

Elstree & Borehamwood Green Belt Society (EBGBS)

AGM

Meeting Minutes

24th May 2023, 7.30pm Allum Hall, Allum Lane, Elstree

Committee Members Present:	Ann Goddard (AG)	Chair
	Helen Stammers (HS)	Treasurer & Web
	Clive Butchins (CB)	
Dignitaries Present:	Cllr. Rebecca Challice	Mayor of Elstree and Borehamwood
	Cllr. Chris Myers	Mayor of Hertsmere
	Cllr. Christian Grey	Mayoral Consort of Hertsmere
Speakers Present:	Robin Bishop	Barnet Society Committee Member
	Francis Wilson	Barnet Society Chair

	Item
1.	<p>Welcome and Opening of the AGM</p> <p>AG welcomed all those in attendance but was disappointed at the turnout for the AGM, especially at this was such a critical time for the protection of our Green Belt.</p> <p>AG thanked the dignitaries and speakers for attending, plus Ros Gray, Chair of the Radlett Green Belt Society and Oliver Joseph a student interested in the society.</p> <p>Cllr. Chris Myers welcomed those present and thanked the Society for inviting him to the AGM. He spoke passionately about the protection of Green Belt and the natural environment. He emphasised the significance of preserving Green Belt in Hertsmere with its benefits including acting as a natural barrier, a sanctuary for wildlife, protecting the delicate web of life and a place to escape from the hustle and bustle of life. It gives people an opportunity to rejuvenate and helps us to live a healthy and balanced lifestyle. He stated Green Belt should be preserved as it was an invaluable asset, critical in tackling Climate Change, and needed to maintain a stable climate. There are constants threats to Green Belt but once lost it is gone forever, which is why he was committed to safeguarding the legacy we leave behind.</p> <p>Cllr. Rebecca Challice, welcomed those present and thanked the Society for inviting her to the AGM. She said Ann Goddard had been an inspiration to her for many years and we should all come together in defence of Green Belt to tackle the apathy.</p>
2.	<p>Apologies</p> <p>Tony Gill, Jon Supran, Pat Strack.</p>

3.	Minutes of previous AGM 16th May 2022
	The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed by CB and confirmed by a raising of hands.
4.	Chairmans Report
	<p>AG spoke personally about her view that with an old and narrow road grid, the air pollution caused by traffic until all cars are electric, the need to preserve our planet and slow down global warming and the need for open spaces, makes our Green Belt vital. We share the planet with flora and fauna and must always remember it is their home as well as ours.</p> <p>AG concluded by stating the use of Green Belt should be kept to an absolute minimum and all brownfield sites should be utilised before Green Belt is sacrificed.</p> <p>AG read her Chairs Report – see attached.</p>
5.	Treasurers Report
	<p>HS provided the meeting with the Year End Accounts for 2023.</p> <p>The accounts were approved:</p> <p>Proposer – Nigel Clark</p> <p>Secunder - Chris Anderson</p> <p>Marjorie Davies was thanked for auditing the accounts.</p> <p>HS read her Treasurer’s Report – see attached.</p>
6.	Election of Officers and Committee for 2023/2024
	<p>Current Committee members were put forward for re-election.</p> <p>These were Ann Goddard as Chair, Helen Stammers as Treasurer and Web, Pat Strack as Membership Secretary, Jonathan Supran as Planning and Clive Butchins.</p> <p>Tony Gill has resigned from the Committee and as Honorary Secretary. AG thanked him for his service. Helen Stammers is currently Acting Honorary Secretary.</p> <p>Proposer – Norman Shuker</p> <p>Secunder – Sue Anderson</p>
7.	Appointment of Auditor
	<p>Marjorie Davies was put forward as Auditor.</p> <p>Proposer – Ann Goddard</p> <p>Secunder – Clive Butchins</p>
8.	Review of Rules

	<p>The amendments to the Rules were distributed to all present and put forward for approval.</p> <p>Proposer – Sue Anderson</p> <p>Secunder – Norman Shuker</p>
9.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>CB informed those present of the Neighbourhood Plan and his involvement in its development.</p> <p>The Plan had involved collecting data from Personal Surveys, Youth Council Surveys and Local Business Surveys.</p> <p>These were all available via the Town Council website.</p> <p>CB stated that the Steering Committee are continuing to invite engagement from residents and businesses as it is the future of their Town that will be shaped by the Plan. We will soon be preparing a draft of the Plan for consultation more widely and this will form the basis of the referendum that will follow.</p> <p>Nigel Clark asked about the cutting down of the Allum Lane trees. It was confirmed none had TPO's but that EGBS had been in correspondence with HBC, EBTC and local Councillors both before and after the sale and clearance.</p> <p>We are working hard to ensure this does not happen again and that plans are not put forward for use of this land.</p>
10.	<p>Guest Speakers</p> <p>Robin Bishop (RB) and Frances Wilson (FW) of The Barnet Society (BS) were welcomed.</p> <p>RB and FW explained how the BS was formed before the Green Belt existed. It was founded in Barnet but goes into Borehamwood on the western boundaries. This part of Borehamwood can be seen from Barnet and the BS care deeply about it.</p> <p>The BS put in objections to many elements of the Hertsmere Local Plan.</p> <p>The biggest development which is underway is the creation of a Regional Park, a large piece of countryside that would share a boundary with Borehamwood. It would attract visitors off the A1 and be of value to locals.</p> <p>A recent success was saving Whalebones, a piece of land with an iconic entrance, on which 150 units were proposed. This was Green Belt land and provided an important division between Barnet and Arkley.</p> <p>In response to our concern about the lack of members and attendance at the AGM, RB explained how their committee worked and activities they undertook to raise awareness, membership and funds.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - They have few Committee members but each sit on different panels - They attend all consultations. - They meet with developers. - They attend planning meetings. - The BS has a quality newsletter sent out quarterly.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The website is updated every 2/3 weeks. - They have a stand at the Summer and Winter Fair. - They run walks on communal land (£10 pp, £15 for families). - They run Guided Walks £20 pp. - They have two books containing walks in the Barnet area, written 10 years ago and recently updated. - They have an annual or biannual Dinner. - They run Quiz Nights. <p>Questions were taken.</p>
11.	Close
	AG thanked RB and FW for their interesting and inspiring talk and for all those who attended the AGM.

Chairs Report on 2022-23 for the AGM and Newsletter

The Elstree and Green Belt Society has fought for the preservation of our lovely Hertfordshire countryside by letter, email, articles in the press and numerous meetings in cooperation with local conservation organisations.

There is need for some new housing, affordable and eco-friendly, but it has to be on brownfield with minimum use of Green Belt. Climate change makes this even more vital. We must not destroy the balanced eco-system, for the survival of all life forms.

After campaigning since 2016, we now hope that there may be a future for the historic Aldenham Reservoir. Planning permission for a business park on land off Watford Road belonging to Liberty Aldenham Ltd has been granted. This will yield funds to repair the dam and maintain the Reservoir through a Public Trust. We supported this as the exceptional circumstance of saving the 'Res' justifies building on Green Belt. We supported permission for repair work on the dam. Councillors Clapper, Newmark and Evans also formed an all party group to press for this.

The path round the 'Res' has now been designated as a Right of Way thanks to the efforts of Debbie Houghy and the Aldenham Country Park Trust.

Woodcock Hill is threatened by proposals from Taylor Woodrow and Inland Homes to build on The Horses Field (B6) and land off Hartfield Avenue respectively.

We opposed both these plans as on Green belt, encroaching on Woodcock Hill and downgrading the wildlife habitat and the historic Beacon site. It would add greatly to the traffic congestion and pollution in our already overcrowded road network. The removal of Village Green status from Woodcock Hill is a tragedy and we support the appeal by Woodcock Hill Village Green Society and have donated to funds to it. The expansion of development at Organ Hall was opposed for the same reasons, ie loss of Green Belt and traffic overload and also loss of separation between Borehamwood and Radlett.

Footpaths are a health and recreational asset. We have been concerned over the state of Tykeswater Lane (Byway 60) and contacted the Footpaths Officer for Herts CC about the poor condition of the footway from churning up by four wheeled cars. We asked for separation of the footpath and traffic access and removal of fly tippage

and review of Byway status. So far we have achieved limitation of access to registered clubs only- a partial success. We investigated the footpath through Radlett Golf Club after complaints from our members but found it was a 'permissive' footpath and could be refused by the owner, sadly.

The Solar Farm proposal off Butterfly Lane(21/0050/FULEI) evoked huge public anger as 300 acres of Green Belt would be industrialised with very ugly visual effects and restriction of public footpaths. The production of green electricity is beneficial but solar panels on buildings would be preferable and prevent loss of agricultural land. We opposed by a majority vote but understand that the HBC Planning refusal has been appealed against and referred to Central Government.

Cecil's Horse Sanctuary has been a favourite institution in Elstree Village but they are being evicted by the end of the year and are looking for new grazing land in the area. We opposed construction of a Care Village on their field and hope for a happy outcome for them.

Finally we made strong objections to the needless felling of trees on Allum Lane verge following purchase from Herts CC by an unknown buyer. As no Tree Protection Orders were in force there was no possibility of prosecution. We are watching for future sales and will object to any development on these sites.

The care of our neighbourhood environment is so important. Please join the Green Belt and support our work.