

Open Minutes HRA Committee Meeting Tuesday 7 April 2026

Highfield Church Halls 19:00h



1. Welcome: Prof Brown welcomed everyone to the meeting and said there would be a short meeting for Committee members only at the end of the main meeting.

Committee members present: Roger Brown, Jerry Gillen, Nicolla Martin, Dave White, Martin Benning, Ken Burtenshaw, Stephen Connolly, Paul Beard, Nadine Johnson, Barbara Claridge

Others present: Cllr. Savage, Cllr Barbour, Cllr Bunday, Graham Linecar, Katherine Holmes, Sarah Milo,

2. Apologies: Councillor Finn, Ed Hill, Karen Edwards, Sonia Cottrell

3. Declarations of interest: None

4. Minutes, 10 February 2026 Committee Meeting: These had been circulated in advance and were agreed

5. Matters Arising, not covered elsewhere

- a. Brookvale ATZ Survey update information exchange. Local RAs (PRG, OTRA, BVRA) and Ward Councillors were invited to contribute to this information exchange. There was no update to this item from Ward Councillors. The survey was now closed and there was no timescale for the publication of any outcomes before the local elections.

Katherine Holmes (BVRA) said the Council was still collecting traffic data but not related to the Survey. The issues for Brookvale road in respect of high traffic volumes countered the National Guidelines for residential roads of between 3400-3800 vehicles per day. The busiest periods for Brookvale Road were being measured at 5000 per day. The Active Traffic Zones safe level for walking and cycling was 2500 per day. She felt there would be a 'no agreement' from the survey. Users agreed with the problem but not the solution. There were other measures [apart from a modal filter] that could be adopted for example restrictions on turning or a one-way system. She noted that at these volumes, the majority of vehicles were not local to the area. Brookvale Road was a route between A roads and other similar roads in Highfield and Inner Avenue had been restricted or closed to through traffic a long time ago. Additionally the presence of Highfield Primary School at the end of Brookvale Road. This is a key driver for the concern about traffic reduction. She concluded by saying that she felt there were flaws in how the survey had been carried out. (see also Annex.i.)

Councillor Savage added that he had never known such a partisan issue that divided the whole community. He encouraged the community to come together to find a good compromise – a community that could work together. A comment was made that the Bus-gate project had caused both the current divide where previously people had got on with each other and the high traffic numbers. It was not good enough for the Council to expect the community to solve a problem caused by Council

Other comments included: the 20mph signs were far too high and not visible to drivers,

Malcolm White (OTRA) commented that the current issues needed to be viewed holistically and were not related to just one road

- b. Bus improvement achievements Eastleigh-Southampton Corridor (Agenda Annex.i.) HonSec. This was noted

- c. Highfield House Hotel update – Community Key Information Network (KINS) updates from Portswood

Neighbourhood Policing Team (NPT) on the anti-immigration protests outside the Highfield House Hotel were received once a week, sometimes pre but mostly post the events. They continued to be posted as official information on the News page of the HRA website: <https://www.highfieldresidents.org.uk/news/> (NJ)

6. Information Reports from Councillors

- a. Councillor Barbour: Malkeat Singh, Community Safety Officer and I have been visiting businesses along the Broadway to discuss shoplifting, the HHH protests and any issues they wish to raise, as a result we have written to the local policing team with our concerns. They are invited to these sessions but so far have not been able to attend. The student who was badly injured by robbers to his flat on Highfield Lane is still in a very poor state and the neuro rehab team are working with him. The university are now revoking his visa and I have been advocating on his behalf as he is not well enough to fly. There is a litter pick at Portswood Park on Sunday 15th March from 2pm to 3pm The next meeting of the Portswood neighbourhood planning development group is 30th March, will report back after this. Shop Local - October Books needs our support, it will be 50 years old next year and it would be hideous if it failed on the eve of this milestone.
- b. Councillor Savage: There was a new Materials Recovery Recycling Facility (MERF) open at Eastleigh which was adaptable for the future where eventually it would be possible to recycle much more, the new food waste recycling scheme was part of this. He also said that a new report would show that Southampton had achieved a 30% reduction in atmospheric nitrogen dioxide reduction since 2019. This had been in response to a Government Ministerial Directive to reduce pollution in the city (see Annex.ii.)
There was progress in the Rights of the River Project. This was focussed on promoting the value of the river and protecting salmon. Refs: Co-working with the university on this *Developing the Rights of the River Itchen University of Southampton* <https://share.google/5wblzcHJxAgW2sxwp>
There was a need to develop community engagement and involvement via community stakeholders: Southampton River Rights - Home <https://share.google/b47DtkoH9sshH4T6k>
(See also Annex.iii) Community reassurance Report from Malkeat Singh
- c. Councillor Finn: apologies sent

7. University

- a. Sonia Cottrell Students Union Chief Executive Officer: apologies sent
- b. Paddy Bedi: apologies sent
 - i. University of Southampton – See new proposed plans for Connaught Halls of Residence redevelopment and the restoration of South Stoneham House
<https://www.southampton.ac.uk/~assets/doc/Wessex%20lane.pdf>

8. HRA Crime WhatsApp group for Highfield- NJ (Agenda Annex.iii.). This was noted and RB thanked Nadine for her report in advance of the meeting

9. Planning

- a. Enforcement enquiry - 24/00790/FUL - 197 Portswood Road (ex-Portswood Hardware premises). The HonSec had asked for confirmation that conditions to the planning approval had been inspected and met. Planning had replied but not fully answered the specific questions. This would be followed up.
- b. Litter around Brookvale Road HMOs and the new supermarket – ongoing
- c. Food truck at Al Barakah – this was legal as it was on private property and presumably had been invited by the store to cater for Ramadan food

10. Reports

- a. Finance (MB) – income/expenditure for the last period – to be advised in April
- b. Membership (NM) - to be advised in April
- c. Digital Communications Report – NJ (Annex.iv.). This was noted and RB thanked Nadine for her report in advance of the meeting
- d. A.O.B.
 - a. New garden at Yellow Door, Brookvale Road: Proposal: Erection of new raised terrace and ramps in rear garden with Amendments approved under 24/00235/dis as part of permission 21/00074/FUL for extension of existing annexe/store building
 - b. NORA Response to National Planning Policy Framework Reform. This had been circulated and was noted

Traffic on Brookvale Road is extremely high for this type of road. Before bus gate, the Council recorded approx 3,400 - 3,800 vehicles a day. BVRA monitoring shows this now gets close to 5,000 on busy days. This is not local traffic.

Active Travel England recommends no more than 2,500 vehicles a day on residential roads like this for safe walking and cycling. Brookvale traffic is well above this (almost double at times) and will continue to get worse over time.

It's frightening for those walking young children to school - we regularly see near-misses at buildouts and junctions as cars try to squeeze/race through at peak times. We're worried someone will be seriously hurt or killed.

Many BVRA members support modal filters, as well as other restrictions not mentioned in the consultation (e.g. restricted turning at junctions). We know others in the wider community are concerned about restrictions on where they can drive locally - but with the Broadway open, detours would be short - this seems a small price to pay for safer residential streets.

On all other residential through-routes in the area, the Council has dealt with rat-running traffic. Brookvale is no different to any of these other roads – it's an unclassified, residential road. 'Unclassified' means it should be for local traffic (Department for Transport definition). If we protect Brookvale Road & Russell Place as well, through-traffic has to use the main roads instead – which are designed to take it.

We have a problem here - traffic is excessive and dangerous. Most people who regularly use Brookvale Road agree on that. We don't all agree on the solution, which is no surprise. But the problem is real, urgent, and needs addressing.

We're asking the Council to act now on the evidence they have, and to prioritise protecting children and residents.

Please see below some feedback from myself and Cllr Barbour from our last two weeks of community reassurance engagements in Portswood High Street:

Firstly It would be very good if a member of the Police service in Portswood could accompany us on these visits, many of the issues raised relate to crime and a sense that it is not worth reporting issues.

Some staff from the Pound shop are frightened of certain people, who come in regularly and take things right in front of staff – when they lock up to go home the staff are frightened they don't bump in to these people - they have reported these thefts to the police – I don't think this is related to the protests.

Boots chemist staff are likewise frightened as above and one staff member is too frightened to go out at lunch times, when they lock up to go home are frightened they don't bump in to these people.

The Tidal Vape shop experiences thefts every week when there is a solo woman on duty – last week a group of youths came in and ran off with lots of stuff – when the staff left that evening they were waiting outside for her – she fears for her safety. This has been reported to the police and the police have not made contact with them.

Library staff feel quite worried when the protest is happening, especially when closing time they have to walk past the protest to get to their cars.

T - REX Supermarket experience theft on a weekly basis and have pictures of the thieves on their wall as you enter the shop – not reported this to the police.

Other businesses trade has been affected by the regular protests – people are frightened to shop.

The sense of lawlessness on the High St seems to be growing with drug and alcohol use taking place just off the High Street or on the street.

- From the Highfield Residents Association - Street drinkers in shop doorway with a large speaker, playing music at high volume, and using microphones to shout at people passing by (1)*
- A group of 3-4 men in 20s walking along in an intimidating manner, staring people down. Possibly involved in drug related activity and appeared potentially violent (in the 'professional opinion' of the person reporting), shouting up the road at a man believed to be a resident of one of the flats above October Books, who had opened the door for one of them to enter (1)*
- One of the flats above October Books had a window completely smashed (1)*

Kind regards,
Malkeat (Community Liaison)

Annex.iii. Councillor Savage NO2 Reduction Report

Attached as .pdf (attached previously)

