



The Ashtead Resident



The Journal of the Ashtead Residents' Association
Working for Ashtead since 1945

Number 225

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www.ashteadresidents.org.uk

Spring 2023

Notice of Meetings

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

AND

SPRING MEETING

Wednesday April 26th 2023

Ashtead Peace Memorial Hall, Ashtead

7.30pm AGM

1. Approval of the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Wednesday 20th April 2022 published in The Ashtead Resident, Spring 2023
2. Matters Arising from the Minutes
3. Chairman's Report
4. Hon. Treasurer's Report
5. Proposed Amendments of Constitution (see Appendices 1 & 2)
6. Appointment of President, Officers and Members of the Committee
7. Appointment of the Hon. Examiner
8. Any Other Business

Interval

8.15pm SPRING MEETING

"Rye Meadows"

Nigel Bond

Chairman of Friends of Ashtead Rye Meadows Wetlands.

Bar open from 7.15 until 8.15pm

Annual membership subscription is £2.50 per household

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE ASHTEAD RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION HELD ON WEDNESDAY 20TH APRIL 2022 IN THE ASHTEAD PEACE MEMORIAL HALL

President Simon Ling welcomed everyone for the first face-to-face AGM since 2019 and thanked everyone for their attendance.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Apologies had been received from Martin Cox, Peter Stanyard, Larry Unthank and Chris and Emma Harbot.

The Minutes of the AGM of Wednesday 19th May 2021 held via Zoom, published in The Ashtead Resident 2022 (Number 224), were taken as read. Proposed: Rosemary Stark, Seconded: Eric Skyte. Passed nem con. There were no matters arising.

ARA Chairman's Report.

Glynis Peterkin (GP) echoed Simon Ling's welcome to the first in-person AGM since 2019 and thanked everyone for attending.

GP pointed to her articles in Ashtead Village News (AVN) putting out calls for more residents to join the Committee and was very happy to say that four new members have answered that call and were standing for election. However, GP announced that, sadly, we will be saying goodbye to three committee members: our Hon. Sec. Pam Ventham-Smith, our Treasurer Hannah Parkes and our Events Organizer Jean Bradley.

Pam Ventham-Smith (PVS) had been on the Committee since 2007, and Hon. Sec. since 2012, and GP offered her thanks for her work on the Association's behalf throughout that time. PVS had been the source of very sound advice and guidance not only on procedural matters but also on the way that the Association presents itself and the stands that it takes on Ashtead issues. In addition to her Hon Sec. role, PVS was AVN editor for many years and also took on the editing of The Ashtead Resident, the Association's formal record of proceedings. PVS will continue to support the Association as a "Friend" by managing our 4 noticeboards but she will be missed on the Committee and we wish her enjoyment of her well-deserved rest.

GP was grateful to new Committee member, David Knoyle (DK), who is standing for election as Hon. Sec. this evening to replace PVS. DK will take on all of the tasks that PVS covered and will also relieve David Baker (DCB) of the job of Committee minute taker. Additionally, DK will take on aspects of the Events Secretary's role that is being vacated by Jean Bradley (JB).

GP thanked Hannah Parkes (HP) who had continued to monitor ARA's finances, which she would shortly cover in the 2021 Treasurer's report. The committee will miss HP's quiet efficiency and GP thanked her for her work over the past 6 years as the Association's Treasurer and wished her a happy retirement.

Martin Cox (MC), another of our new recruits, was standing for election as Treasurer to replace HP. MC is a trained accountant and will be a great asset to the Association. Unfortunately, he wasn't able to attend the meeting as he works away from Ashtead and was immersed in producing year-end company accounts.

GP said that the Committee is currently renegotiating the Association's insurance cover with the aim of reducing costs and she thanked Peter Stanyard who had done a lot of the initial research on this. MC would be carrying this forward to finalize the new policy.

GP thanked Roger Bennett (RB) who had been unflinching in his diligent review of all of Ashtead's Planning Applications. Although there had been very many straightforward applications mainly relating to extensions and loft conversions, there had also been a number of applications that had required Roger to write a letter of representation to Mole Valley; the letters had all been published on our website and referenced in the spring and autumn AVNs.

GP thanked new Committee member Peter Shrubsole who will shadow RB in his Planning role to provide extra resource in this critical area of our work, especially important as the Local Plan loomed large in our future.

The publication of Mole Valley's Regulation 19 draft of their Local Plan required that comments be based on its legality and soundness, and we had employed a Planning Consultant to advise on how best to draft the Association's response on those bases; our reply was available to read on our website. Two Inspectors had been appointed to examine the Plan and we will keep abreast of the examination and publish anything we learn about its progress on our website.

GP thanked DCB for all the work that he does on behalf of Ashtead's residents on Highways & Rail and in maintaining the Association's website.

Our newly designed website was launched in January last year and DCB maintains the site, keeps the information up to date and posts all of the Latest News items including the diary of Ashtead events.

He had also continued his liaison roles with Surrey Highways, Govia Thameslink, Network Rail (NR) and the station car park operator APCOA Connect but it was a rail issue that featured most prominently in 2021.

Last September had seen the question of the existence of a Public Right of Way (PROW) over the tracks at Green Lane brought to the Mole Valley Local Committee. At issue was the difference between the Definitive Map showing a PROW over the tracks (ARA's view) and the Definitive Statement saying the opposite (NR's view). Neither Map nor Statement takes precedence one over the other, but both must agree.

Legal advice provided to Surrey County Council's (SCC) PROW Officer concurred with NR's view that a PROW does not exist, and the Association's own legal advisors also said that the historical documentary evidence, provided to us by Brian Bouchard, was not sufficient to support our case that a PROW existed at the location.

However, in our statement to the Local Committee we had taken the line that the route should have been designated as a PROW at the time of the railway's construction and that it had been in continual public use since then up to the present day, as evidenced by NR's own cameras.

The mood of the meeting had been sympathetic to Ashtead's case, but protocol required that content be identified in the Officer's report that would support a decision to vote against his recommendation that the Map be brought into line with the Statement. References to usage in his report, including a statement made by Peter Williams about his unimpeded usage of the crossing since 1983, provided sufficient grounds for the Committee to vote against the Officer's recommendation and vote instead that the Definitive Statement be modified to agree with the Map.

A modification order had to be published to allow objectors to respond; just one objection would mean that the matter must be referred to the Secretary of State for a final decision. We were still awaiting publication of the modification notice which was with SCC's Legal Department for review.

Finally, on the Green Lane crossing, GP thanked DCB for all of his free time that he had spent on this, which included much drafting of letters to SCC and liaison with the Open Spaces Society, the Ramblers' Association and the lawyers. DCB's contribution has been overlooked in public accolades and GP was correcting that gross oversight this evening.

GP thanked Tony Mansell for his continued work as our Membership Secretary during another year when COVID precautions had continued to have an impact on Road Stewards' opportunities to collect subscriptions, inevitably leading to a reduction in our membership numbers.

Although we now had various options in place for paying membership subscriptions electronically, and their use was gradually increasing, most subscriptions still came through our Road Stewards. It was very clear that they remained the life blood of the Association, and the Committee was very grateful for all that they do to support it.

JB was the third Committee member to be standing down this year. JB had always been good-natured and positive in her approach to the events that she had run very successfully, and which included liaison with the speakers at our Spring and Autumn Meetings, organizing our presence at Ashted Rotary Village Day, arranging our Road Stewards' Summer Meeting (although last year it was COVID-delayed until early autumn) and assisting the Spring Clean Coordinator. The Committee would miss her efficient organization and her sense of fun, and GP offered her thanks for her contribution to the Association's work over the past 7 years.

GP congratulated and thanked Lynda Coburn for running her first and very successful event as Spring Clean Coordinator. On April 2nd, volunteers had collected almost 60 bags of rubbish along with a discarded large green road barrier – and we had been well on our way to building our own car from some of the other items left on our roads. This year we had also finally able to meet up again afterwards in the pub with the volunteers.

Clive Stirling warranted special thanks. He was an invaluable asset during our annual Spring Clean collecting as he did all the rubbish sacks and discarded items from all the meeting points around Ashted and ferrying it all back to the APMH for collection by Mole Valley.

As usual, we published the 2021 Spring and Autumn issues of our newsletter AVN.

GP said that she was delighted, and grateful, to announce that Andy Smith had responded to our advert for a new editor and had volunteered to take on the role. Andy was a professional journalist with a huge amount of editing experience so it was with much relief that GP could say that we can look forward to an autumn issue of the AVN.

It had been another frustrating year for Ashted Tree Wardens in respect of new planting, but they had continued to comment on tree works referenced in planning applications. Liaison with SCC had improved since the beginning of 2022 and there had been some easing of planting regulations resulting in some newly planted trees appearing in our verges. We were hopeful now that things would continue to improve and GP thanked the tree wardens for the work that they do for our community.

ARA had responded to the Boundary Commission's initial consultation on where to draw the new ward boundaries. The Mole Valley Administration had made the decision to reduce the District's representation to thirteen wards of 3-Councillors each by 2023, with the likelihood that this would mean the loss of an Ashted Councillor. We had strongly opposed this in our response although we knew there was little hope of this changing and so it has proved, with the Boundary Commission's recommendation to reduce Ashted to 2 wards. The latest consultation was now out for public comment by 6th June and the link was on our website.

As ever, the committee was grateful to our "Friends" who, while not on the committee, provided invaluable support to the Association; GP was thinking in particular of Di Stirling who represented us on, and was chairman of, the Joint Residents' Associations Bus group.

Finally, GP said that this was her last AGM as ARA Chairman and she thanked all the members of the Committee for all of their hard work and their support during her time as Chairman, but she felt that it was now time to look for someone new to take on the role and lead the Association in the coming years.

The report was proposed by Alan Reilly and seconded by Andy Smith.

Treasurer's Report.

The Treasurer's Report and the 2021 accounts have been published in The Ashted Resident 2022. There were no questions raised on the financial statement nor the accounts. Hannah Parkes is standing down as Treasurer and will also leave the committee after many years of service. She thanked everyone for their help over the

years and in particular the Road Stewards and their helpers. They had all helped to make Hannah's role as Treasurer an easier one! Hannah also thanked Tim Tennant who had been the Hon. Examiner of the Accounts she had prepared.

The report and the accounts were both proposed by Chris Townsend and seconded by David Baker. They were both passed nem con.

Appointment of Vice Presidents.

Janet Marsh and Larry Unthank had both been proposed and seconded as Vice Presidents of the Association. They were both duly elected nem con.

Appointment of Officers and Members of the Standing Committee.

Glynis Peterkin was standing down as Chairman, having successfully carried out that role since 2014. There is currently no candidate to fill the role of Chairman. Glynis will continue as a member of the Standing Committee to assist the new Committee Members and to help identify a new Chairman. Hannah Parkes is standing down as Hon Treasurer and from the Standing Committee, both roles she has carried out since 2015. Pam Ventham-Smith is standing down as Hon Secretary, a role she has filled since 2012, and also from the Standing Committee, which she joined in 2007. Jean Bradley is also leaving her role as Events Organiser and the Standing Committee, both roles she has carried out since 2014.

Nominations have been received for Martin Cox to take on the role of Hon Treasurer and for David Knoyle to take on the role of Hon Secretary. They were both elected nem con.

In addition, Lynda Coburn, Glynis Peterkin, Peter Stanyard, Peter Shrubsole and Peter Ross have all been proposed and seconded for membership of the Standing Committee and were elected nem con.

Appointment of the Examiner.

Hannah Parkes proposed Tim Tennant and he was seconded by Ian McLaughlin. Passed nem con.

Any Other Business.

Clr Chris Townsend is also a Road Steward and said that the current annual subscription of £2.50 meant that he needed a lot of change when collecting subscriptions. The subscription has been £2.50 for some years, and he suggested that an increase may be in order to £3 or even £5. He also noted that inflation is at a 30-year high, and many people are experiencing financial difficulties due to the increased cost of living.

Clr Chris Hunt responded to a query about the developments at 106 and 108 Barnet Wood Lane and said that MVDC had given permission for 4 properties at 108 BWL and would probably approve 3 or 4 units at 106 BWL. Ashtead Councillors had raised concerns about access and egress from these properties but they had been overruled by other Councillors on the DC Committee.

A request was made that people turn off the engines of their vehicles when waiting at the level crossing at the bottom of Woodfield Lane. It was suggested that signs be erected to that effect at the level crossing. There are no official signs that cover this situation, and it was suggested that the Residents' Association could investigate if they could put up signs requesting people to turn off their engines.

It was highlighted that recently a number of trees had been cut down near developments on the A24 near Ashtead Aquatics, near Whitefriars Close and elsewhere. A question was raised about existing rules and regulations for removal of trees and whether they can be strengthened to prevent the loss of more trees. Clr Pat Wiltshire explained that work is underway to look at tree health and other tree issues. Often trees are cut down by developers before a formal planning application is made and this is problematic. If anyone has a concern about tree health or removal, then they should write to Paul Anderson of MVDC with a copy to the MVDC Chief Executive and to the relevant Local Councillor.

Presentation of Election Candidates.

Simon Ling reminded those present that there will be local elections on Thursday 5th May and that there are independent candidates standing for election to Mole Valley District Council in each of the three Ashtead wards. Patricia Wiltshire is standing in Ashtead Common Ward, Alan Reilly in Village Ward and Garry Stansfield in Park Ward. Patricia and Alan were present at the meeting and made themselves known. They were thanked for agreeing to stand and wished good luck.

Meeting Closed.

SPRING MEETING

Glynis Peterkin introduced Simon Cowell of the Wildlife Aid Foundation. Simon gave a very interesting and entertaining talk entitled 'My Wild Life' that described the history of the Foundation and the work that it carries out in rescuing and caring for animals in distress. It responds to around 20,000 incidents a year and has around 400 volunteers that ensure incidents can be responded to whenever they occur. Simon's colleague, Douglas Anderson, gave a briefing on the iDot initiative. iDot stands for 'I do one thing' and is aimed at getting people to do something different each day that will have a positive impact on the environment and wildlife. (Further information about the Wildlife Aid Foundation can be found in the front page article of Issue 33, Autumn 2022, of Ashtead Village News).

The final act of the evening was for David Baker to make a presentation of gift tokens to the people who are standing down from the Committee – Hannah Parkes, Jean Bradley and Pam Ventham-Smith. A presentation was also made to Glynis Peterkin who is standing down as Chairman after 8 years in the role.

NOTES OF THE AUTUMN MEETING OF THE ASHTEAD RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION HELD IN THE APMH ON 26TH OCTOBER 2022

Simon Ling welcomed two representatives from Network Rail, Sam Peard and Andy Smith. Sam is the Regional Level Crossing Manager and Andy is the Level Crossing Manager for Wessex. Sam and Andy gave a talk about level crossings. They provided useful information about the number, type and risks associated with level crossings in the UK. They also referred to the recent fatality at the Lady Howard crossing and the investigation held into that accident. They explained the various options that were considered for the crossing following the accident. The options ranged from keep as is to closing the crossing completely. The short term solution was to provide extra signage on the approaches to the crossing and this is now in place. The longer term solution will be to install Miniature Stop Lights (MSL) at the crossing that will show a red light when a train is approaching together with an audible warning. The presentation was followed by a useful question and answer session.

David Baker thanked Sam and Andy for their very interesting and useful talk. If anyone would like to see a copy of the Network Rail presentation about level crossings then please email your request to ashteadra@tiscali.co.uk.

Following a short intermission, SL introduced a Question and Answer session with Ashtead's District Councillors: for Village Ward Mary Cooper (MC) and Chris Hunt (CH) and for Park Ward Garry Stansfield (GS). Apologies had been received from Common Ward Councillors David Hawksworth and Pat Wiltshire and also from Ashtead's Surrey County Councillor Chris Townsend.

Q What is, or might be done, to review the safety of local trees before the arrival of winter storms and who is responsible for the maintenance of trees?

A GS explained that if trees are on a public road they are owned by Surrey County Council and SCC is responsible for their inspection and maintenance. There is a tree on Parker's Hill that will shortly be felled by SCC. Sometimes maintenance is carried out to make trees safe instead of felling. The trees in Ashtead Park are

owned by and the responsibility of MVDC to maintain. Trees on private land or property are the responsibility of the land or property owner.

CH referred to assessments that are carried out on trees and how they are based on the risks they pose. The high risk trees are those close to playgrounds, etc. Trees adjacent to roads and pavements are considered medium risk whilst trees in groups or part of a forest or wood are low risk. MVDC is starting a new process for the safety assessment of trees. They have identified around 50,000 trees in the high and medium risk categories and 250,000 in the low risk category. High risk trees will be assessed every 18 months. Medium risk trees will be assessed every 18 to 36 months and low risk trees every 5 years or potentially earlier if a member of the public identifies a tree that is not safe. If a tree is protected and has been allocated a Tree Preservation Order by MVDC then any work on that tree must be reviewed and approved in advance by MVDC.

MC mentioned that trees at the APMH car park had recently been inspected as some had been identified as dangerous. Trees in Ashtead Recreation Ground are also the responsibility of MVDC and they are currently trying to recruit an additional tree officer.

Q What can be done to improve traffic problems on Ottways Lane near the playground and entrance to Paddocks Way. Problems are caused by people parking on Ottways Lane opposite Paddocks Way and on the nearby bend.

A GS confirmed that highways issues are dealt with by SCC but it is possible that parking matters will move from MVDC to SCC in the near future. Currently any parking problems should be reported via the SCC website. Planning and highways issues should be linked at the start of the planning process so that the total environmental impact is considered. It is thought that Ashtead hospital staff park their cars on Ottways Lane and that contributes to the problem.

CH advised that whilst the addition of yellow lines may alleviate the parking problem, they can result in traffic travelling at higher speeds which is not desirable near a children's playground. A better solution may be to have regular passing points on Ottways Lane rather than continuous yellow lines.

MC stated that traffic problems are getting worse in Ashtead. There are car parks in Ashtead but some people don't want to use them because of the cost but they are an important source of revenue for councils. People are requested to report issues regarding parking and traffic in general to the relevant authorities.

Q As a follow-up question to the above, can local employers do more to prevent parking problems close to their premises?

A Ashtead Hospital used to operate a bus service for staff but that has now stopped so presumably more staff now drive to work. MVDC can't place new restrictions on an employer. Restrictions can only be applied if an employer is opening a new office or development.

GS advised that an employer can purchase parking permits for staff to use local car parks.

Q What is the latest situation regarding the proposal from Ashtead Football Club to install a new all-weather pitch at the recreation ground?

A CH advised that a petition with 1400 signatures objecting to the proposal had been received and as a result the proposal cannot be decided by the MVDC Cabinet and will now need approval at a full council meeting. MVDC is consulting with Fields in Trust and a recommendation on how to proceed is to be made by the Cabinet. Residents can contact the council's Chief Executive or the Deputy Chief Executive to express their opinions on the proposal or any of the Ashtead councillors.

MC stated that council officers will complete their reports on the proposal but she agreed that the normal planning process had not been followed correctly in this instance.

GS added that there are concerns about the fencing-off of a large part of the Recreation Ground in order to accommodate and protect the proposed all-weather pitch. There are also concerns about the proposed material for the all-weather pitch and its health impacts.

Q Why were some residents who live adjacent to the Recreation Ground and close to the proposed new pitch not notified about the AFC planning application for a new all-weather pitch?

A CH has a list of all the people that were contacted about the application and he is willing to share that list with any local residents. As mentioned by MC earlier, the normal planning process was not correctly followed in this case. Also there were no public notices posted at or near to the Recreation Ground about the planning application. This was because MVDC follow government guidelines that they only contact neighbours of the proposed development without placing any public notices.

SL thanked the Councillors for their time and the audience for attending and their continued support of the Association.

HON TREASURER'S REPORT (2022 ACCOUNTS)

The Association made a surplus in 2022, largely due to a small increase in membership subscriptions and an absence of any exceptional or extraordinary expenditure in the year. Overall, a surplus of £848 was made in the 12-month period.

Income

Members subscriptions rose to £6,369 from £6,191; 3% up on 2021. Out of this year's total subscription income, £715 was paid via the online payment facility, roughly 11%. Payments made directly to the Road Stewards remains the single most popular method.

Other income includes some book sales and a small amount of bar takings from the AGM, added to which, with the ever-increasing Bank of England Base rate, interest income from the Deposit Account actually reached double figures.

Expenditure

Total expenditure for the year was £5,603, down £2,560 on 2021. The one-off costs for the previous financial year included the website rebuild and employing the services of a Planning Consultant – this year no such one-off charges were incurred.

Other 'like-for-like' costs are 5% down on 2021 albeit with an increase in Meeting costs due to all monthly meetings taking place at the Peace Memorial Hall in 2022 – rather than 'virtually', as they were for most of 2021.

Balance Sheet & Reserves

The Association remains in a very robust position, with in excess of £31,000 in accounts at Lloyds Bank; making us well placed to meet any potential expenditure that may be necessary in the future, in the execution of our responsibilities to the Village.

Not included with our 2022 accounts is a bank account balance of £735 for the maintenance and upkeep of the Ashted War Memorial outside St. George's Church in Barnett Wood Lane.

From myself and on behalf of my fellow Committee Members, our grateful thanks to the Road Stewards for their invaluable work distributing our various publications and collecting the annual subs plus promoting the Association generally.

Finally, I wish to thank our Membership Secretary, Tony Mansell for his help and valued input in maintaining our membership records and assisting in the compilation of this year's Financial Statement and thank you to Tim Tennent for his time as Examiner of the Accounts.

Martin Cox

February 2023

ASHTEAD RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Draft Financial Statement for the year ending 31st December 2022

NB – The final approved Financial Statement will be available at the AGM on 26th April 2023.

	<u>£</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>£</u>
<u>INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT</u>					
<u>Income</u>					
Subscription & Donations	6,191			6,369	
Interest	2			12	
Miscellaneous Receipts	111	6,304		69	6,450
<u>Expenditure</u>					
Communications					
"Ashtead Village News" & "The Ashtead Resident"	3,056			3,157	
Website,PC,IT	1,793			275	
Meeting Expenses	392			656	
Insurance	1,066			731	
Membership Administration	566			386	
General Administration	63			102	
Consultants Fees	720			-	
Gifts & Donations	405			295	
Other Items	102	8,163			5,602
Profit / (Loss) for the Year		(1,859)			848
 <u>BALANCE SHEET</u>					
<u>General Fund</u>					
Balance brought forward		32,049			30,190
Surplus (Loss)for the Year		(1,859)			848
Total Net Funds at Year End		30,190			31,038
<u>Represented by</u>					
Bank Balances		30,190			31,038
Sundry Debtors/Creditors		-			-
Totals		30,190			31,038

At 31st Dec 2022 in addition to the funds held in the bank, the Hon. Treasurer holds a stock of second class postage stamps. There is also an account held for the Ashtead War Memorial Fund. This account at 31st December 2022 has a balance of £735.14 which amount is excluded from the figures above. . The above Financial Statements were approved by the Association's Standing Committee on the

Signed by XXXXXX on behalf of the Chairman

M. Cox Hon. Treasurer

I confirm that I have examined the above accounts, and that they accord with the vouchers, documents and information supplied to me.

Signed by T Tennent on the

A BRIGHT FUTURE FOR ASHTEAD PARK

Last autumn, I introduced a resident from my ward 'Ashtead Park' to Mole Valley's Parks Officer and we took a walk around the Park together to review overgrown areas and blocked views and assess what restoration work was needed. Ashtead Park, a Grade II listed historic park and garden, was strategically planted in the mid-1800s mainly as oak woodland; it now has some veteran oaks and notable large park trees but their majestic structures are hidden from view by a lot of secondary woodland which conceals them. As a pilot event, the Parks Officer offered to set a date to see if we could rustle up some volunteers from Ashtead to gauge local support for the Park and I set about telling everyone who'd listen about the first date and dropping leaflets through letterboxes with the details.

The first day there was an amazingly large turnout of volunteers! We all had a great time chopping and cutting and making new acquaintances while having a purposeful day working in the outdoors. It was great fun! Already, I've received grateful thanks from the resident that made that initial walk around, noticing that things are changing. We've had three volunteer days so far however chopping, etc. must now stop because of the nesting season, but volunteer days are planned to resume in September/October with renewed vigour. ARA has been very supportive and will be broadcasting the future dates, so keep an eye out! We like to think that we're bringing the vision of the original planter back to life.

Over the Spring/Summer, the Parks Officer will create a Masterplan and distribute it to all users and interested parties for comment. All inputs will be welcome!

Other environmental news is that at the Full Council meeting on 22nd February, the Administration proposed a motion to clean up the River Mole by enlisting the support of DEFRA, which is the statutory water authority and the source of grant funding for the work. This support will precipitate monitoring water quality this year and provide the gravitas to engage with all those who contribute to contamination/pollution - all the way back to the source of the Mole, which rises around Gatwick. As an 'independent' Councillor, I am free to vote on what I think is best for Ashtead rather than adhering to a party whip, and, on this occasion, I voted with the Administration in favour of cleaning up the river.

Due to a Boundary Commission Review, all Mole Valley ward boundaries have been redrawn leading to an all-out election in May of the district's 39 Councillors representing 13 wards. The ward changes have resulted in Ashtead being reduced to two wards of three Councillors each from the three wards hitherto known as Park (2), Village (3) and Common (2) with a total of 7 Councillors. There is a detailed article in the spring issue of Ashtead Village News explaining what has happened but in the forthcoming elections, you will be asked to vote to elect all three of the Councillors representing your ward. It's an exciting year, and whichever way you vote, please enjoy the process - our freedom to debate, argue and elect our representatives is so precious!

David J Harper

Ashtead Park Ward.

ASHTEAD RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

President: Mr Simon Ling

Vice Presidents: Mrs Janet Marsh and Mr Larry Unthank

STANDING COMMITTEE

Chairman : Vacant

Hon. Secretary: David Knoyle, 6 Beechcroft, KT21 2TY 273771

Hon. Treasurer: Martin Cox, 10 Paddocks Way, KT21 2QZ 279682

David Baker, Brookside, Ashtead Woods Road, KT21 2EQ 276158

Roger Bennett, 5 Woodlands Way, KT21 1LH 274925

Lynda Coburn, Willow Brae, Grange Road, KT22 7JU 07779 865562

Tony Mansell, Cashio Berry, Ashtead Woods Road, KT21 2EQ 877438

Glynis Peterkin, 2 Kelmscott Place, KT21 2HD 270138

Tim Robertson, 4 Orchard Drive, KT21 2PD 07980 813682

Peter Ross 07709 885280

Peter Shrubsole, 40 Summerfield, KT21 2LF 270460

Peter Stanyard, Moonfleet, Farm Lane, KT21 1LW 07785 243988

Janet Webber, Kerria, Highfields, KT21 2NL 278221

Hon Membership Secretary: Tony Mansell 0300 030 9980

The views expressed by contributors to this magazine are not necessarily those of the Ashtead Residents' Association.

APPENDIX 1– PROPOSED NEW ARA CONSTITUTION

During 2022, an ARA sub-committee was set up to review and propose amendments to the ARA constitution. The current Constitution was last revised in 2021 and can be viewed on the ARA website . An explanation for all the proposed changes to the constitution is provided in Appendix 2. The proposed new constitution was agreed by the ARA standing committee at a meeting held on 9th January 2023 by ten votes to one with one abstention. Please note that Annex A referred to in paragraph 6 has not been printed in these pages but can be read on the ARA web site. The proposed new constitution, which will be decided upon at the AGM on 26th April 2023, is as follows:

1. NAME

The name of the Association shall be "Ashtead Residents' Association" also referred to as "ARA".

2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Association shall be:

- a. to preserve the existing and historic village character of Ashtead;
- b. to improve the amenities of the area for the general benefit of the residents of Ashtead;
- c. to seek to ensure that the income raised, and the expenditure incurred by the District and County Councils is relevant to the needs and best interests of Ashtead residents;
- d. to foster and encourage community life and organisations in Ashtead.
- e. *Removed*

3. MEMBERSHIP

- a. Each residential address in Ashtead shall be eligible to become a member of the Residents' Association and membership shall be by household with a minimum of one subscription being paid by a representative of the household.
- b. Membership indicates endorsement of the Aims and Objectives of the Association and support for the Committee elected by members to achieve them on behalf of the community, including through interaction with statutory and formal bodies providing services to the community.
- c. *Removed*

4. MANAGEMENT

In order to assist in achieving the above-mentioned objectives, the Association shall, subject to the ensuing rules, elect a Committee who shall:

- a. maintain a careful watch upon all matters affecting the district, particularly those concerning planning and development;
- b. seek and make known to the appropriate authorities or persons the views of members concerning any proposed or actual alterations to the amenities and general character of the neighbourhood;
- c. in all matters, and always, act solely in the interests of the residents of Ashtead;
- d. support by considered suggestion, constructive criticism and where appropriate communication with council officers and third parties (statutory or formal bodies), the efforts of all elected Ashtead councillors and hold them to account in pursuit of the interests of Ashtead residents;
- e. keep residents informed of relevant matters through:
 - (i) the Association's website, social media, notices, circulars and meetings, and by publishing from time to time a newsletter known as Ashtead Village News;
 - (ii) publication of the minutes of the Committee's monthly meetings on the Association's website;
 - (iii) annual publication of the Association's formal record of proceedings through The Ashtead Resident;
- f. ensure that financial and membership records are kept;
- g. act in combination with, or affiliate with such other organisations as may be considered appropriate.

5. **Removed**

6. **THE COMMITTEE**

- a. The management of the Association shall be undertaken by the Committee, all members of which shall be members of the Association. One third of the members of the Committee (except the Chair) shall resign in rotation each year (including the Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer) but shall be eligible for re-election. The Committee shall consist of a Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer and Secretary, together with not more than twelve other members of the Association.
- b. The Chair shall serve for a period of three years and can be re-elected for a further three-year term. The Chair is not permitted to serve more than two three-year terms of office.
- c. In the absence of a Chair the ARA Committee will decide how to conduct its business.
- d. The election of members of the Committee and officers shall take place at the Annual General Meeting or (if the Committee deems it necessary) at a Special General Meeting. Nominations for membership of the Committee and officers shall reach the Secretary at least seven days before the meeting. The proposer and seconder of ARA officers and Committee members shall be members of the ARA but not members of the ARA Committee.
- e. All members of the committee shall complete the Declaration of Interests document to be found at Annex A and the Committee shall publish all such documents upon the ARA website. All committee members shall update their declaration of interests as and when their interests change in any material way.

In the event that a member of the committee has a personal or business interest in any matter under consideration by the committee they shall declare it, the secretary shall minute their declaration, and the member shall recuse themselves from any participation in that matter.

7. The Association may nominate one or more persons for election to the offices of President or Vice-President.

The President:

- a. shall be a member of the Association;
- b. may advise the Chair and Committee members on Association-related matters;
- c. may attend, but not vote at, Committee meetings;
- d. shall be elected for a three-year term at a general meeting, and be eligible for a further 3-year term, if nominated by the Committee. Such nomination shall not prevent the Committee from nominating other candidates.
- e. No president shall serve for more than two terms.

Vice-President(s):

- a. shall number no more than four;
- b. shall have the same conditions relating to their nomination and role as the President.

8. The Committee shall have power to co-opt up to four members from the Association and any such person thus co-opted shall serve only until the next Annual General Meeting. Co-opted members shall not be included in those retiring by rotation as mentioned in Rule 6.

9. No person who is a member or co-opted member or official of the District Council or the County Council shall be a President or Vice President or hold office in the Association or be a member of the Committee but such persons shall be eligible for ordinary membership of the Association, subject to the provisions of Rule 3, and may attend Committee meetings, if invited, but shall not vote thereat.

10. The Committee shall meet once a month or as it otherwise resolves. Five shall form a quorum. It shall have the power to require any officer of the Association to produce for its inspection all or any books, papers, accounts and other property belonging to the Association in his or her custody or control and in the case of failure to do so the Committee shall have power to take such action as seems appropriate.

11. If any members of the Committee has, in the opinion of the Committee, absented himself or herself without good reason from six consecutive Committee meetings, the Committee may declare such person's seat vacant.

12. **FINANCE AND ACCOUNTS**

The minimum annual subscription, due on 1st January each year, shall be such sum or sums as may be decided at any General Meeting of the Association. If any member's subscription remains unpaid after 30th September, after having been duly requested, the Committee shall be at liberty to remove the member's name from the membership register. Persons joining the Association on or after 1st October in any year shall be entitled to treat their subscription as covering the current and subsequent year.

13. In addition to paying the normal operating expenses of the Association, the Treasurer shall make such other payments as the Committee may direct.

14. The accounts of the Association shall be closed on the last day of December each year and shall then be examined by an independent examiner elected at the previous Annual General Meeting. The examined accounts shall be presented for adoption at the next Annual General Meeting, together with the Secretary's and Treasurer's reports.

15. **GENERAL MEETINGS**

The Annual General Meeting, at which the formal business of the Association shall be conducted, shall be held before the end of April in each year at such place and time as may be decided by the Committee.

Should extraordinary circumstances prevent it being held before the end of April, the Committee, deciding by majority vote, may postpone or cancel the AGM providing that:

- a. as much notice as possible is given by posting notices on the Association's boards, on its website and through social media;
- b. the Chairman's Report and Annual Accounts are published on the Association's website; and
- c. Officers remain in post until elections can be held at the rescheduled AGM or at the next ordinary meeting of the Association, whichever is the earlier.

At least one other ordinary general meeting of the Association shall be held, but extra meetings may be held if the Committee deems it necessary. At least twenty-eight days' notice shall be given of all ordinary meetings.

16. The business to be transacted at any ordinary General Meeting shall be in accordance with the agenda which shall be published with notice of the meeting as provided in Rule 15. Unless urgency is claimed and the Chair of the meeting for the time being agrees that urgency exists, no motion shall be considered at any ordinary General Meeting unless notice of it has been received by the Secretary in writing at least fourteen days before that meeting; the decision of the Chair of the meeting as to whether a matter is urgent shall be final. Motions arising directly from the agenda of the District Council, which are under discussion at any meeting of the Association, shall be excepted from the operation of this Rule.

17. ***Removed***

18. A Special General Meeting may be called at any time by the Committee, or shall be called by the Secretary upon receipt of a requisition signed by not less than one per cent of the members registered at 31st December immediately preceding, stating the object for which the meeting is to be convened. At least fourteen days' notice shall be given to members of such meetings. The notice shall state the object of the meeting and no other business shall be transacted thereat. The meeting shall be held within a reasonable time from the date of receipt of the requisition by the Secretary.

19. The chair of any general meeting may invite an officer or a member of the Committee, as deemed appropriate, to respond to questions asked by members present concerning the current business of the Association.

20. The Chair of any General Meeting shall take due account of the views expressed by members present, and shall decide when any agenda item or any part thereof has received sufficient discussion, and when any vote shall be taken. Voting at General Meetings shall be by show of hands and the Chair's decision shall be final.

21. The introduction or discussion of any issue, which is not related to the objects of the Association shall be prohibited at any meeting of the Association or the Committee.

22. DISSOLUTION

The winding up of the Association shall be agreed only at a Special General Meeting called under Rule 18; at least ten per cent of the members registered at 31st December immediately preceding must be present, and the motion must be agreed by the votes of not less than two thirds of those members present. The meeting shall appoint one or more persons to conduct the winding up of the Association's affairs and after all liabilities of the Association have been met, any remaining assets of the Association shall be disposed of as agreed at the meeting or any subsequent similar meeting. The decisions taken shall be binding on all members.

23. ALTERATIONS TO THE RULES

Amendments to these Rules shall be made only at an Annual General Meeting or Special General Meeting. Notice of any proposed amendment must reach the Secretary at least fourteen days before such meeting and at least seven days' notice of the proposed amendment shall be given to all members. Any such amendment must be carried by not less than two thirds of the members present and voting and shall then become immediately effective, unless otherwise stated in the resolution.

24. Where a Rule requires notice to be given to members, the Rule shall be deemed to have been complied with if notice has been published on the Association's website and within associated Newsletters.

25. In the event of a dispute, the Chair's interpretation of any of the foregoing Rules shall be final and binding.

APPENDIX 2 - ARA CONSTITUTION, PROPOSED AMENDMENTS 2023

1. INTRODUCTION

In the best interests of all Ashtead residents and to be equally fair to all councillors the ARA Committee has decided to update the Constitution.

The Ashtead Residents' Association "ARA", driven by the revised constitution, will remain committed to working with all Councillors, the community and third parties for the benefit of Ashtead and its residents.

The proposed amendments to the ARA constitution fall into two categories:

1. ARA's political neutrality and the Association's relationship with candidates standing independent of national political parties for election to our District and County Councils. A total of four paragraphs have been amended as shown in Table 1.
2. Changes to management and administrative clauses. A total of sixteen paragraphs have been amended as shown in Table 2.

2. RATIONALE FOR POLITICAL NEUTRALITY

1. ARA works on behalf of all Ashtead residents irrespective of how residents voted in local elections; the representations the Committee makes on planning, highways, railways and other local issues must be seen to be without any political bias and based only on what it believes is best for Ashtead.
2. ARA should not influence the democratic process of electing Councillors; this is a decision for the residents. The ARA could not be said to be politically neutral (or perceived to be so) if it selects or endorses candidates for election.
3. For the benefit of Ashtead, ARA needs to have effective working relationships with all Councillors irrespective of their affiliation to a political party or status as an independent. Would an elected councillor be prepared to work with ARA if it had endorsed/supported another (defeated) candidate?
4. The current constitution requires ARA to support independent candidates in their election effort. What is the Association to do if an independent candidate stands against an Ashtead Independents "AI" candidate?
5. There is a perception by some non-members that ARA exists to ensure that non-AI candidates are not elected, thus they will not join the Association and doubt the bona fides of the Association in its work. This has resulted in amendments to the paragraphs detailed in table 1 below.

3 POLITICAL NEUTRALITY AMENDMENTS

TABLE 1

Clause	Current wording	Proposed amendment
2e	to have no affiliation with any national political party and remain independent of national party ties.	The sub-paragraph has been deleted.
4c	have no affiliation with any national political party but support and encourage individuals who are prepared to stand as candidates for the District Council and the Surrey County Council, who agree to be independent of national political party ties	in all matters, and always, act solely in the interests of the residents of Ashtead;
4d	continue to support by considered suggestion and constructive criticism the efforts of elected independent councillors without prejudice to their independence of the Association	support by considered suggestion, constructive criticism and where appropriate communication with council officers and third parties (statutory or formal bodies), the efforts of all elected Ashtead councillors and hold them to account in pursuit of the interests of Ashtead residents;
5	Nothing in these Rules shall permit the use of the Association's funds in providing financial support to candidates for election or to councillors.	This paragraph has been deleted.
17	Applicants proposed by the Committee for support by the Association at a Council election or by-election shall normally be presented to the members at an ordinary general meeting of the Association. Where the election or by-election is arranged giving in the opinion of the Committee insufficient time before nomination day for the applicant to be presented, or the applicant is unable to attend the ordinary general meeting, the Committee shall have discretion to accord to the applicant the Association's full support at that election or by-election.	This paragraph has been deleted.

4 MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION AMENDMENTS

TABLE 2

Clause	Current wording	Proposed amendment	Explanation for change
1	The name of the Association shall be "Ashtead Residents' Association".	The name of the Association shall be "Ashtead Residents' Association" also referred to as "ARA".	Minor - style
2a	to preserve the existing village character of Ashtead	to preserve the existing and historic village character of Ashtead;	Minor – style
2c	to seek to ensure that the income raised by and the expenditure incurred by the District Council and/or the Surrey County Council is relevant to the needs and generally serves the best interests of the residents Ashtead	to seek to ensure that the income raised, and the expenditure incurred by the District and County Councils is relevant to the needs and best interests of Ashtead residents;	Minor - style
2d	to organise such activities and events as would appear to the Committee to be the general wish of members.	to foster and encourage community life and organisations in Ashtead.	Minor - style
3	Any person whose name is currently on the Register of Electors for Ashtead or any other resident of Ashtead aged 18 years or over may, on payment of the appropriate annual subscription, become an ordinary member. Upon a recommendation of the Committee, honorary membership of the Association may be granted to any other person by decision of the ordinary members in general meeting, but such honorary membership shall not include entitlement to vote at general meetings or eligibility for Committee membership.	<p>a. Each residential address in Ashtead shall be eligible to become a member of the Residents' Association and membership shall be by household with a minimum of one subscription being paid by a representative of the household.</p> <p>b. Membership indicates endorsement of the Aims and Objectives of the Association and support for the Committee elected by members to achieve them on behalf of the community, including through interaction with statutory and formal bodies providing services to the community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amended for clarification. • Reference to honorary membership removed as it is unclear when this might need to be invoked.
4e	keep members generally informed of relevant matters by means of meetings, notices or circulars and by publishing from time to time a magazine to be known as <i>The Ashtead Resident</i>	<p>keep residents informed of relevant matters through:</p> <p>(i) the Association's website, social media, notices, circulars and meetings, and by publishing from time to time a newsletter known as Ashtead Village News;</p> <p>(ii) publication of the minutes of the Committee's monthly meetings on the Association's website;</p> <p>(iii) annual publication of the Association's formal record of proceedings through The Ashtead Resident;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Style changes made to theme communication methods. • Improved accountability and transparency through publication of ARA Committee meeting minutes.

4f	ensure that satisfactory financial and membership records are kept;	ensure that financial and membership records are kept;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minor - style. Removed 'satisfactory', the word was unnecessary.
4g	act in combination with or affiliate to other organisations as may be considered appropriate.	act in combination with, or affiliate with such other organisations as may be considered appropriate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minor style amendment to the sentence.
6	<p>The general management of the affairs of the Association shall be vested in the Committee, which shall consist of a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Honorary Treasurer and Honorary Secretary, together with not more than twelve other members of the Association. These officers and in rotation one third but not more than one third of the other members of the Committee shall retire every year but shall be eligible for re-election. The election of officers and Committee members shall take place at the Annual General Meeting and nominations, signed by the proposer and second, shall be sent in writing to the Honorary Secretary to reach him at least seven days before the meeting.</p>	<p>a. The management of the Association shall be undertaken by the Committee, all members of which shall be members of the Association. One third of the members of the Committee (except the Chair) shall resign in rotation each year (including the Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer) but shall be eligible for re-election. The Committee shall consist of a Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer and Secretary, together with not more than twelve other members of the Association.</p> <p>b. The Chair shall serve for a period of three years and can be re-elected for a further three-year term. The Chair is not permitted to serve more than two three-year terms of office.</p> <p>c. In the absence of a Chair the ARA Committee will decide how to conduct its business.</p> <p>d. The election of members of the Committee and officers shall take place at the Annual General Meeting or (if the Committee deems it necessary) at a Special General Meeting. Nominations for membership of the Committee and officers shall reach the Secretary at least seven days before the meeting. The proposer and second of ARA officers and Committee members shall be members of the ARA but not members of the ARA Committee.</p> <p>e. All members of the committee shall complete the Declaration of Interests document to be found at Annex A and the Committee shall publish all such documents upon the ARA website.</p> <p>All committee members shall update their declaration of interests as and when their interests change in any material way.</p> <p>In the event that a member of the committee has a personal or business interest in any matter under consideration by the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-structured the paragraph for style. Added the requirement, of ARA Committee Members to complete a 'Members interests' form (see Annex A of the draft Constitution) Added a tenure for the Chair. It was deemed an appropriate measure to ensure that the ARA evolves through new leadership. Longer than six years was deemed potentially unhealthy. Added requirement for ARA Committee members to be proposed and seconded by non-Committee ARA members.

7	<p>A President and up to four Vice-Presidents who shall be members or honorary members may also be elected at an Annual General Meeting but they shall be subject to re-election every third year. They may attend Committee Meetings, if invited, but shall not vote thereat. From their number the Committee may select one to preside at general meetings of the Association. Nominations shall be put forward as provided in Rule 6.</p>	<p>committee they shall declare it, the secretary shall minute their declaration, and the member shall recuse themselves from any participation in that matter.</p> <p>The Association may nominate one or more persons for election to the offices of President or Vice-President.</p> <p>The President:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> shall be a member of the Association; may advise the Chair and Committee members on Association-related matters; may attend, but not vote at, Committee meetings; shall be elected for a three-year term at a general meeting, and be eligible for a further 3-year term, if nominated by the Committee. Such nomination shall not prevent the Committee from nominating other candidates. No president shall serve for more than two terms. <p>Vice-President(s):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> shall number no more than four; shall have the same conditions relating to their nomination and role as the President. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reference to honorary membership removed as it is unclear when this might need to be invoked. Minor style changes for presentational purposes. Added specific reference to the role of the President. Added a tenure for the President/Vice President. It was deemed an appropriate measure to ensure that the ARA evolves through new over-sight.
10/11 13, 14 and 18		<p>Very minor changes to grammar/style.</p> <p>The three paragraphs have only one amendment, the removal of the word 'honorary'.</p>	<p>Minor - style</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minor – presentational The word Honorary has been removed
19	<p>The President or a Vice President being chairman of any general meeting may invite the Chairman of the Association, an officer or a member of the Committee, as deemed appropriate, to respond to questions asked by members present concerning the current business of the Association.</p>	<p>The chair of any general meeting may invite an officer or a member of the Committee, as deemed appropriate, to respond to questions asked by members present concerning the current business of the Association.</p>	<p>Minor change removing reference to individuals and replace with the noun 'Chair'</p>
20		<p>Presentational change only: References to 'Chairman' replaced with 'Chair'.</p>	<p>Minor-style</p>

23	<p>Amendments to these Rules shall be made only at an Annual General Meeting. Notice of any proposed amendment must reach the Honorary Secretary at least fourteen days before such meeting and at least seven days' notice of the proposed amendment shall be given to all members. Any such amendment must be carried by not less than two thirds of the members present and voting and shall then become immediately effective, unless otherwise stated in the resolution.</p>	<p>Amendments to these Rules shall be made only at an Annual General Meeting or Special General Meeting. Notice of any proposed amendment must reach the Secretary at least fourteen days before such meeting and at least seven days' notice of the proposed amendment shall be given to all members. Any such amendment must be carried by not less than two thirds of the members present and voting and shall then become immediately effective, unless otherwise stated in the resolution.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The word Honorary has been removed 'Special General Meeting' added to enable changes to be made without having to wait until the AGM.
24	<p>Where a Rule requires notice to be given to members, the Rule shall be deemed to have been complied with if notice has been published in the local Press or the Association's magazine, <i>The Ashtead Resident</i>.</p>	<p>Where a Rule requires notice to be given to members, the Rule shall be deemed to have been complied with if notice has been published on the Association's website and within associated Newsletters.</p>	<p>Minor – style change made to reflect new communication methods and widen the scope of potential outlets.</p>
25	<p>In the event of a dispute, the Chairman's interpretation of any of the foregoing Rules shall be final and binding.</p>	<p>In the event of a dispute, the Chair's interpretation of any of the foregoing Rules shall be final and binding.</p>	<p>Minor – style 'Chairman's' replaced by 'Chair's'</p>