and to everyone present for coming out and showing your support.</p>
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