

**Minutes of HRA Committee Meeting Part 1 and Part 2  
Tuesday 10 October 2023  
Highfield Church Hall 19:00h**

**Present Committee:** Prof Roger Brown (Chair), Nadine Johnson, Nicolla Martin, Ken Burtenshaw, Christine Rawnsley, Barbara Claridge

**Attendees:** Cllr Barbour, Cllr Finn, Malcolm White, Peter Errington

**Apologies:** Martin Benning, Stephen Connolly, Jerry Gillen, Karen Edwards, Jayne Tamlyn, Cllr Savage, Cllr Bunday, Cllr Fielker, Jon Walsh, Kate Fay, Laura Graves, Sue Swallow

**Part 1 HRA Committee and Attendees**

- 1. Welcome:** Roger welcomed everyone to the meeting. He said that there was not much to report; Portswood Broadway would be covered elsewhere in the meeting; there had been two community events a Love Where You Live event at which HRA had been represented by himself with Nadine and Christine and a Police and Community Together (PACT) event which several members of the HRA WhatsApp Crime Reporting Group had attended. The minutes of the PACT meeting were not yet available from Malkeat Singh. Work continued on the Local Plan and there would be further consultation in due course. The Levelling Up Bill was still passing through Parliament, however, the planning system would likely be weakened. There had been a recent report in the Guardian which reported a decline in Council enforcements from 2015-2016 of 5000+ to 2022-2023 of fewer than 3600.
- 2. Declaration of interest:** none.
- 3. Approval of minutes from the Committee Meeting 13 June 2023:**  
The minutes were approved.
- 4. Matters arising not covered elsewhere:**
  - a. Roger thanked Ken for his excellent design work on the new logo and banner. The banner had been used at the LWYL event and stood up to breezy conditions thanks to weights supplied by Christine.
  - b. Roger thanked everyone for their contributions to the HRA Committee response on Phase 2 of the Portswood Broadway Scheme which had been well received, including positive member comments which had been return-emailed to HRA. The dossier of collected member responses had finally numbered 29 and there had only been 2 supporting statements. The matter now rested with the Council and there had been no news on any forward timescale.
- 5. Information from Councillors**  
Councillor Finn supplied the following report:
  - a. "There is a public Consultation on the Council website on changes to the Adult social care charging policy that may be of interest to your members. Committee members were

encouraged to read it and give their views. This is something that HRA Social Media could promote.

- b. The Health and Wellbeing Board (of which Cllr Finn is a member) have been reviewing the "We can be active" policy about getting people moving more and that the issue of few public toilets has come up as a barrier to some people in using green open spaces. Work has also begun on the updated mental health and wellbeing strategy, incorporating the suicide prevention strategy. We discussed this as a Board and have had individual sessions to input views to the Public Health officers dealing with this.
- c. John Savage and Satvir Kaur had met with Southern Water and we are all very disappointed that assurances made have not been kept, especially as local email for complaints was removed without consultation. John has met with the regional stakeholder manager and a new local stakeholder manager is due to start. A further meeting is planned as the odour issues are affecting a large number of residents including some in Highfield/Portswood.
- d. A Love Where You Live event was held in Portswood as part of a cross-party move to improve the area between Thomas Lewis Way and Portswood Rd. Residents' concerns there. These included anti-social behaviour, crime and littering. It was notable that the waste dept who cleared the dog park prior to the event found and disposed of 35 needles from the bushes there."

Councillor Finn also asked if there were specific areas of the local authority that would be of interest to HRA members which could be included in her future reports.

Councillor Barbour reported on the following issues:

- a. The ongoing problem of smell from the Portswood Sewage Treatment Works (Southern Water). Recently Councillors had met with the CEO and although positive conversations had taken place a serious and on-going problem existed which was affecting the wellbeing of residents in lower Portswood. Christine Rawnsley confirmed this was a serious issue that needed to be remedied now not just as a future target. It was suggested that HRA should write to Southern Water. Cllr Barbour and Christine offered to provide some background information. (Action HonSec to write).
  - b. Councillor Barbour thanked the Committee for its detailed submission regarding Portswood Broadway Phase 2 proposals.
  - c. Councillor Barbour put forward an idea that as UNILink buses had been using Westwood Road as an alternative route during the upgrading of Brookvale Road, there was potential for busses to use Westwood and Winn roads alternately so that more residents could be encouraged to use the bus to visit Portswood rather than use their cars.
  - d. Committee members may wish to review the plans for the North-East Quadrant in the University when published to see if they are compatible with the area and whether the impact on the cityscape would be properly considered.
- Roger thanked the Councillors for their reports.

### 6. University Liaison

Apologies had been sent from all members of the University Liaison Team as there had been an outbreak of Covid. A short report has been included in the Annex.

**7. HRA Crime WhatsApp group for Highfield (NJ)**

a. PCSO Hayley Morrison introduced herself and Police Officer colleague. She informed the meeting that she had been a PCSO for 17 years, operating out of Portswood Police Station. She had recently returned after maternity leave. The Police Officer said that he preferred to be a face-to-face, on-foot officer whenever possible.

Roger said how pleased HRA was to have police representatives at committee meetings and he hoped this would become regular practice.

Hayley then described an initiative called Smart Water, whereby residents who had had their cars broken into or theft related incidents from cars, could receive a package of DNA traceable liquid which could be applied to car parts, so that if anything were to be stolen again or tampered with, ultra-violet light would link a caught culprit to the crime. She also advised that Faraday Bags for car keys could help prevent car thefts from driveways. It was hoped there would be a Beat Surgery at Sainsbury's on Saturday 14 October.

Cllr Barbour asked about progress regarding the police tackling shoplifting in Portswood. Shop Watch was mentioned as a system of communication warning between shops if a crime had been committed.

b. Nadine asked if there were still squatters in the empty Gorillas' Building. PCSO Hayley Morrison responded that this area no longer came under Southampton North but Central, but she would try and find out. Overall there had been a decrease in 7 reported crimes from the previous month. She reminded the committee that if anyone witnessed an active crime they should ring 999. 101 or the police reporting Website was for non-emergency crime reporting. 5 members of the WhatsApp Crime Reporting Group had attended the PACT meeting and found it useful. The minutes of this meeting were awaited. Nadine's full report is in the Annex.

Cllr Barbour reminded the meeting that that Ward Councillors met the police quarterly.

Hayley added that the police always tried to respond to any reports.

Roger concluded by saying that HRA always appreciated police efforts especially given the resourcing pressures they were under. Roger thanked Hayley and Luke for their contributions. The police visitors then left the meeting.

**8. Planning**

a. 33 Welbeck Avenue. With reference to this Resubmission of a Planning Application, Barbara reported that she had been contacted by a member as to why Planning Notices were no longer sent to near neighbours or attached to lampposts. Barbara would write to Planning to enquire. Planning approval had been granted for a large extension at the dwelling in 2022. The recent resubmission was for some alterations to the fascia. The resulting dwelling would be a 9-bedroom detached house. Although the extensions and loft conversions were large, some of the work fell under permitted development. The only acceptable planning reasons for objection might have been overdevelopment hence no HRA Objection had been made. (Action: HonSec to consult with Planning).

b. There was a discussion about a Planning Application for 4 studio apartments above Mettricks but HRA had not made a comment. (Post meeting note: Conditional Planning Approval was granted in 13/10/23)

**9. Reports**

- a. Finance: Income for the last month = £268. Current Account Balance = £13,394 Reserve Account = £10,107 (MB)
- b. Membership: Paid up members = 330: Rolling (Jan-Sept paid) = 259. See Annex for further details. (NM)
- c. Nadine reported the transparent version of the new logo which had been provided by Ken was working better and that gradually it would be used to amend various website pages. See Annex for further details.

**10. A.O.B.**

- a. Newsletter: Ken reported that he anticipated that this would be completed and sent to the printer before the end of the weekend.
- b. Graffiti and Land Registry. A member had contacted the HonSec to ask if HRA would make the application and pay for the land Registry Fee to find out who owned the garages in Heatherdeane Road which had been graffiti-tagged. He was prepared to paint over but didn't want to do so without the permission of the owner as it would be a criminal offence. This was discussed but the Committee felt that the fee of £38 + VAT would not be possible to endorse at this time as graffiti was prevalent throughout Highfield and costs could mount. (Action: The HonSec to discuss this problem with Stephen Connolly who knows a lot about graffiti removal).
- c. Parking fines at The Crown and Ceno. A member had contacted the HRAHonSec about two recent excessive parking fines which had been imposed by these establishments. In both cases the people concerned had been eating / drinking at the premises but had not known they had to provide their car licence plate. At the HonSec's suggestion, the HRA member had agreed that the 'story' could be posted on HRA Social Media to inform others. She wishes to remain anonymous. (Action: Nadine).
- d. A member, who had recently moved into the area, had contacted the HonSec to ask for information about overhanging tall trees in De Grouchy Lane which backed onto her garden. Pete Errington agreed to see if he could find a contact on the Management Group for the lane. (Action: HonSec to liaise with the new member once further tree information is available).
- e. There was to be an OARA 'Meet Your Neighbours' fun day on Saturday 14 October. All welcome.

**Part 1 of the Meeting ended at approximately 8.10pm.**

## Annex to the Minutes

### Reports

#### 7. University Liaison Report

Last month, we welcomed new and returning students to the University. We had another extremely successful recruitment and admissions cycle this year. We also saw the publication of a number of the annual University League Tables, as well as student experience outcome measures, maintaining our position as a [UK Top 20 university and a World Top 100 university](#).

We have planned a mass mailout to go out to our second- and third-year students, now no longer in halls, informing them of their communal responsibilities, such as registering to vote at their new address, what can go in their recycling bin and where to find out more information.

Recycling bags – we are pleased to have found a new supplier for the much-loved recycling bags. Distribution information will be available in due course.

Southampton Residents Forum – we will be arranging a meeting in the coming weeks to revisit the discussion of a city-wider charter. We will be in touch with any developments.

*Laura Graves University*

#### 8. HRA Crime Information Sharing WhatsApp Group for Highfield

There were 5 incidents reported in the WhatsApp Group between 12 September and 10 October. This was a decrease of 7 in comparison to the previous report of 12 September.

##### Reported incidents by representatives in the WhatsApp Group (total 5 incidents):

- Two car break-ins: Abbotts Way and Oakmount Triangle. The thieves in Oakmount Triangle were suspected of gaining entry by Radio Frequency Identification (RFID), used to receive a signal from the key fob. It is important to store key fobs in a Faraday Box/Pouch or equivalent, well away from the door.
- House burglary: Shaftesbury Avenue end of Richmond Gardens. A large amount of cash was taken.
- Mettricks Portswood was broken into. The person was caught in the act.
- Oakmount Triangle: daughter on own woken up by 3 women knocking loudly on the door at 1.30am saying there was a black dog walking around the street with a shaved side. A possible pretext to get her out of the house/commit a burglary? She phoned 101 and waited for over one hour but no answer. The WhatsApp Group Representative was advised that when a crime/suspect crime was actually taking place, to phone 999.

All incidents are logged here: <https://www.highfieldresidents.org.uk/crime-incidents/>

#### PACT (Police and Community Together) Meeting, 28 September 2023

Due to a family emergency, I was unable to attend this meeting but did receive feedback from some representatives who attended from the WhatsApp Group: There was not a huge turnout. It was an interesting, very useful and productive meeting where residents had the opportunity to air issues

from the area: Highfield and Portswood, to the police and council. The police were very engaged, receptive and sympathetic and there was honest discussion from both sides. A number of representatives from the WhatsApp Group attended, and it was nice to meet some of them.

**Distribution of Smart Water Kits and Local Beat Surgery**

The following information has been taken from 'Southampton Police' on Facebook:

Smart water kits are made of a highly durable liquid used to protect and mark components of a vehicle. The kits can be applied to catalytic converters to act as a deterrent to would-be thieves as they contain a traceable liquid which, once applied, is nearly invisible to the naked eye and difficult to remove. However, this can ensure that assets that are registered can be traced back to their original owner if found. Officers will be distributing these to residents at beat surgeries. The next local beat surgery is 10am to 12pm, Saturday 14 October at Sainsburys, Portswood Road.

*Nadine Johnson Digital Comms*

**10. Reports – Additional Information**

**a. Membership:** Reconciliation of Membership Payment Type January to October 2023

HRA member reconciliation by month 2023

	TOTAL	CASH	CHEQUE	BACS
JAN	20	5	9	6
FEB	12	1	3	8
MAR	48	5	19	24
APR	87	10	40	37
MAY	22	2	7	13
JUNE	22	4	8	10
JULY	27	5	7	15
AUG	14	-	8	6
SEPT	7	1	1	5
	259	33	102	124

RENEWALS SINCE JAN 2023 = 230 NEW MEMBERS SINCE JAN 2023 = 29

Note: A significant number of members continue to pay by cash or cheque. In October 2022, there were 324 Paid-up and 241 Rolling members compared with October 2023 when there were 330 Paid-up and 259 Rolling. These ongoing numbers 2022/2023 are similar and the 29 new members must make up for lost members over the last 12 months.

**b. Facebook/Website**

We now have 1022 followers on the HRA Facebook page, an increase of 2 since HRA Committee Meeting Minutes of 12 September 2023.

Thank you to Ken Burtenshaw and several other HRA Members for their recent photos, and to Barbara for some news posts.

The new logo is gradually being introduced across all our media communications, including the HRA website, Facebook page and Mailchimp emails to members. It is also being rolled out, where possible, to include all HRA policy documents on the 'Our Documents' page and, additionally, all online membership application forms.

**c. E-news to members**

There was one email to members on 3 October with a message from Barbara on the Phase 2 Consultation of the Portswood Corridor Scheme.

**d. Discounts**

We have obtained one new discount: 10% on food, Monday to Thursday inclusive, evenings only, at Centenary Restaurant, Centenary Building, on the University's Highfield Campus.

*Nadine Johnson Digital Comms*

**Part 2. HRA Committee Only - AGM Preparation**

**1. Draft Agenda**

This would be similar to last year's with the inclusion of Councillor Kaur's address. This would be circulated to committee members asap.

**2. Financial Report 2022**

- a. Accounts – the Examiner approved accounts 2022 had been circulated in advance. There were no comments. Roger expressed thanks to the Examiner, Malcolm White.
- b. The treasurer had recommendation that subscriptions for 2024 should remain at £10 per household with £3 additional fee for each additional discount card. This was agreed.

**3. Committee member responsibilities at the AGM:**

- a. Reception / signing in. Nicolla would provide membership lists. Nadine and Christine would join Nicolla on signing in duties in the lobby.
- b. Organisation of refreshments. Barbara would supply these and liaise with the church admin about delivery before, and pick up after, the event.
- c. Setting up and clearing away the hall. Ken Burtenshaw, Stephen Connolly, Dave White, Martin Benning would be asked to help.
- d. Reception organisation. Barbara would set up the kitchen and then hope for the usual help!
- e. Greeting Councillor Kaur and mingling with members: Roger and Jerry  
Note: absent committee members would be contacted about helping

**4. A.O.B.**

- e. Ken asked about an audio system as previously it had been very difficult to hear the speakers. Christine indicated that she might know someone who could help. Barbara and Christine to liaise.

**Part 2 of the Meeting ended at 8.35pm**