



**EASTCOTE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION**  
**MINUTES OF 81<sup>st</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 23<sup>rd</sup> MAY 2012**  
**EASTCOTE COMMUNITY CENTRE- OAK HALL**

**Present: Committee Members:**-Chris Groom (Chairman), Ian Brooks, (Vice-Chairman), Irene Groom (Minutes), Roger Brown (Treasurer), Councillor Michael White, Karen Spink (Chief Road Steward), Ian Murray, Elizabeth Beggs, Linda Laurie, Jackie Redrup, Carolyn Derecki, Jean Gibson, Keith Barnard, Councillor Catherine Dann, Councillor Edward Lavery, Councillor David Payne, Andrea Gohil, Alison Akerman. James Cracknell of the local press, representatives of other Residents Association, plus approximately 50 members and guests.

**Apologies for absence:** Councillor Bruce Baker, Councillor Raymond Graham, Lesley Crowcroft, Ian Parkinson, Gawain Cox, Councillor Andrew Retter, Act Sgt Richard Charlesworth -E&ER SNT, Tom Sharkey, Nick Hurd MP, John Randall MP, Nick Woodley (Chairman Cavendish Park), Jean Ingram (Chairman South Ruislip R.A.)

CG opened the meeting by welcoming everyone to the 81<sup>st</sup> AGM of ERA, introducing the Councillors and members of the ERA committee. CG then bid a fond farewell to James Cracknell, our press representative, who is moving on to pastures new, thanking him for all his coverage of ERA during his time with the Gazette.

1. **Minutes of the 2011 AGM:** Agreed with no amendments. Proposed by Roger Brown, Seconded by Keith Barnard. Agreed by show of hands
2. **Matters arising from minutes of 2011 meeting, not on the Agenda:** There were no matters arising.
3. **Chairman's Report:**

Thank you all for coming to the 81st Annual General meeting of Eastcote Residents Association. After the Treasurer's report you will hear reports covering the work of our Road Stewards; followed by a report on our planning activities. Planning, which forms a significant part of our work will be followed by Police Matters and Safer Neighbourhoods and Transport and Road Safety. Finally I will give our Webmaster report and tell you a little about our website which in this modern era is becoming ever more important as both a point of direct contact with residents plus a source of information about what is going on in Eastcote. Unfortunately our webmaster cannot get away from work this evening until later.

I must thank our Treasurer Roger, for his work over the last 41/2 years in keeping our books in order. He is standing down this year as he is moving away from the area and I wish him the very best wherever he goes.

The local groups at Eastcote House Gardens, Warrender Park and Highgrove Woods, Cavendish and Bessingby Parks and River Pinn Volunteers are continuing their invaluable work and have achieved significant improvements during the year. Congratulations to the Friends of Eastcote House Gardens in clearing the first hurdle, having gained stage 1 approval of a Heritage Lottery Fund grant of over £1 million for major repairs and improvements to Eastcote House Gardens. As their group gets stronger and stronger they are able to raise their own funds thus this year we have not been asked for funds from the Residents Association but as they move into major fund raising for their improvement plans I sure we would be receptive to applications for helping them with the match funding required by the Heritage Lottery Fund. Their next large event is the Jubilee Picnic in Eastcote House Gardens, from 12.00 noon, on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> June. Bring along a picnic or buy your food and drink from the stalls. Don't forget that you are also represented by members of the ERA Committee on other organisations such as The Friends of Ruislip Woods, The Friends of Ruislip Lido, the Police Safer Neighbourhoods Panel, Hillingdon Alliance of Residents Association, The Eastcote Village Conservation Panel, Community Voice and other committees and community groups.

As I have already mentioned our website which goes from strength to strength and is the envy of other local Residents Association. If you haven't had a look yet I recommend you do. If you don't know the address just type Eastcote Residents Association into Google or other search engine. Please also remember that if you are a local community group who would like to add details of your events to our website, What's-On, just go to the link on the website or give us a ring. This also applies if you would like to put advertisements on our notice-boards. This reminds me – thanks to our Councillors for approving a Council grant to add a new notice board in Whitby Road and to replace the old notice board outside The Ascott – the old Manor House pub. We expect them to be erected any day now. I said this last year and I will repeat it now. Thank you to everyone who contributed to our latest newsletter ERA News. On this subject I must also thank Linda Laurie our editor and Karen Spink for all their hard work in connection with the newsletter including arranging for its distribution by our band of Road Stewards who distribute the newsletter and collect the subs. I don't apologise for again giving a big thank you to all of our Road Stewards. We are still short of road stewards in some roads so if you can spare just a very small amount of time please, please volunteer to be a road steward. You will hear from Karen in a minute and you can contact Karen after the meeting. We do get complaints that we do not cover all the streets in Eastcote but sadly this will remain the case if we cannot get enough Road Stewards.

In this Jubilee year, my year and time as Chairman, was crowned by the great honour of being presented to the Queen and Prince Philip at one of the Queen's Jubilee Parties in late March. Hillingdon Council even provided us with a chauffeur driven car to the occasion. It was a wonderful day and fortunately the sun shone down all day.

As I said last year this was my final year as chairman and I hope you will give our new Chairman, Ian Brooks, all your support. I hope he is elected. I'm not leaving the Residents Association I am moving aside to give others a chance. Despite the many trials and tribulation I have enjoyed my time as Chairman but I am confident that Ian will be a very able replacement. I now wish to express my sincere thanks to the committee for all their hard work throughout the years. I rely heavily on the support of the committee and they have done a great job despite the many other things that seem to vie for our attention these days.

In all the activities we have been involved in we could not have managed without the help and support of our Local Councillors all of whom have always been there when required.

I will finish now with a big thank you, to you, as many of you obviously really care about their local community and work hard to make Eastcote the great little town that it is.

#### **4. Treasurers Report (Roger Brown)**

The Accounts of ERA were distributed. RB then gave his report on the finances of the ERA. There was a surplus for the year of £695.65 and a balance in the bank of £13,498.29. RB requested that the accounts be approved there were no question from the floor. Proposed by Ian Murray, Seconded by Jackie Redrup adopted by a show of hands.

#### **5. Representatives Reports**

##### **Senior Road Steward : (Karen Spink).**

KS started her report by thanking all her Road Stewards for their hard work during the year, collecting subs and distributing the Newsletter. She continued her report with a plea for more Road Stewards as we have a number of roads in the area not covered.

##### **Planning: (Jackie Redrup)**

In the last year there have been some 288 planning applications in the ERA area. 188 were approved and 38 were refused. These numbers include all applications, whether determined by a planning officer, the North Planning Committee or at appeal. Currently there are 55 that have not been determined – not all of these are recent applications. There are quite a few which go back over a year and have just never had any further action taken on them for whatever reason. 7 applications were withdrawn or deemed to be invalid.

There are 3 large projects which affect everyone within our community on which I would just update you:-

RAF Eastcote– This project with 385 properties is nearing completion. A recent application for 12 extra units convert from the existing live work units was rejected.

150 Field End Road – Initial House. Was the subject of two more applications – for a 76 Bedroom Hotel and for 44 flats, with a small retail/office area below. The developer then went out of business and there was no movement on either application until April this year, when the Receiver resurrected a proposal for 42 flats. This was heard at the North Planning Committee on 17<sup>th</sup> May and was refused. We shall wait to see if a resubmission is made.

216 FER – the derelict plot of land which used to be a garden centre, opposite Eastcote station. This application is for 11 flats and a large retail unit. It was refused by the Planning Committee and the developer took it to appeal which was heard on 16<sup>th</sup> May. The results are still awaited. In terms of reporting on planning applications – we now have a planning report each month which includes a direct link to the Hillingdon Planning website for each application. The report is sent out with the minutes and can also be found on the ERA website. Hopefully, any residents with an interest in a particular application will be able to make use of this to be able to find the details of the application quickly.

**Police:** (Ian Murray)

IM started his report by stating that he did not propose to give the statistics for the area as they are confusing and “boring”. He went on to explain the impact the Olympic Games will have on police numbers for our area during the Games. He went on to advise that there is to be a complete police reorganisation within Hillingdon and the details will be announced soon. He finished up with a warning to everyone to be very security conscious and safe particularly during hot weather when windows and doors are left open.

CG then gave a report on the SNT. – Our local representatives who were based in Northwood Hills are now moving to the old Ruislip Police Station. At the moment we have half a Sergeant, 2 Constables and 2 PSCOs., hopefully, when the reorganisation is finalised, we will be up to full strength.

**Transport/Road Safety:** (Ian Brooks)

At last year’s AGM we set our intention to tackle local specific transport & road safety issues and a couple of examples illustrate our approach to problem solving this last year.

A year ago a complaint arose regarding noisy lorries travelling along Joel Street and Field End Road at 5am in the morning. Once the initial complaint was raised several other residents also voiced their concerns. The Council and police were requested to intervene. Consideration was given to resurfacing the road and police apparently undertook additional patrols to detect speed. Neither option resolved the issue. Research and enquiries by the ERA revealed that these early morning lorry journeys were in contravention of the ‘Night Time Lorry ban’. The London Councils undertake enforcement operations and the ERA made a request for action – only to be told “if the lorries were turning left into Harrow, rather than right and remaining in Hillingdon, we could take enforcement action – as it is we cannot”. Hillingdon is one of only 5 boroughs not to subscribe this pan London enforcement regime and consequently compliance with this noise pollution regulation is purely voluntary in Hillingdon. After considerable work by the ERA in research; submitting reports; lobbying; arranging a petition; and attending a petition hearing on the 18<sup>th</sup> April – the Cabinet Member, Councillor Burrows, has indicated that the current situation warrants a policy review. We appear to be much closer to a solution – but not there yet!

At our AGM in 2007 (5 years ago) I gave details of an issue of where residents were suffering from the impact of ‘rat running’. The volume and speed of traffic was such that it was clearly unsuitable for the design of the road (several places where there was no foot path). The ERA provided support to the residents as they tried to maneuver their way through a series of obstacles. After nearly 4 years of petitions; public meeting; lobbying; public consultation etc a traffic calming scheme was eventually implemented into the road – Cheney Street last year. It is only recently that the post scheme review of traffic monitoring has been completed. It concluded that overall there had been some reduction in speeds - particularly with regard to the higher speeds. This together with ‘what it feels like’ to use the road indicates some success and certainly an improvement over what was occurring before the scheme was implemented. There are still concerns regarding some elements and it is intended to seek some refinements to improve the scheme.

Concluding there are increasing levels of vehicular traffic in this area and this borough and this is contributing to congestion as is inconsiderate parking. Volume and speed of traffic not only undermines quality of life on some/many local road but also acts as deterrent to increased levels of walking and cycling. There lies a problem - how do we secure a reduction in speeds and an improvement in driver behaviour without some form of intervention – whether that be engineering, or education and enforcement. Typically the ‘do nothing’ retains the status quo – however we do not have the luxury of this as national and local planning guidelines have, and will continue to do so, lead to levels of housing density which in turn is leading to increased number of vehicles that is proving problematical. It is proposed that the ERA continue to tackle local specific issues whilst at the same time contributing to effective strategic problem solving.

**Webmaster’s Report:-** Gawain Cox

Once again 2011/12 has been a good year for visitors to the Eastcote Residents’ Association Website, but still many residents remain unaware of its existence. Last year we undertook a big optimization campaign to push the site higher up the search engine rankings, and largely this has been considered a success, appearing in the top 5 listings in over 20 of the most popular search engines;

when searching for the word "Eastcote". We now also appear top on almost all search engines when the search term is changed to 'Eastcote Residents Association'.

**Statistics** -The site has enjoyed over 15,000 visits since June 2011 until today. 7,845 unique visitors have navigated to our site this the past year, with some 6,957 visitors being new to the site. Most interestingly, over 200 individuals have visited our site on more than 20 separate occasions in the past year.

**Redevelopment** -The site has almost become a victim of its own popularity, receiving numerous requests by local people, groups and businesses for various advertising. While we strongly encourage this, it's become apparent that the site is ill equipped to handle these demands in a way that allows a fast turnover to such requests. Therefore, it has since been decided to re-develop the website in the coming months to further enhance our service to the community and provide a place for our members, residents & visitors of Eastcote to interact further with the wider community. However we would like the feedback of all our members and visitors to the site. We have today posted a link on the home page of our website inviting visitors to participate in a short online survey to help us shape the future of our site, and allow you, our members, to provide comments and feedback on what you would like from your Association's website.

Finally, we have also launched our social network pages for residents who wish to interact or keep up to date in that way. Visitors can find us at [www.facebook.com/EastcoteRA](http://www.facebook.com/EastcoteRA) or [www.twitter.com/EastcoteRA](http://www.twitter.com/EastcoteRA)

Most importantly, if you haven't recently visited our website, or you wish to complete the survey, you can visit [www.eastcoteRA.co.uk](http://www.eastcoteRA.co.uk)

I look forward to reading through your thoughts and comments and working to produce a cutting edge website which provides an even greater level of service to the community

#### **6. Election of officers:**

The following nominations were read out by the Chairman:- Chairman: Ian Brooks, Existing members who have agreed to re-stand:- Irene Groom (Secretary), Karen Spink (Chief Road Steward), Jackie Redrup (Planning), Ian Murray (Police Matters), Elizabeth Beggs (Community Voice), Linda Laurie (Newsletter), Ian Parkinson (Business Liaison), Gawain Cox (Web Administrator). Unassigned Committee Members – Keith Barnard, Tom Sharkey, Alison Akerman, Carolyn Derecki and Christopher Groom. The positions of Vice Chairman and Treasurer are vacant. Proposed by Sylvia Ladyman Seconded by Jeff Duley and approved by a show of hands. Ian then thanked CG for all his hard work over the 6 years as Chairman and was pleased that he had agreed to stay on the Committee.

#### **7. Review of ERA Constitution:**

CG explained why a review of the ERA's Constitution was necessary as it was many years old and needed updating. There are only very minor changes to the rules, aims and objects of the Association and these are highlighted in red (circulated document). There was a couple of questions from the floor – the first one was regarding how many meetings should a Committee Member attend - "Under our Constitution a Committee Member does not have to attend any specific number of meetings" – a comment was made that at a later date this should be discussed and an amendment made to the Constitution. The second question was regarding – the status of children age under 18- "Under the Constitution although children under 18 are not formally members, in practice a member consists of the whole household irrespective of age". There was then a formal proposal to accept the new Constitution by Roger Brown and Seconded by Elizabeth Beggs – The revised Rules and Constitution were adopted by a show of hands.

#### **8. ERA Priorities**

IB provided details on the consultation exercise together with the three main priorities identified of firstly Planning and Conservation; secondly Road Transport/Road Safety; and thirdly Police Matters and Anti-Social Behaviour. After general discussion and questions from the floor, IB then suggested that these be adopted as ERA priorities. Proposed by Keith Barnard and Seconded by Elizabeth Beggs and this was carried by a show of hands.

#### **9. Any other business**

IB concluded by thanking everyone for coming; requesting that more volunteers get involved; encourage younger members; and visit the ERA website. Sylvia Ladyman from the floor then thanked all the committee for their hard work during the year.

The meeting finished at 9.30pm

**The date of the next ordinary meeting is WEDNESDAY 27th JUNE 2011 at Elsie Fischer Room, St. Lawrence Church, Bridle Road, at 7.30pm. Apologies to Irene Groom on 0208 866 0985 (answer phone) or by e-mail.**