



Mill Hill Park
Residents'
Association
Acton

Minutes of the 2021 Annual General Meeting of the Mill Hill Park Residents' Association

1. Welcome (*Jonathan Darby, Chair*)

Welcome to our virtual AGM. The unusual times have continued! The neighbourly atmosphere and community spirit that makes Mill Hill Park such a special place has been stronger than ever. And while we've not been able to meet as usual, the Residents' Association has been busy in a variety of different ways.

2. Minutes of the AGM 2020

Corinna Stowell reported that we had not received any requests to amend the Minutes of the 2020 AGM following their circulation to the membership.

The minutes of the 2020 AGM were approved.

3. Review of the Year's Activities

a. Treasury and Membership (*Sandy Nicol/Elisabeth Curlet*)

Financial statements for the 12 months ending 30 June 2021

Receipts	
Opening balance – current account	£1320.79
– cash	£34.00
Subscriptions	£645.00
Donations (Misc.)	£16.00
TOTAL	£2015.79

Payments	
Website costs (accrued)	£136.25
MHPRA Covid-19 leaflet printing	£75.00
Copy licence application (Zevi)	£10.50
Bulbs for planting in 'Pocket Garden'	£149.94
Website costs	£203.28
Closing balance – current account	£1432.82
– cash	£8.00
TOTAL	£2015.79

The accounts for the for the 12 months ending 30 June 2021 were approved.

b. Planning (Corinna Stowell)

The information below covers the MHPRA's activities in the year to 30 June 2020:

- We reviewed 16 planning applications relating to Mill Hill Park and the surrounding area. We commented on three.
- We reviewed 15 applications for tree works. We commented on one application and spoke to one of the Council's tree officers about it.
- We contacted Planning Enforcement to report a breach of planning conditions in relation to trees that should have been planted in the back garden of the 2-4 Heathfield Road development but hadn't been. The agreement to plant the trees had resulted in a reduction in the amount of S106 funds the developer was due to pay. As a result, a planning enforcement officer took action, contacting the developer.
- We attended two online consultations in relation to proposals for a) Phases 9.3, 9.5 and 9.6 of Acton Gardens and b) Bollo Place, a development for mixed use (flats and work studios) in the lower section of Bollo Lane. We submitted a response to the consultation on the latter.
- **Former Mill Hill Pub redevelopment**
The redevelopment breaches several elements of the approved planning application for the site. Ann Brennan contacted Planning Enforcement several times in the course of the 2020-21 year to address these concerns but there was no progress. She eventually contacted the Council's Chief Executive which resulted in an immediate response from the Planning Enforcement Manager. A desk-based study was conducted on the breaches raised, followed by a site visit on 22 July 2021. A document listing the planning breaches and actions taken was then issued.

The Planning Enforcement Manager acknowledged that there had been breaches of planning control but did not consider that many of the issues raised were particularly harmful and that, in his view, permission would be granted for their retention. He said that he would contact

the freeholder to bring the issues to their attention and request that a planning application be submitted to regularise them.

Action: Ann Brennan to review the feedback, discuss with Corinna Stowell and the members of the Mill Hill Park Conservation Area Advisory Panel and follow up with the Council.

A member raised the issue of trailing cables on the walls at the 2019 AGM. The freehold for the communal areas is now managed by Citydeal Estates on Churchfield Road.

Action: MHPRA to request the removal of the cables with Citydeal Estates.

c. MHPRA and Conservation (*Ray Batchelor*)

Updating Conservation Area documentation – why it matters

Mill Hill Park has been a Conservation Area (CA) since 1993. All planning applications affecting properties in our area and judgements made about them are supposed to refer to the “Conservation Area Appraisal” and the guidance given in the “Conservation Area Management Plan” document held by the Council.

Many of these (including ours) were drawn up several years ago – 2007 in our case – with a poorly-drafted 2019 Addendum to the Appraisal intended to bring it up to date.

MHPRA and the Ealing Conservation Area Review

Ealing Council are in the process of organising a Borough-wide review and re-drafting of all CA Appraisals, including a draft “Generic Management Plan” which will apply to all CAs and take the place of the existing individual Management Plans for each CA. This has yet to be adopted.

In the meantime, the existing documentation AND the emerging documentation are both being used for guidance for drafting and for processing planning applications.

The Conservation Area Review is being co-ordinated for Ealing by Renato Messere, Ealing’s Principal Planning Consultant.

MHPRA’s contributions to that process

On 2nd March 2021, Eleanor Stewart, Corinna Stowell and I had a very useful [online] meeting with Renato Messere.

Setting aside any detailed discussions, the most important effect of this meeting was that Renato – and so Ealing – know that we exist, that we are well-informed, and that we should be closely involved in the Review process insofar as it affects the Mill Hill Park CA.

Shortly afterwards Eleanor Stewart, Corinna Stowell and I did a tour of the whole of Mill Hill Park, with the Appraisal documentation in hand, to see what needed to be updated. We passed this information on, and it is now there to be referred to and will be useful in re-drafting our new Appraisal document.

MHPRA and the Conservation Area Advisory Panel

- As an official consultee (along with the CAAP), the MHPRA is notified of all planning applications in our Area
- The mechanisms for scrutiny are the Conservation Area Advisory Panels.
- There are 15 in the Borough covering 29 CAs
- Mill Hill Park is covered by the “Acton Park, Acton Town Centre and Mill Hill Park Conservation Area Advisory Panel”.

Following indications from both Marcia Hurst and Anna Dargavel that they no longer wished to serve on that body, since March 2021 MHPRA Committee Members Eleanor Stewart and I have taken the two posts allocated to us. As members, we also get to see all the planning applications in our area, as well as those for the other two CAs.

Conclusions

The Planning process in Ealing has historically been problematic with regard to Conservation.

With no Conservation Officer and problems (now addressed) in retaining a stable body of suitably qualified, knowledgeable Planning Officers, the importance of the Conservation aspects of planning applications in recent years has been inconsistently recognised.

However, the work that Renato Messere has been doing in moving the Conservation Area Review forwards is promising. MHPRA is now well-placed to make constructive contributions to that process, and to see that the Conservation interests of MHPRA members are effectively represented.

d. Licensing (Ann Brennan)

All licence applications in Acton continue to be reviewed. These include applications for gambling premises, alcohol licences for pubs, bars, clubs, off licences, cafes and restaurants and late-night refreshments (LNR) where the premises sells hot food and drink between 11pm and 5am.

Number of applications assessed in the year to 30 June 2021: 27

Breakdown by premises type:

Alcohol off sales where premises are not open to the public	16
Off sales	2
Off sales and LNR	1
On sales	1
On sales and LNR	3
Application voided or too far out of our area	4

Similar to last year, there were a large number of applications for storage units within a storage facility, providing delivery of alcohol via online platforms. We do not comment on this type of

application as they are not open to the public and are a lower risk in terms of giving rise to crime, anti-social behaviour, noise and litter.

MHPRA submitted representations for five premises and, in conjunction with the Licensing Team and/or Police Licensing Team, negotiated on hours and conditions to be added to the applicant's licence.

- *Takeaway; Ryu, 23 Horn Lane, W3 9NJ*
Agreed alcohol only be sold with a substantial takeaway meal (included collection or delivery). The Police Licensing Team requested slightly reduced hours and nine other conditions to address crime and safety including CCTV, no stock or sale of high strength beer, lager or cider (above 6% ABV) and no sales of spirit miniatures.
- *Convenience shop; Acton Superstore, 15 Horn Lane, W3 9NJ*
Application to extend their hours. Police negotiated a reduction in hours. The applicant agreed to 18 conditions, suggested by the Police and MHPRA. Included no sales of single cans or spirit miniatures and staff training on the Licensing Act.
- *Cafe and restaurant: The Coffee House, 135 High Street, W3 6LY*
Two conditions agreed by the applicant. Alcohol only to be sold with a substantial table meal and no waste/recycling collections and deliveries between 8pm and 8am.
- *Supermarket: Zevi International, 310-314 Uxbridge Road, W3 9QP*
Our 16 requests were agreed by the applicant. Included no sales of high strength lager, beer, ale and cider, no single cans or spirit miniatures and staff training on the Licensing Act.
- *Restaurant: Kayra Mediterranean Restaurant, 187-189 High Street, W3 9DJ*
All our three conditions requests were agreed by the applicant. Included no deliveries or waste/recycling collections between 8pm-8am, sufficient staffing for both floors and alcohol only sold with a substantial table meal.

e. Environment

Pocket Garden (Marcia Hurst)

Last autumn the MHPRA purchased a bulk order of daffodils and narcissi and we had a big bulb planting session in the Pocket Garden. Passers-by were rewarded with a wonderful display this year from March until April. It really was worth the effort. In the Spring, after the cold weather, we had a very well attended big weeding session in the Garden. The Garden has been looking really good this summer. We plan to have our usual weeding and tidy up in the Autumn.

Mill Hill Park and beyond - taking care of our local area (Elisabeth Curlet)

Our Saturday fortnightly litter pick became, during lockdown, a weekly event and attracted a core group of between 6 and 10 residents.

In June we teamed up with the Facebook group, LAGER can (the Litter Action Group of Ealing Residents). With Council support (who supply of litter picks and bags and co-ordinated collection)

we are now part of a network of c1600 Ealing residents looking after our patch of the borough. LAGER can was awarded a Queen's Award for Voluntary Services earlier this year.

Elizabeth Curlet's garage is now the South Acton hub for LAGER can, storing litter picks and the bright blue LAGER can bags. Around 25 people from all parts of Acton have collected kit, including eight from the King Edward's Gardens / Hillcrest Road area. Two of them join our Saturday group regularly and we are increasingly able to go further afield.

We would like to thank everyone who contributes in their own way.

The Council, at our request, has agreed to fund and install two compactor 'Big Belly' bins in Woodlands Park which should prevent food-related litter being pulled out of the bins by birds, squirrels and foxes. The bins will be fitted near the Crown Street and Woodlands Avenue entrances.

f. Social events

As a result of the pandemic and the lockdowns and various restrictions imposed during the 2020-21 year, the MHPRA did not hold any social events.

g. Acton Covid-19 Task Group (*Corinna Stowell*)

In October 2020, the MHPRA was invited to join the Acton Covid-19 Task Group set up by the Council's Community Engagement and Public Health Teams. Representatives from various Acton communities joined the group. The aim of the Task Group was to keep community groups up-to-date with government guidelines, Council initiatives and local issues and for community representatives to pass on key messages on topics such as the vaccination and testing programmes. Community representatives were able to make suggestions and raise topics of concern. We, along with some others, raised the issue of the lack of a vaccination centre in Acton. Some temporary, walk-in sites were subsequently made available in Acton and other parts of the borough.

h. Ark Soane Academy (*Jonathan Darby*)

The school opened in September, one year later than originally planned. It comprises one year group and uses the completed building on Gunnersbury Lane. The remaining construction should be completed by September 2022. I have joined the school's governing body as community liaison link.

4. Election of the Committee

The following people have agreed to stand for re-election to the committee:

- Sandy Nicol: Treasurer, Social Secretary, Neighbourhood Watch representative
- Corinna Stowell: Secretary, Planning, Web Manager
- Elisabeth Curlet: Membership Secretary
- Ann Brennan: Licensing
- Jonathan Darby: Communications
- Marcia Hurst: Environment
- Ray Batchelor: Committee member

- Wlodek Mier-Jedrzejowicz: Committee member
- Eleanor Stewart: Committee member
- Lucy Vidal: Committee member
- Naomi Wright: Committee member

The above-named committee members were re-elected.

The Committee will continue to share in fulfilling the role of Chair, as set out in Paragraph 6 of our Constitution: “The role of the Chair may be discharged by a single, named member of the Committee or, at the discretion of the Committee, by a sequence of named members of the Committee.” Ray Batchelor agreed to take on the role of Chair for a period following the 2021 AGM.

5. Any Other Business

a. Traffic and Speeding (*Ann Brennan*)

In September 2020, I contacted Cllr Mik Sabiers for an update on Ward Forum funds and requested a review of traffic and speeding on Avenue Road, Mill Hill Road and Gunnersbury Lane so that experts from the Highways Team could come up with suitable solutions to address our concerns, supported by data in the early 2020 counts.

Cllr Sabiers stated all Ward Forum funds were frozen due to the pandemic and the Ward Forum Co-ordinators were seconded to work on the Covid response. In July 2021, Cllr Sabiers said that funds might be released soon and he had forwarded on our request for a study of the traffic pathways in our area and measures to reduce the traffic and speeding to the Head of Highways for consideration.

Members often make suggestions to solve the issues of speeding and speed bumps have been mentioned. Cllr Sabiers confirmed that ‘speed bumps are definitely a no go’. Feedback from Ward Forums says the bumps in the Twyford Road area are very noisy for nearby residents and there are issues surrounding emergency vehicle access. Humps can also lead to an increase in emissions as vehicles drive over them. Cllr Sabiers said speed tables aren’t often used on smaller roads even if it is a feed but he hoped the Head of Highways would get back to me.

Action: Ann to email Head of Highways asking for a response to our request and mention two recent vehicle accidents:

- July 2021 Avenue Road - Vehicle crashed into the front garden of a property
- August 2021 Mill Hill Road/Gunnersbury Lane - Crash involving two vehicles

b. Heritage Road Signs (*Ann Brennan*)

In 2019, MHPRA was granted Ward Forum funds for two new heritage style signs on Avenue Crescent (near junction with Avenue Road), a replacement sign for a single vandalised sign on Mill Hill Road and replacement of missing plastic end caps on several of our road signs.

Cllr Mik Sabiers confirmed the project had been delayed as Ward Forum funds were frozen because of the pandemic but Highways had now passed on the request for action. Highways are behind on their work programme due to Covid. It will be completed although no timeframe has been given.

c. Trees on Gunnersbury Lane (*Ann Brennan*)

In 2019, we asked for vandalised trees along Gunnersbury Lane, from Mill Hill Road down to the tube station, to be removed and the paving reinstated. We made it clear that we were not against new tree planting but the location of these trees was not ideal due to the narrow pavements and high footfall resulting in pedestrians having to give way to each at pinch points.

No progress was made and eventually some of the trees were replaced. Once again, the new trees were vandalised. I contacted Cllr Mik Sabiers who confirmed the Trees Team will finalise planting plans in September 2021 and will reorder paving where the establishment of small trees is unlikely to succeed.

d. Mill Hill Gardens (*Ann Brennan*)

The arch at the entrance to Mill Hill Gardens on Avenue Road was installed in 2020. The project was funded using Ward Forum funds and included planting in the beds at the entrance. After some delays due to Covid, the planting was completed in early September 2021.

The park entrance beds will be maintained by MHPRA volunteers. Thank you to Ollie Kite, Eleanor Stewart and Elisabeth Curlet who have already agreed to volunteer. **Action:** Ann to email all members to ask for three extra volunteers. It is a relatively small area to maintain and shouldn't be too onerous.

e. Litter Picking (*Elisabeth Curlet*)

Join our regular session

If you have time on a Saturday morning at 9.00am please join us. It does not have to be regular – just when you can. Or indeed if you'd like a litter pick and some bags to do your own thing, please just ask Elisabeth Curlet (07762 268494).

MHPRA donation

You all, as members of the Mill Hill Park Residents' Association, very kindly agreed to fund the purchase of litter kit both for our own group and for Berrymede Junior School. Berrymede Head Teacher, Mrs Lubna Khan, has expressed her deep gratitude to the MHPRA for this purchase of hoops and junior litter picks. She is keen to encourage children to take pride in their local park. I delivered the kit in September when the school reopened and will report back later this Autumn

The new Bollo Brook Park in Acton Gardens, opposite the school, between Bollo Bridge Road and Osborne Road is well used by all age groups as well as the school children. There are only three small bins, so there are days when there is a lot of littering. Several people from parents with small children, to older children and teenagers, have helped keep the area clean. Hopefully it'll help should create good habits for the future.

f. MHPRA, Acton Gardens and the Jerome Allotments (*Ray Batchelor*)

It has been known since 2012 that the Acton Gardens Development would involve construction of buildings closely adjacent to the Jerome Allotments in Enfield Road and that the layout of the Allotments would be drastically altered, with building on some plots and new ground being allocated to make good the loss.

The scale and proximity of these increased when the “uplift” (promise by the developers of some 800 more dwellings) revisions were made in 2018.

Provisional outline (“Hybrid”) Planning Permission was granted for these developments in 2019. The developers are preparing a detailed planning application for permission actually to build.

Although these developments affect a small number of MHPRA Members who hold allotment plots or whose homes are in the vicinity, direct engagement with this process was correctly judged to be beyond the MHPRA’s remit.

What follows is a brief report on what has happened, as it may, even so, be of interest.

Full impact of proposals becomes apparent

A most unsatisfactory “consultation” exercise was set in motion by the Countryside + L&Q (the developers) which involved series of three online meetings with their experts and allotment holders – a format of 75 minutes of unseen, new material followed by 15 minutes Q&A with some 20+ allotment holders.

At the second of these on 5th May 2021, it became apparent that what was proposed would plunge several plots into darkness for much of the year meaning they would no longer be viable as areas of cultivation. Other issues emerged.

Creation of the Jerome Allotment Holders’ Association

On 6th May 2021, the Jerome Allotment Holders’ Association was brought into being by a small number of plot holders with view to organising an authentic allotment holders’ voice. I offered to serve as Chair. Until then, the developers had been obliged to engage with unconnected individuals.

Since then, the Jerome Allotment Holders’ Association has:

- Affiliated itself with the National Allotment Society who offer free legal advice
- Recruited 24 members (that is, the majority of plot holders)
- Made contact with Ealing Allotment Partnership, the body representing all allotment plots in Ealing and Ealing Council
- Made and developed a good relationship with key figures in Ealing Parks Department, the section responsible for all allotments

- Identified the passages in the 2019 Hybrid Planning Permission which requires the developers to draft and submit to Ealing Council for approval an Allotment Development Strategy specifying how the reconfiguration of the Jerome Allotments will be carried out
- Shifted the debate away from the synthetic issues which had preoccupied the developers towards those concrete ones which directly affect allotment holders
- Secured an agreement that one building will be set further back and be lower, while other proposed town houses on the existing plot will not now be built.
- Eliminated several “cosmetic” “community” signifiers from what is being proposed in the draft planning application
- Contributed to one final online consultation, where all materials were circulated in advance of the meeting and sufficient time was given over for reactions to them and for questions to be asked.
- Received a reassurance that the plot holders will be given sight of the draft Allotment Development Strategy before it is submitted to Ealing Council (the Parks Department).

The developers are finalising their planning application in the light of their consultations (submission expected in the next two months) and drawing up their Allotment Development Strategy.

Channels of communication remain open.

END

14 October 2021