



The minutes include reports received in advance.

Many thanks to Nadine Johnson for taking additional notes at the meeting

Present Committee: Professor Roger Brown (Chair), Stephen Connolly, Jerry Gillen, Nadine Johnson, Nicolla Martin.

Others: Councillor Gordon Cooper, Chris Jackson (OARA), Sue Swallow (OARA), Jon Walsh (University).

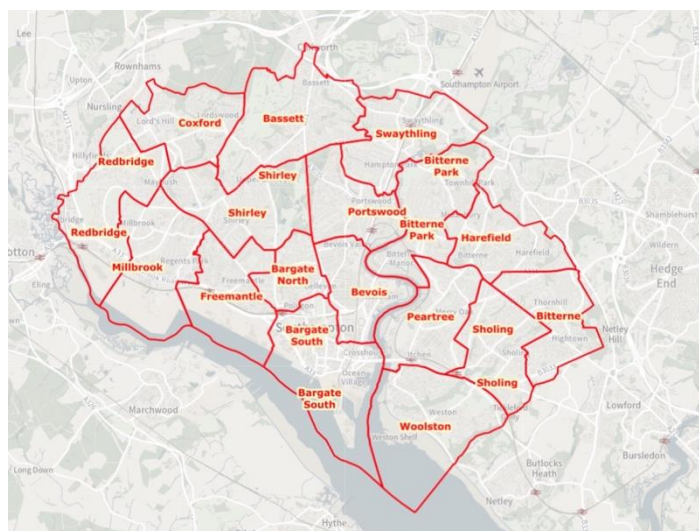
1. Welcome and Opening Remarks:

Roger welcomed everyone to the meeting especially friends from other RAs. He informed the meeting of the necessary resignation of Steven Ossont. Steven had moved to Wellington in New Zealand for a new professional opportunity with the whole family at the end of August. The Chair affirmed that HRA owed a debt of gratitude to Steven and that his involvement, over a number of years, was greatly appreciated. A formal letter of thanks would be sent from the Chair. However, as a result of Steven's departure, there would be a vacancy on the committee. Also, Steven's additional roles would need to be picked up - the Convenor of Common Sense (environmental volunteering) co-ordinating work on the Little Common, Editor and digital publisher of the HRA Newsletter prior to printing and organiser of some of HRA's social events.

Roger further informed the meeting that the HRA AGM would take place on Tuesday 8 November 2022. The AGM Agenda will be discussed at the October Committee Meeting.

Dave Tyrie, SCC Divisional Head of Services, who had been due to address the September meeting, would be rescheduled.

The Chair drew the Committee's attention to the proposed Ward Boundary changes. These included, for example, the loss of Hampton Park and some of Upper Shaftesbury Avenue to Swaythling. The full details can be found here: [New Ward Boundaries](#) RB and BC had discussed the proposed changes and the conclusion was that HRA should not change its boundaries.



2. Apologies: Martin Benning, Karen Edwards, Pete Errington, Kate Fay, Pete Thomas, Ken Burtenshaw, Barbara Claridge

3. Declaration of interest: none

4. Approval of minutes from the Committee Meeting July 2022: The Minutes, which had been previously circulated, were approved.

5. Matters arising not covered elsewhere:

a. Brookvale Road re-surfacing

Cllr Cooper had spoken to the Cabinet Member responsible who confirmed that the work had been scheduled for 2022/2023. He explained that the Transforming Cities Fund did not cover road repairs.

b. The Citizens' Assembly

Cllr Cooper said there had been no further developments

6. Information from Councillors:

Transforming Cities Fund

Additional grant funding, provided by the Government, was for improvements to cities for projects such as cleaner air quality, better transport links and regeneration. Expenditure was subject to strict criteria and every project has to be approved by Government. An earlier plan of expanding N/S cycle lanes on The Avenue from the Cowherds onwards towards the M3, will now not be implemented. Instead, the plan would be to focus on routing and improving cycle lanes through the underpass on the Common, along Lovers Walk and on Glen Eyre Road. These plans are likely to proceed.

Also under the Fund, the council had been developing plans to transform Portswood Broadway. This may include the possibility of pedestrianisation of roads and the creation of a transport hub. Cllr Cooper suggested inviting the SSC Integrated Services Manager to the next HRA Committee Meeting to brief HRA on these options. He also suggested opening the meeting up to as many people as possible to form part of the public consultation.

The Chair replied that this would necessitate a factual briefing document, which would need to be issued ahead of the meeting and displays to be provided on the day. A bigger venue would be required. However, in principle it might be possible.

Evening parking charges after 6 pm in the city

The Council was to reinstate the £2 charge for parking after 6 pm in the city centre. Finance generated will be reinvested into road improvement.

Council Six-month Scrutiny Inquiry

A cross-party group had selected 'Protecting, preserving and promoting the River Itchen in Southampton' as their focus over the next six months. Cllr Cooper was likely to be part of the Group. Ref: <https://www.southampton.gov.uk/riveritchensurvey>

In addition, he had recently visited the waste treatment works in Portswood. Strong sewage odours have been particularly bad in St Denys, partly due to outdated equipment. Southern Water is being closely monitored.

Family hubs and youth clubs

Southampton is one of 75 Councils to be given additional funds of £3.5 m between now and 2025 for Family Hubs (previously called Family Centres). Youth investment funds will also be made available so

that more buildings could be brought into use as youth clubs. There are currently 20 youth clubs in the city.

Progress on Landlord's Charter

The Chair asked about progress on the Charter which had been discussed at the last Committee Meeting with Cllr Kaur. He stressed that something had to be done to improve the behaviour of many landlords. Cllr Cooper suggested writing to Cllr Mitchell, as this came under her cabinet responsibility, but he would also follow it up. *(Action: Chair to write to Cllr Mitchell)*

7. University Liaison (JW)

News output had been reduced this week and the University would be closed on Monday 19 September. Jon offered the Avenue campus at the University as a venue for Cllr Cooper's proposed public consultation on Portswood Broadway, and also provide printing for any materials required. New students would arrive on Saturday 24 and Sunday 25 for Freshers' Week. All other students would return one week later. The University was waiting to see if undergraduate student numbers had risen. Postgraduate student numbers for taught courses had increased.

The University would be undertaking a review of the Estates Master Plan, mainly relating to Highfield, but it would also include the Hospital. HRA would be invited to comment on the plan.

Planning consent had been granted to demolish the Faraday Building, along with the adjacent two houses. However consent for a replacement building remained pending. Demolition would commence in January.

Planning Approval with Conditions for the extension to the Jubilee Sports Centre had finally been received. The build programme is likely to be 1-2 years away. Existing facilities would continue to be open until then.

After the proposed boundary changes take effect, the University would be located in Swaythling Ward. Traffic is likely to be impacted. HRA and Portswood Councillors would be invited to an exhibition of these changes in due course.

Work on the University Civic Agreement is ongoing. The Chair asked JW to take back a clear message that HRA would like to be consulted on the text, even if it is only on items that refer to 'engagement'. This message was accepted. *(Action: Jon Walsh)*.

9. Planning: (BC)

In the recent Appeal Dismissal for 1 Blenheim Gardens, to which HRA had contributed an objection, the Inspector placed significant weight on two considerations. The Chair drew these to the Committee's attention. The first was SCC's Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document 2016 (the SPD) which was prepared to help manage HMO development and reduce its impact on established communities. This was highly relevant to progress on the Local Plan. The second being mitigation against the Solent Special Protection Area (SDMP) [Solent Disturbance Mitigation Project \(SDMP\)](#). It seems that additional fees have to be paid to mitigate any development's impact upon the ecological importance of the SPA around the Solent. This could have wide ramifications. The full text of the Appeal Dismissal is on the HRA Website [1 Blenheim Gardens Appeal Dismissal](#)

Others:

- a. 61 Tennyson Road (HRA objected)
- b. 62 Tennyson Road (HRA objected)
- c. 6 Blenheim Ave (OTRA no grounds to object)
- d. 6 Crofton Close (HRA will object)
- e. 11 Russell Place (PRG to submit the objection)
- f. 45 Westwood Road (update – PA to turn offices into flats. HRA not objecting, a good idea)
- g. The Avenue 5G mast Planning Appeal decision pending. HRA objected to both PA and Appeal.
- h. Upper Grosvenor Road 5G mast Planning Application. RB and JG would visit the site before the end of the week. (*Action: following the site visit by RB and JG no HRA objection would be made*)
- i. 62, Alma Road: Sue Swallow (OARA) explained that the landlord of this property had been granted Planning Permission in 2010 to divide it into 2 flats. The letting agency – POSH PADS was claiming it to be a 9-bed HMO, but permission for this had never been granted. There had been no Planning Enforcement. JG suggested that OARA should seek legal advice as this had proved to be an effective strategy in achieving Landlord-backdown in previous similar applications.
- j. Stephen Connolly commented on the high number of bins on the pavement and road in Tennyson Road. Cllr Cooper responded that the Council had no powers to ask people to remove them from roads or pavements. They could only advise.

(HonSec post-meeting comment: See below a link to SCC Website for reporting bins repeatedly left on the street - [Bins on-Pavements](#) Residents should be prepared to report incidents to clean up streets with high and regular incidents of bins left out)

HRA Planning Statements can be found on the Website:

[HRA responses to planning applications and Appeals Inspectorate/](#)

10. Reports:

a. Finance (prepared by MB)

Income since last meeting has been £549 and outgoings £108.76. Subs and donations paid by cheque/cash came to £358. BACS subs and donations came to £191.

Total income so far this year is £4322 and outgoings £1370

b. Membership (NM)

Paid up members 324 (July 361). Rolling 229 (July 221)

In July 36 renewal letters sent out. 24 residents have renewed so far. 1 paid by cash; 9 paid by cheque; 14 used BACS.

In August 17 renewal letters sent out. 9 residents have renewed so far. 1 paid by cash; 6 paid by cheque; 2 used BACS

There were 3 new members who paid by BACS

11. Digital Communications (NJ)

- a. **Facebook:** There are now 900 followers, an increase of 75 since the last HRA Committee Meeting on 12 July 2022. Two detailed items had been posted about Nita and Raj Patel leaving Highfield News after 30 years. The first one attracted over 202 'likes'; our best yet!

Website: Nadine expressed thanks to Ken for continuing to contribute very good photos. A helpful update on The Crown was received from Stephen Connolly. More local news and local photos are needed – please contact Nadine.

Short E-news update: This will be compiled and sent round to members in September (BC/NJ)

b. **HRA Crime information sharing WhatsApp Group for Highfield:**

There have been 23 incident reports in the Group which are summarised below:

Incidents involving sheds, garages, cars and gardens (16 incidents)

- i. On the Uplands Way Estate, there were two car incidents on separate days: a woman trying car doors was caught on CCTV (blond with ponytail and carrying a large, dark rucksack) but there was no evidence of actual thefts; 2 other cars were broken into and items stolen.
Note: There is a suggestion that someone has an electronic device which can unlock locked car doors by intercepting the key fob signal. It is recommended that keys are kept away from your front and back doors as the device could pick up the signals from outside.
- ii. A male wearing a baseball cap was seen checking cars on Welbeck Avenue; minor items were stolen from an unlocked car in Woodstock Drive; a catalytic convertor was stolen from a car in Grosvenor Road; in Highfield Close a car window was smashed in.
- iii. Three men were seen trying garage doors in Russell Place; a shed break-in was reported in Welbeck Avenue - three bikes were stolen and thieves scaled a 7 ft locked front gate. Equally determined thieves sawed through a garden gate in Holyrood Avenue but did not break into the house; a shed was broken into in Grosvenor Road - power tools and a bike were stolen. There was a separate shed break-in on another night - nothing significant was stolen.
- iv. A man on a scooter stole bricks from a house in University Road. There is good CCTV footage of the theft. A few days before this, building work equipment had been stolen from the house by 3 males in hoods who were wearing dark clothing. This event had also been captured on CCTV. There had been reports by builders that a VW golf (light grey/silver) had been cruising suspiciously up and down Highfield Crescent. This may have been linked to previous incidents.
- v. There had been sightings of a flatbed truck in Highcrown Street and Oakmount Triangle. No crimes/anti-social behaviour incidents were reported but Highfield residents should be vigilant, given past crime/anti-social reports from Oakmount Triangle and St Denys regarding this truck.
- vi. An unnerving incident occurred in Oakmount Triangle: a pair of old men's trousers, a vape pen and cigarette butts were found hidden along the side of a house behind the bins. The occupants of the house were not sure whether someone had slept there in the warm evenings.

Attempted or house break-ins (3)

- i. In Welbeck Avenue a man had been woken up by a male climbing through his downstairs window at 7 am. The male wore a balaclava and had a bike. A similar incident also happened in St Denys.
- ii. In Grosvenor Road, a gang of teenagers were chased away by the neighbour of a property as they were acting suspiciously. The neighbour thought they were trying to gain entry to a partly boarded up property owned by a landlord. The property is empty and full of combustible material. The person

reporting the incident to HRA lives next door to this property and the concern is that there is a fire risk in addition to vandalism, should people gain illegal entry. The front door was found to have been damaged.

- iii. Random men were knocking on the door of a house in Grosvenor Road at 1.40 am. This was persistently repeated a few times over 5 minutes but quite quietly. The occupants did not answer but switched on the lights and the men left. It was suspected that they might have been checking whether the house was empty.

Miscellaneous incidents (4)

- i. Glue sniffers (up to 10 people) were observed sitting on the benches on the Little Common path from Omdurman Road to the underpass during the night into the early hours. This caused a lot of disturbance for residents of Omdurman Road who had their windows open due to the heat.
- ii. The teenage daughter of someone in the Uplands Way Estate experienced someone exposing themselves near the pond at the Bellemoor entrance to The Common around 7 pm one evening.
- iii. There was a lot of evening activity in Lovers Lane at the back of houses in Westbourne Crescent. We advised on how to make a noise nuisance report to SCC.
- iv. One of our representatives flagged up a recurrent problem of receiving very strange emails from a potentially hacked email address belonging to an HRA member. The member was contacted and advised to change passwords.

All crime and anti-social behaviour reports are logged on the website:

<https://www.highfieldresidents.org.uk/crime-incidents/>

NJ commented there had been a spate of minor crime and anti-social behaviour incidents in the area recently. It was agreed that NJ would talk to Lucy Nagra about her thoughts on further engagement with the Police.

Re item: Attempted or house break-ins above, Cllr Cooper reported that Cllr Savage had investigated this. However, as it is not a Council owned property, there is no action that can be officially taken. He will discuss any new developments with Cllr Savage and report back at the next Committee Meeting. It was suggested that if this had not already been done, the matter should be reported to the Fire Brigade.

Sue Swallow and Chris Jackson (OARA) listed two anti-social behaviour incidents affecting their area:

- Doughnutting (rotating front or rear wheels of cars around while driving): at the junction of Alma and Earls Road.
- Use of nitrous oxide cans (laughing gas). These can be purchased legally.

(Post-meeting comment: any anti-social or potential crime witnessed should be reported by the witness to 101 as well as logged with the Crime information sharing WhatsApp Group for Highfield as a Crime Number will be allocated)

12. AOB:

1. Highfield News has changed owners and Sureka, the new proprietor, is happy to continue to collect HRA subscriptions and keep the HRA Box. This will be advertised on social media.
2. Volunteers from the Committee will be needed for kitchen duties to serve refreshments after the AGM business. The Secretary will be contacting Committee members in due course.

The meeting ended at: 8.25 pm

The date of next meeting is Tuesday 11 October, 7.00pm