

**Minutes of Annual General Meeting
Hampstead Neighbourhood Forum
21 March 2023**

The tenth Annual General Meeting of the Hampstead Neighbourhood Forum took place at 7.00pm on 21 March 2023.

It was held at the Hampstead Community Centre with more than 30 people attending. The Powerpoint slides shown at the meeting are on the Forum's website.

Alex Nicoll, chair of the Forum, thanked the management and trustees of the Hampstead Community Centre for allowing the Forum to hold the meeting there.

1. Approval of Minutes from the last AGM.

The minutes of the previous AGM, held on 8 March 2022, had been posted on the Forum's website. As proposed by Glen Robinson and seconded by Carissa Bub, the minutes were approved unanimously.

2. Approval of Accounts

Clyde Whittaker, treasurer, reported on the Forum's income, including donations, and expenditures for 2022. The Forum continues to seek and receive donations to meet annual costs such as the website. The main expense in 2022, funded by donations, was on the air quality monitoring project. At the end of 2022, the Forum had cash of £1,001.58 in its bank account. As proposed by Linda Chung and seconded by Andrea Lally Kukrika, the accounts were approved unanimously.

3. Election of the Committee

Nominees to the committee had been published on the Forum's website, with short biographies.

The chair asked for a vote on the nominees being elected as a single slate. This was proposed by Janine Griffis and seconded by Vicki Harding and passed unanimously.

The nominees were:

- David Castle
- Stefano Filippi
- Oliver Froment
- Janine Griffis
- Vicki Harding
- Andrew Haslam-Jones
- Andrea Lally Kukrika
- Sean Lask
- Alex Nicoll
- Glen Robinson
- Katharina Schauer
- Stephen Taylor
- Clyde Whittaker
- Guy Wingate

The nominees were proposed for election by Guy Wingate and seconded by Peter Ratzler, and were elected unanimously.

The chair thanked Stephen Stark and Linda Chung, councillors for Hampstead Town ward and *ex officio* members of the committee, for their tireless work on behalf of the Hampstead community. He welcomed Anne Clarke, London Assembly member for Barnet and Camden, to the meeting.

4. **Forum's activities**

The chair recalled the Forum's mission statement and outlined the activities of the Forum over the past year in line with its remit. These included:

- continuing to monitor planning applications and to comment selectively, and to record outcomes in the Planning Watch section of the website;
- launching a public consultation on reviewing the Neighbourhood Plan and seeking to bolster policies related to sustainability, energy efficiency and biodiversity;
- carrying out a project to measure air quality;
- other activities such as creating a new website and monitoring the health of Hampstead's retail centres.

5. **Air quality project**

Katharina Schauer, co-leader of the project with Francesca Agostini, reported on the results. She recalled that the Forum previously measured nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) in November 2015. The 2021/2022 project took measurements over a full year, in 10 locations. Schauer thanked all those involved: volunteers who put up and replaced diffusion tubes each month, including pupils and teachers from UCS Junior Branch, Devonshire House and Maria Montessori schools; donors including the Heath & Hampstead Society; and Camden for their advice.

The measurements showed that NO₂ levels were above or close to the UK legal limit in South End Green, Pond Street and Heath Street. They were above the World Health Organisation annual limit in all 10 locations, including at Viaduct Bridge on Hampstead Heath. Overall, they were highest in January, when they exceeded the UK legal limit, and November. Though NO₂ pollution tailed off during the summer months, it remained above the WHO limit throughout the 12 months. Comparing November 2015 and November 2021, NO₂ levels fell by 19%. But the decline was not uniform, and in Pond Street the level actually rose. Though particulates were not measured in this project, Schauer noted that these were extremely dangerous and that they were produced especially by wood-burning fires.

Schauer answered many questions on her presentation. Tom Parkes, Camden's Air Quality Programme Manager, who advised the Forum, contributed to the discussion.

6. **Revision of Neighbourhood Plan**

The Forum had previously held a public meeting on 31 January 2023 to launch a public consultation on revising the Hampstead Neighbourhood Plan.

Janine Griffis updated the AGM with a summary of the areas in which the Forum was working on this: principally, to strengthen policies relating to sustainability, energy efficiency and biodiversity.

For example, the Plan should support retrofitting existing houses rather than replacing them with new ones. It should support the insertion of clean, renewable energy, including in listed buildings. New builds should not worsen air quality and should be energy-positive.

In line with new legislation, the Plan would support development that provided 10% net gains in biodiversity. It would build on the biodiversity corridors designated in the existing Plan, developing biodiversity networks that would link the corridors more closely with the Heath. It would support retaining and expanding gardens and trees on the fringes of the Heath.

The Plan would seek to improve water efficiency, to encourage clean transport and to discourage the insertion of flues for wood-burning stoves.

Griffis noted that two sites, while still in the hands of long-time owners, had been designated in Camden's site allocations list. Camden had indicated that if the Plan sketched a vision for these, this would be taken into account when development plans emerged. Therefore, the Forum would draft vision statements for Queen Mary's House (including concepts of biodiversity net gain, energy positiveness, affordable housing, retrofit and protecting views and the character area), and the Shepherds Walk postal delivery office. These would be included as part of the Plan.

A general discussion of ideas for the revised Plan followed.

The chair noted that the aim of the Plan was shifting from one of protecting heritage and limiting damage from development to actively improving the Forum area, contributing positively to the environment and to resources. A section that offered information and guidance on options for energy efficiency could also be included in the Plan.

The chair said the Plan's revision would proceed through the next stages of drafting, use of consultant experts, public consultation, scrutiny by Camden and an independent examiner, probably followed by a public referendum.

7. Any other business

Peter Ratzer asked whether there was any possibility of bringing Church Row and Perrin's Lane into the Forum area. The chair noted that the two streets had decided in 2014 to set up their own Forum. Altering the borders of a Neighbourhood Forum would be problematic but the chair said would consider the issue.

Peter Ratzer suggested the establishment of a 'Friends of the Forum' group to give greater assurance that the Forum would remain adequately funded. The chair and treasurer agreed to consider this.

The chair brought the meeting to a close soon after 8pm.