

Minutes HRA Committee Meeting Tuesday 16 June 2026
Highfield Church Halls 19:00h



Annex.i. HRA Objection - 26/00584/FUL Replacement front fence and gates 2, Russell Place

Annex.ii. HRA Objection - 26/00595/FUL Proposed change of use of the building from an office to facility for the education and day care for children with special educational needs (use class F1(a))

1. Welcome: Roger welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked those who had prepared reports in advance as this greatly helped with the efficiency of the meeting

Committee Members present: Ken Burtenshaw (with thanks for organising the chairs), Martin Benning, Nadine Johnson, Paul Beard, Karen Edwards, Nicolla Martin, Roger Brown, Barbara Claridge

Others present: Councillor Savage, Councillor Barbour, Councillor Walsh, Sonia Cottrell (SUSU), G Giles (University), Sharon Burgess (OARA), Jamie Holmes (member)

2. Apologies: Jerry Gillen, Stephen Connolly, Cllr Foster, Cllr Fielker
3. Declarations of interest: Barbara declared an interest in the item about food recycling (6.b)
4. Minutes
HRA Committee Minutes 12 May: these had been circulated in advance. The Minutes were agreed.
5. Matters Arising, not covered elsewhere
 - a. RB had represented HRA at the recent meeting organised by Cllr Barbour for Ward Councillors and representatives of local groups to discuss the next stages of the Portswood Planning Strategic Group (see also Cllr Barbour's report: Agenda Annex.ii.). Cllr Barbour indicated that Ward Councillors would shortly be meeting the Council Leader, Cllr Bogle and Stephen Haynes, Executive Director – Growth and Prosperity SCC, to discuss plans for Portswood.
 - b. Cllr Savage reported that he had been able to contact Julian Evans from Fusion (re-the stalled PBSA at Portswood Centre). It was hoped that a Teams Meeting could be arranged between them to discuss the project going forward
Cllr Barbour reported that Fusion had also stalled on a PBSA project in Portsmouth.
 - c. HonSec Update (Agenda Annex.i.)
5c.7 End of Year waste. A list of roads was now available. Sonia Cottrell had a leaflet to hand out about donating items rather than throwing them out.
5c. Post meeting note: h. The Enhanced Bus Partnership Meeting had been postponed until September owing to the number of participants who were not available. No need for a Committee Volunteer
6. Information Reports from Councillors
 - a. Councillor Barbour, Portswood – Agenda Annex.ii. Additionally at the meeting, she reported that she now held the position of Sheriff to the Mayor (Councillor Patricia (Pat) Evemy) and would be organising diary events for her. She invited ideas from committee members for occasions where

the Mayor might sponsor events for communities.

She reported visiting the riots as an observer; was concerned about knife-crime; that a Sub-group of the Portswood Planning Strategy Group would be looking at Housing as its next topic.

She expected an update from Cllr Rayment (Cabinet Member for Transport) re-the Brookvale Road Survey results soon.

Paul Beard commented that the effect of the protests was escalating for nearby residents many of whom were elderly. The video coverage was adding anxiety.

- b. Councillor Savage, Portswood: Councillor Savage reported on the Local Government Reorganisation of SW Hampshire. This was complex. It was now a Transitional Stage.

From now it would be harder to manage and the biggest impact was likely to be lack of decision making. The Ward Boundaries would change (51 would become 40) and cover a wider area but not before the new Authorities were established. Portswood would be likely to have 2 Ward Councillors as the population represented was smaller and some (e.g. students) did not register to vote.

A Shadow Authority would be established and operate for 6-9 months in parallel operations to set in place the issues around governance and prepare the way. There would be 'all out' elections in May 2027. At present it would be known as S.W Hampshire Authority. 8 of the current Councillors would have places on the Shadow Committee. Some issues would be addressed at the full Council Meeting in July.

The Council Leader was considering a meeting with The Patriots to engage and try to understand their motives in continuing to demonstrate.

Cllr Savage commented that the situation was tricky; since the by-election there had been negative publicity on an international scale and stirring issues up on a political agenda. There was to be a Unity Rally of counter-protest in Guildhall Square. Would it be the Police Station or Highfield House Hotel?

Since the stabbing of the Southampton University student (and others recently in the UK), it was felt there was a need for the community to come together; for a healing to take place. The University had been working on this concept which would involve traders as well as the community. No date, venue or financial support had been secured – more of an idea going forwards.

Portswood was top of the queue for the next District Centre upgrade.

Contrary to HRA Chair requests for the removal of the bench outside the ex-Flagship Coffee Shop, Cllr Savage felt that benches on The Broadway should remain and were an essential feature to build communities and attract people to the shopping area. Roger replied that HRA members were concerned that all aspects of anti-social behaviour would be taken into account.

The Hon.Sec asked Cllr Savage to provide a quick evaluation on the recent introduction of food waste collection. He replied that the Council was tracking tonnage, that it was early days and that people could not be forced to take part.

The Hon.Sec. felt the scheme had not been promoted enough nor the positive benefits explained. How many residents knew about the new processing plant at Eastleigh?

<https://www.southampton.gov.uk/bins-recycling/recycling/recycle-your-food-waste/>

('By using a process called 'anaerobic digestion' we can turn food waste into renewable energy and a useful soil conditioner.'

Sharon Burgess (OARA) commented that there were many HMOs in Outer Avenue and many unused food waste bins were still lying about. Could these be collected by the Council if they were

not going to be used? They added to the whole problem of bins being left on streets.
A further comment was made that the bags for the food waste were very flimsy and kept splitting.
The HonSec said that their food waste collection had been missed and the brown bin smelt so bad it had had to be put outside of the block bin store.

G. Giles reported that the University was 'late to the party' on food waste organisation.

c. Councillor Foster, Portswood - Agenda Annex.ii.

d. Councillor Walsh, Swaythling – Cllr Walsh informed the Committee that he had taken the position of Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management committee.

Parish Councils would become 2nd tier in the new Authority.

Southampton City population made up 49% of the New Authority. The Council Leader had made it known that that she wanted 'Southampton' in the name of the new Authority.

On the question of Officers, there may be a block transfer of staff or they might have to reapply for their jobs. This was yet to be decided.

Cllr Barbour said that some discussions in other areas had already been taking place.

7. University

a. University Report. The date for the End of year waste collection had been set for 4 July. The University team was collaborating with SCC over this.

A new Vice Chancellor had been appointed.

Discussions would be held with the community with regard to the proposed building on the University Gower Car Park and loss of parking space possibly impacting on residential parking on Oakmount Triangle.

b. Sonia reported that she had leaflets about the end of year waste collection items that could be donated to charity after running costs had been deducted (Anglo Doorstep Collections) rather than adding to the waste (www.susu.org/moving-out)

8. Crime information sharing WhatsApp Group Report

a. Crime information sharing WhatsApp Group Report (Agenda Annex.iii.). Nadine commented that ASB had been on-going. 37/47 incidents reported to the WhatsApp Group had been ASB related.

9. Planning

a. 26/00584/FUL Replacement front fence and gates 2, Russell Place (RJ Mitchell House). Heritage Statement: [26/00584/FUL 2 Russell Place](#) Karen Edwards, PRG, said that PRG were looking into this and asked for HRA support. (See Minutes Annex.i. for HRA Comments)

b. 26/00595/FUL - Proposed change of use of the building from an office to facility for the education and day care for children with special educational needs (use class F1(a)). Rear of 189 Portswood Road (see Minutes Annex.ii. for HRA Comments)

c. Roger informed the meeting that the HRA Planning Guidelines needed updating. He felt that the amended version should reflect the fact that HRA should normally only respond to member requests over Planning Applications. Permitted Development (e.g. HMO roof extensions to increase bed-space and ELDC Applications) were particularly difficult to cover with an objection.

10. Reports

- a. Finance (MB) – income/expenditure for the last period. Payments: Church Room hire = £286.20: Website = £100.66: High Interest Account Transfer = £2000. Income = £484 (including Membership payments and HRA@50 donations; Current Account Balance (as of 5 June) = £499; High Interest Account = £28,453.77
- b. Membership (NM) - Members recorded on Database 346 . Paid up members: Jan 29, Feb 9, Mar 45, April 79, May 22 = 184 paid in total
Not renewed in Jan 8, Feb 5, Mar 13, April 16, May 14 = 56 total not renewed. Roger commented that HRA would need to conduct a membership recruitment drive in the autumn to make up the lost members.
- c. Digital Communications Report Facebook/Website (NJ)
There were now 1296 followers on the HRA Facebook page. An increase of 10 since the meeting of 12 May 2026.
Thank you to Ken for photos, and also to Barbara and miscellaneous others for news items.

eNews emailed to members

Two eNews / Events Updates were emailed to members - on 21 May and on 4 June.

Local businesses

Some good news - K's market have re-done their shopfront sign - in green. They are, for the moment, staying put!

11. A.O.B.

- a. Speedwatch (Simon Fidler)
- b. Volunteer Litter Picking (Cllr Savage and Simon Fidler)
The HonSec reported that there were now 4 volunteers to work on the Speedwatch (including Martin Benning Committee). Simon was away at present and it was more likely that these projects would begin in the autumn.

Dates of the next meeting:

Tuesday 14 July

A volunteer note taker will be needed for this date

No Meeting in August

Annex.i. HRA Planning Objection 26/00584/FUL Replacement front fence and gates 2, Russell Place

2, Russell Place lies within Highfield Residents Association boundary and within the Portswood Residents Gardens Conservation Area. Whilst the replacement of an old fence and wider gate with similar style and materials to improve access is not objected by HRA, the Heritage Statement misses a significant aspect of the design in that the whole front garden has already been destroyed and replaced with hard standing (see submitted photograph 1. of previous front garden below).



(Source Google street view)

If this alteration to the front garden had been subject to a Planning Application, before the hardstanding work had been carried out, then HRA would have objected strongly.

The Heritage Statement submitted by the applicant states: *'Russell Place and this particular part of the street has a verdant feel with large trees visible as a backdrop to the rear and green verges with feature trees lining the pavement to the front.'*

This statement whilst true, does not mention that the front garden has already been destroyed and replaced with hard standing. Other nearby houses all have front gardens with trees, bushes and grass which contribute to the verdant feel.

Furthermore, *'The alterations proposed do not cause harm to any neighbouring amenity, nor have any negative impact on the Conservation Area.'*

This statement is not true, as the removal of a whole front garden, without permission, has already harmed neighbouring amenity and had a negative impact on the Conservation Area. Natural rainwater drainage has been replaced by hard standing and this will have permanent impact .

Also, *'In addition, an evergreen hedgerow will be planted behind the fence.'*

No details of the proposed evergreen hedgerow are given. The property used to have a substantial, wide hedge and this heritage feature has been lost to the Conservation Area (See submitted photograph 2. below).



(Source Planning Application 24/00318/FUL Heritage Statement)

Any replacement planting would require a good depth and width of earth to sustain it. Any earth has already been replaced by hardstanding. Details of the hedge are missing from the application.

HRA disagrees that, *'The changes are minimal'* in respect of the front drive and hedge. Great detail is provided for the fence and gate but not for the hedge replacement species or landscape plan.

A further comment is made in the Heritage Statement under *'RGP 6 Hardstandings, Driveways, Access and Paths.'*

HRA highlights that the Conservation Area Policy PRG6, adopted by the City Council, states that front gardens are essential for the appearance and character of the Conservation Area and must be retained.

The front garden detail has been omitted in the Heritage Statement where the only comment is, *'A second vehicular access is not proposed, merely widening the existing access from 3.2m to 4.5m.'*

Is the removal of the whole front garden 'merely widening the existing access' ?

Highfield Residents Association objects to this Planning Application on the grounds that there has been no linked Planning Application for the removal of the front garden and existing drive to create total hardstanding and parking (for up to 6 or 7 cars or vehicles, nor any acknowledgement that these material changes have already been carried out.

Front gardens are essential for the appearance and character of the PRG Conservation Area and must be retained. HRA asks that the Planning Officer considers this breach of planning law and asks that the applicant withdraws this application in order to restore an appropriate front garden, hedge and driveway in keeping with others in the PRG Conservation Area.

Once the restoration work has been completed, HRA would have no objection to a resubmission of the PA for the replacement of the front boundary fence and a new gate as proposed in 26/00584/FUL.



(Source Rightmove)

HonSec Highfield Residents Association 30/06/26

Annex.ii. HRA Planning Objection Application 26/00595/FUL - Proposed change of use of the building from an office to facility for the education and day care for children with special educational needs (use class F1(a)). Rear of 189 Portswood Road

HRA Comments on Planning Application 26/00595/FUL - Proposed change of use of the building from an office to facility for the education and day care for children with special educational needs (use class F1(a)). Rear of 189 Portswood Road

This address falls within the boundary of Highfield Residents Association. HRA does not object to the change of use per se. It is considered that the empty office building could provide a valuable educational service for a small number of SEND children to be run by a private company- Pathway 360 Care Limited.

However, HRA considers that the Design Statement is lacking in detail or acknowledgement of the difficulties that would be experienced in terms of Access.

The empty office block in question is the first building at the end of an unadopted lane behind Portswood Road shops (north side). It is immediately next to the Southampton Mencap building which has well reported issues with the access for its clients, being single vehicle width, along an unmade surface which experiences constant flooding in wet weather and is litter strewn and filthy.

From the Design and Access Statement:

6.3 'Children attending the site will range between 6 and 18 years old. The use will for the most part be focussed on term times and normal school hours only.'

'Term time only' does not acknowledge the restricted poor general access via the lane. This has not been addressed or commented upon.

6.4 'The location of the site within a District Centre, being a location highly accessible by public transport, is considered to be appropriate for a new education and care facility of this type. There will be staff at the site and together with comings and goings from parents/carers the level of activity is considered to be similar to the existing office use and to contribute towards the vitality and viability of the centre.'

This is true but SEND pupils are most likely to be transported by taxi services or private vehicles which will need to have turning space in the 'staff car park' Such a turning space has not been included on the plans of in the Design and Access Statement.

6.6 'There is sufficient space on site to ensure the use has sufficient onsite parking.'

The plan document identifies 6 car parking spaces and a bike store but no turning circle for arrival and departure vehicles. This plan drawing also shows the single entry / exit back lane from Portswood Road (between the Post office and October Books) Ref: https://planningpublicaccess.southampton.gov.uk/online-applications/files/94346C621A36BDDDD55E24D202225807/pdf/26_00595_FUL--2308930.pdf

7. 'Access - In terms of access, the application site is well located within the Portswood District Centre. The nature of the proposed use and the age of the children who will attend means that the majority of students accessing the site will arrive by car and are unlikely to make use of public transport, although staff may use public transport.'

It is well located

7.2 'There are 6 parking spaces on the site. The submitted floor plan shows that there are six offices in the building and applying the LPA's parking standards for schools this would equate to a car parking requirement on site of 4.5 spaces. Therefore, the on-site parking is considered more than sufficient to meet the needs of the use. A cycle store can be provided as required.'

The requirement is met for parking space but the pragmatics of managing arrivals and departures of pupils by taxi/private car or possibly mini-bus have not been addressed adequately or with safety in mind.

7.3 Although the site occupies a location set behind frontage development on Portswood Road and the access is of single car width, it is not considered that traffic generation of the proposed use will be any higher than can already be the case through its existing use as an office. It is therefore considered that the development proposals will not have an adverse impact on road safety or the ability of existing transport infrastructure to accommodate future vehicle movements.'

HRA does not agree with this statement. The access via a single car width is further compromised by the likely arrival of transport for other pupils, Mencap clients, staff and delivery vans for the many food outlets on the north side of Portswood Road which use the back entrances rather than the main Portswood Road where waiting / delivery restrictions apply.

HRA would fully support the application for change of use on condition that:

- The lane is fully adopted
- Is resurfaced with appropriate drainage installed
- Is cleaned up
- A one-way system for vehicle safety is introduced
- A turning circle for transport to and from the SEND Facility is included in the plans

HonSec Highfield Residents Association 02/07/26