

11 Pinecote Drive
Sunningdale
SL5 9PS

September 2021



SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF ASCOT AND ENNS

Dear Member

I am pleased to invite you to SPAE's 50th Annual General Meeting. It is taking place at:

7.30pm on 7th October in the Bandstand Restaurant of Ascot Racecourse

Light refreshments will be available from 6.45 pm.

You will be aware that the 2019-20 AGM did not take place in May last year because of the pandemic. We plan to cover the AGMs for 2019-20 and 2020-2021 at the same time.

You will find here the following:

1. Executive Committee Report 2019-2021
2. Agenda for the SPAE 50th AGM
3. Statements of Financial Activities - 2020-21 DRAFT and 2019-20 DRAFT
4. Minutes of the 48th Annual General Meeting

Reflecting on the AGM in 2019, *"the general theme was that the subscription level was far too low"* [and] *"the meeting agreed that rates should be increased"* (draft minutes extract). We are therefore proposing changes to the constitution to allow this. These proposed changes were circulated to members by post and email in March this year and the amended extracts are included later. Our proposal for subscriptions for existing and new memberships is as follows:

Annual membership: £24 per annum Lifetime membership: £240

Annual subscriptions will no longer be fixed at the point of joining.

This we believe represents excellent value and we trust it will be acceptable.

We are also proposing that all future communication with members should be by electronic means, unless in exceptional circumstances. Those for whom we do not have email addresses are being notified about this by post with this invitation. This proposal is an agenda item.

Your committee believes strongly these are measures necessary to ensure we can manage the necessary costs we are incurring and shall enable us to move with the times to improve communication with our membership.

This year we would like to encourage you to welcome any friends and family who wish to attend the AGM with you. Please just let us know how many would like to attend (email chairman@spae.org).

I do hope you will be able to join us at the AGM.

Yours sincerely,
Patrick Griffin, Chairman

Executive Committee Report 2019-2021

Ascot & Environs

1 Planning Applications by Type and by Parish area

Between April 2019 and March 2021, there have been 1,284 planning applications that were determined. Of these, 576 (45%) were “FULL”, i.e., building and property development, and 290 (23%) were for works to trees. The remainder were for applications such as discharges of planning conditions, certificates of lawfulness, and variations to permitted applications.

Of the total number of applications, Sunningdale accounted for 330 (26%), Sunninghill & Ascot 681 (53%) and Winkfield 273 (21%).

2 Planning Applications

There were 576 FULL applications across the three parish areas determined in the two years. Of these, 436 (76%) were permitted with the balance being refused or withdrawn.

In Sunningdale, Sunninghill & Ascot, and Winkfield, there were, respectively, 72%, 72% and 87% of development applications permitted.

Full Applications - April 2019-March 2021								
Decisions	Sunningdale		Sunninghill & Ascot		Winkfield		Total	
Permissions	104	72%	218	72%	114	87%	436	76%
Refusals	27	19%	51	17%	12	9%	90	16%
Withdrawals	13	9%	32	11%	5	4%	50	9%
Total	144		301		131		576	

A greater proportion of applications have been refused or withdrawn in the Royal Borough and an explanation is the Ascot, Sunninghill and Sunningdale Neighbourhood Plan. This Plan adopted in 2014 provides added protection through rigorous policies tailored to the neighbourhood. Winkfield has yet to produce a Neighbourhood Plan for examination.

3 SPAE Performance in Objecting to Planning Applications

SPAE has objected to 98 planning applications where 56 (57%) have been refused or withdrawn, with the balance of 42 (43%) having been permitted.

Planning Application Objections - SPAE Performance				
Decisions	Sunningdale	Sunninghill & Ascot	Winkfield	Total
Permissions	12	21	9	42
Refusals	13	18	4	35
Withdrawals	6	14	1	21
Total	31	53	14	98
	61%	60%	36%	57%

The analysis does not include applications that were commented on (there were 24) and those that were supported (there were 3).

4 Appeals about Council Planning Decisions

Where applications have been refused, applicants have the right of appeal to the Government Planning Inspectorate. Often, these appeals are about proposals that we believe would do the most harm to the character of our area. Whilst good performance by councils on defending decisions made can act as a deterrent for developers, such applicants do have financial resources behind them to pursue these appeals.

Between April 2019 and March 2021, there have been 34 appeals determined about applications for development. Of these, 25 (74%) have been dismissed.

Inspectorate Decisions about Appeals on Full Applications - April 2019-March 2021								
Decisions	Sunningdale		Sunninghill & Ascot		Winkfield		Total	
Allowed	2	20%	5	29%	2	29%	9	26%
Dismissals	8	80%	12	71%	5	71%	25	74%
Total	10		17		7		34	

5 SPAE Performance on Planning Applications Appealed

SPAE has objected to 19 of these planning applications that have been appealed and then determined in this period. Remarkably, 18 (95%) have been dismissed.

Appeal Objections - SPAE Performance				
Decisions	Sunningdale	Sunninghill & Ascot	Winkfield	Total
Allowed	0	1	0	1
Dismissals	7	9	2	18
Total	7	10	2	19
	100%	90%	100%	95%

Protecting the character of our area is challenging particularly with Government planning policy where there is a presumption on favour of sustainable development. However, this is why SPAE exists.

We need a large number of residents to be members so that we can respond credibly at appeals and enquiries. In summary, SPAE can take credit for its performance in challenging applications appealed that are deemed to be inappropriate and a threat to the character of our area.

Sunningdale

Over half of development applications determined have been for domestic extensions and conversions. About a quarter have been for outbuildings / external structures, with the remainder being for demolition and rebuilding of dwellings, and new housing developments. The replacement dwellings have in the main been one-for-one replacements.

As an example, a Council decision to refuse an application to build a house in the back garden of a site in Sunningdale was appealed. SPAE had opposed the development on the grounds of (i) the character and appearance of the area, (ii) protected trees and (iii) the living conditions of neighbouring occupiers. The inspector has dismissed the appeal.

Sunninghill & Ascot

Over half of development applications determined have been for domestic extensions and conversions. About a fifth have been for outbuildings / external structures, with the remainder being for demolition and rebuilding of dwellings, and new housing developments. Interestingly, there were a handful for changes of use from commercial to residential which is an increasing and concerning trend and the loss of employment resulting.

For instance, a Council decision to refuse an application to build a storage shed of considerable size in the front garden very close to the highway of a house in south Ascot was appealed. SPAE had opposed the development on the grounds of (i) the character and appearance of the area and (ii) protected trees on the site. The inspector has dismissed the appeal.

And a Council decision to refuse an application to replace a dwelling in south Ascot village with four flats was appealed. SPAE had opposed the development on the grounds of (i) the character and appearance of the area and (ii) scale and bulk and (iii) harm to neighbour amenity. The inspector has dismissed the appeal.

Winkfield

Four-fifths of development applications determined were for domestic extensions and conversions, with the balance being for new housing developments and outbuildings / external structures.

By way of example, a decision by the Council to refuse an application in north Ascot for a substantial series of extensions that would have involved part two storey, part single storey side and rear extension, single storey front extension was appealed. SPAE had opposed the development on the grounds of (i) scale and bulk, (ii) inadequate parking provision, and (iii) invasion of the privacy of neighbours. The inspector has dismissed the appeal.

The 50th Annual General Meeting

7.30pm on 7th October 2021

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of 48th AGM - circulated to members in March and September 2021
3. Matters arising from the Minutes
4. Chairman's Report
5. Treasurer's Report
 - A. Statement of Financial Activities (2019-20) - circulated to members in March 2021
 - B. Statement of Financial Activities (2020-21)
6. Membership Report
7. Amendments to Clauses 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 of the Constitution - circulated to members in March 2021 for consideration.
8. Subscriptions shall be £240 for lifetime memberships and £24 per annum for annual memberships
9. Committee communication with the membership shall be by electronic mail, unless in exceptional circumstances
10. Election of Officers: the following have been nominated and are willing to serve:

President	Christina Hill Williams DL
Chairman	Patrick Griffin
Vice-Chairman	Peter Lynam
General Secretary	Keith Cameron
Treasurer	James Morley
Membership Secretary	Sarah Fenton
Planning Secretary	Vacant
11. Election of Executive Committee: the following have been nominated and are willing to serve:

Emma Litwin, Andy Clifton

Nominations for Officers and Executive Committee members should be received by the Chairman by 24th September.

12. Any other business

Statement of Financial Activities – 2020-21 – D-R-A-F-T

	2021	2,020
Income		
Subscriptions	£1,175.00	£1,200.00
Donations	£665.00	£455.00
Witan - Dividends & Interest	£675.09	£319.02
NS Bank Interest	£56.80	£85.18
Bank Account Interest	£1.03	£5.56
	£2,572.92	£2,064.76
Expenditure		
Printing & Stationery	£175.68	£0.00
Postage & Telephone	£105.60	£25.00
AGM Expenses	£276.91	£908.64
Hire of Halls		£97.50
Design Award		£0.00
Subscriptions & Donations	£486.00	£335.00
Accountant's Fee	£120.00	£120.00
IT & Office Equipment	£575.13	£2,406.00
Sundries - Petrol / Travel	£11.40	£45.00
Fund Management		£0.61
Operating Expenditure	£1,750.72	£3,937.75
RBWM Borough Plan	£650.00	£1,000.00
Consultancy re RBWM Planning Panel Conduct		£0.00
Total expenditure	£2,400.72	£4,937.75
(Deficit) / Surplus of Income over Expenditure	£172.20	-£2,872.99
New Life Memberships	£150.00	£300.00
Increase / (Decrease) in Market Value of Investments in Year	£5,929.49	-£4,013.72
Accumulated Funds brought forward	£28,010.46	£34,597.17
Accumulated Funds carried forward	£34,262.15	£28,010.46
Represented by:-		
Investment with NS Bank	£7,945.82	£7,889.02
Barclays Business Premium A/c	£2,235.15	£2,234.12
Barclays Community A/C	£2,521.87	£2,932.59
Witan Investment Trust plc shares at market value & uninvested cash	£21,559.31	£14,954.73
	£34,262.15	£28,010.46

Patrick Griffin

Chairman

James Morley

Treasurer

ACCOUNTANT'S REPORT We have examined the accounts of the Society for the year ended 31st March 2021 in conjunction with the books, records, and information supplied to us by the Treasurer and confirm that they are in accordance therewith.

Porter Garland Chartered Accountants
Communication House, Victoria Avenue, Camberley, Surrey

April 2021

Statement of Financial Activities – 2019-20 – D-R-A-F-T

	2,020	2019
Income		
Subscriptions	£1,200.00	£1,225.00
Donations	£455.00	£25.00
Witan - Dividends & Interest	£319.02	£420.58
NS Bank Interest	£85.18	£91.44
Bank Account Interest	£5.56	£2.99
	£2,064.76	£1,765.01
Expenditure		
Printing & Stationery	£0.00	£115.59
Postage & Telephone	£25.00	£92.80
AGM Expenses	£908.64	£811.50
Hire of Halls	£97.50	£273.00
Design Award	£0.00	£256.83
Subscriptions & Donations	£335.00	£311.00
Accountant's Fee	£120.00	£120.00
IT & Office Equipment	£2,406.00	£189.23
Sundries - Petrol / Travel	£45.00	£166.10
Fund Management	£0.61	£50.44
Operating Expenditure	£3,937.75	£2,386.49
RBWM Borough Plan	£1,000.00	£500.00
Consultancy re RBWM Planning Panel Conduct	£0.00	£500.00
	£4,937.75	£3,386.49
(Deficit) / Surplus of Income over Expenditure	-£2,872.99	-£1,621.48
New Life Memberships	£300.00	£250.00
Increase / (Decrease) in Market Value of Investments in Year	-£4,013.72	£274.06
Accumulated Funds brought forward	£34,597.17	£35,694.59
Accumulated Funds carried forward	£28,010.46	£34,597.17
Represented by:-		
Investment with NS Bank	£7,889.02	£10,803.84
Barclays Business Premium A/c	£2,234.12	£3,593.56
Barclays Community A/C	£2,932.59	£1,550.34
Witan Investment Trust plc shares at market value & uninvested cash	£14,954.73	£18,649.43
	£28,010.46	£34,597.17

Patrick Griffin

Chairman

James Morley

Treasurer

ACCOUNTANT'S REPORT We have examined the accounts of the Society for the year ended 31st March 2020 in conjunction with the books, records, and information supplied to us by the Treasurer and confirm that they are in accordance therewith.

Porter Garland Chartered Accountants

Communication House, Victoria Avenue, Camberley, Surrey

April 2020

Treasurer Report

Treasurer Report During the year to 31 March 2021, the Society's accumulated funds increased by £6,252 to £34,262 primarily because of the £5,929 recovery in the market value of the Society's holdings in Witan Investment Trust. As dividends from Witan are reinvested, they generate no free cash, other net outflows resulted in a slight reduction in our accounts with Barclays to £4,757, but as these are broadly in line with policy, no transfers were made from our deposits with NS bank.

There are four significant changes in income and expenditure to consider.

- i. The £2,200 IT development costs incurred last year were not repeated in the year.
- ii. As a result of the coronavirus pandemic, we were not able to hold the AGM in 2020 and consequently there has been a significant one-off reduction in those costs.
- iii. Contributions to the RBWM action group have reduced, and no further significant expenditure is anticipated.
- iv. The level of donations received has increased by some £220 to £665 but continuing at this level is not anticipated.

If the Witan dividends continue to be reinvested, the Society continues to face a slightly negative cashflow on an ongoing basis. In the short term this will be increased by the costs incurred in further upgrading the Society's web site and membership systems.

Membership Report

Our fully declared and paid-up SPAE memberships are currently 400, which translate into approximately 600 members through individual and dual memberships. These memberships, however, include additional members of local Resident Associations, who support SPAE through the membership of their individual chairs rather than as members in their own right. They are therefore anonymous to us as full members as we do not, and cannot without their permission, hold their addresses or any personal details.

This is a great disadvantage, and potentially a considerable loss of influence for SPAE – especially as we continue to be a driving force in the formulation of planning policy and the resolution of local difficulties. It is particularly disappointing that some residents who call on SPAE for help or advice are subsequently reluctant to join at what must be a surprisingly low subscription rate. We therefore urge members to encourage their friends who are not members to support the Society at this crucial time in the development of building policy. We also urge those who support SPAE anonymously through their respective RAs to join us in their own right. Support from our community is key and helps us to thrive as an organisation to ensure our Green Belt is protected and new developments in the area conform to planning policy so we can continue to enjoy the beautiful green space we are so lucky to have surrounding us. The greater our declared full membership figures, the greater will be our influence in the development of both local and national planning policies.

Proposed Constitution Amendments

3. Membership shall be open to all who are interested in actively furthering the purposes of the Society as contained herein. No member shall have power to vote at any meeting of the Society if his subscription is in arrears at the time. The types of membership shall be Lifetime and Annual where both provide for up to two names per subscription. The subscription for Lifetime membership will be payable on joining and the subscription for Annual membership will be payable on joining and thereafter annually.

4. Subscriptions for the ensuing year will be determined annually by the Executive Committee and submitted to members for ratification at the subsequent Annual General Meeting.

Membership shall lapse if:

- a) the subscription is unpaid three months after it is due;
- b) despite reasonable attempts to contact the member at his or her last stated address it has not been possible to do so;
- c) in the opinion of the Executive Committee a member shall conduct, or have conducted, himself or herself in a manner that is considered to be contrary to the purposes of the Society and its interests.

5. An Annual General Meeting shall be held in person or virtually in May or June of each year to receive the Executive Committee Report and independently examined Accounts and to elect Officers and Members of the Executive Committee. The Committee shall decide when Ordinary Meetings of the Society shall be held and shall give at least 21 days' notice of such meetings to all Members.

Special General Meetings of the Society shall be held in person or virtually at the written request of Members representing not less than ten per cent of the existing membership of the Society and whose subscriptions are fully paid up. Twenty Members personally present shall constitute a quorum.

Nominations for the election of officers and any other members of the Executive Committee shall be made at or before the Annual General Meeting. Such nominations shall be supported by a seconder and the consent of the proposed nominee must first have been obtained in writing together with an assurance in writing that the nominee has read the Constitution and supports the purposes of the Society as set out therein. If the nominations exceed the number of vacancies, a ballot shall take place at the Annual General Meeting in such manner as shall be determined. No individual may vote on a proposal for their own election.

6. The election of Officers shall be completed prior to the election of other members of the Executive Committee.

The Officers of the Society shall consist of:

Chairman : Vice-Chairman : Secretary : Treasurer

Planning Secretary : Membership Secretary.

All Officers and other members of the Executive Committee shall relinquish their office every year and shall be eligible for re-election at the Annual General Meeting of the Society. A President and Vice-President may also be elected at an Annual General Meeting of the Society, for periods to be decided at such a Meeting. The Executive Committee shall have the power to fill casual vacancies occurring among the Officers of the Society.

7. The Executive Committee shall be responsible for the management and administration of the Society and for this purpose it may exercise all the powers of the Society. The Executive Committee shall consist of the Officers and not more than six other Members of the Society. Officers and members of Executive committee shall not receive any remuneration but shall be paid their reasonable and proper expenses incurred wholly, exclusively and necessarily on the purposes of the Society. The Executive Committee shall have power to co-opt further Members (who shall attend in an advisory and non-voting capacity). The Officers and Members of the Committee shall normally be resident or work in the area of benefit but the Executive Committee shall have power to co-opt additional Members from outside the area of benefit. Decisions of the Executive Committee, or any Sub-Committee, shall be by simple majority. A member who has a personal interest in the proceedings shall not vote. The President and Vice-President may attend any meeting of the Executive Committee but shall not vote at any such meeting. In the event of equality in the votes cast the Chairman shall have a second or casting vote.

The Executive Committee shall meet not less than six times a year at intervals of not more than three months and the Secretary shall give all Members not less than seven days' notice of each meeting.

The quorum shall comprise a Chairman and six members of the Executive Committee. Members of the Executive Committee may appoint other persons to deputise for them at such Committee meetings; however, the persons so appointed shall not have the right to vote. In the event of the Chairman or Vice-Chairman not being present at a meeting of the Executive Committee, those Members of the Executive Committee who are present shall elect a Chairman from amongst themselves.

Minutes of the 48th Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting was held at 7.30pm on 22nd May 2019 in the Ascot Authority Box, Ascot Racecourse, with 55 attendees.

Chairman, Patrick Griffin, welcomed everybody to the meeting and noted that written apologies for absence had been received from 35 members. He asked the meeting to confirm the acceptability of the 2018 AGM draft Minutes and there were no matters arising which would not be dealt with in the meeting.

Beginning the **Chairman's Report**, Mr Griffin said that he would describe national and political changes since the last AGM which affected local planning, review progress on local plan developments and then update the meeting on major proposed developments in the area.

He pointed out that in the recent local elections, 1,300 Conservative councillors had lost their seats and had frequently been replaced by Independent councillors whose common theme was protection of their environment. This was largely because of potential incursion into the Green Belt and was a dominant and controversial issue with local plans in preparation currently.

Almost 10% of all Conservative losses in the 2019 local elections were next door in Surrey. In Windsor and Maidenhead, the ruling party was reduced from 95% of seats to 56%, close to "no overall control".

The National Planning Policy Framework was revised in July 2018 (further minor modifications in February 2019) with many changes introduced since its original publication in 2012. One such area was in calculating local housing need with a new standard methodology incorporating population growth forecasts and average wage to average cost of housing ratios for each local authority.

One further change is the housing delivery test where local authorities will be penalised for non-performance, even though councils don't actually build the homes. The National Audit Office produced a report earlier this year showing that council planning departments have suffered an average staff reduction of 15% while the number of planning applications has increased and have become more complex.

Turning to local issues, the Windsor and Maidenhead Local Plan was reviewed by an Inspector at a three-day hearing in June. SPAE had combined with 13 other local organisations to form the RBWM Residents Action Group which had retained a QC to represent its interests. The Inspector was subsequently critical in several areas including of the use of 2014 data to support housing allocations when 2016 material was available, and not taking due care and attention to the flood risk in selecting these sites. The hearing did not have time to review the full range of scheduled issues including water quality.

The Inspector has asked RBWM on separate occasions for revised submissions and this lengthened process has meant that RBWM has proposed there will be a further consultation

in autumn 2019 followed by the resumption of the examination in 2020. At the time of the AGM, no response had been received from the examiner to this request.

The Local Plan process for Bracknell Forest is simpler. Autumn 2019 is scheduled for consultation on plans for further growth. None of Bracknell Forest's proposals involves Green Belt (unlike RBWM where 85% of the land in the housing allocations is in the Green Belt). Examination is likely in Autumn 2020 with adoption the following Spring.

Meanwhile, there is little to report on the Ascot Consortium's proposals for Ascot Centre. Following several public consultations there were few significant changes and SPAE remains opposed to the plans on several grounds. What is now being proposed in increased housing, design and scale bears little comparison with the Vision in the Prince's Foundation study published in 2013.

The Gasholder site in Sunninghill has been approved for 53 houses and 23 apartments. SPAE supported this proposal with an attractive mix of housing types and 30% affordable, in what is a sustainable location close to Sunninghill High Street.

The Sunningdale Park development for 168 dwellings and 103 Care Village units has been agreed in principle although the affordable housing element is only 22% of the mix compared with RBWM's aspiration for 35% in the draft local plan. The Suitable Alternative Natural Space (SANG) public open space necessary to support the application approval provides for more than required for the development, but the developer is reluctant to fund the operational costs of maintaining the additional land.

For the Shorts Waste Transfer site in St George's Lane, SPAE has objected to the application for 131 dwellings on the basis of the narrow unadopted road (the only access to the development), the inadequacy of a traffic solution for the adjacent roundabout and the impact on biodiversity and the openness of the Green Belt. A major concern is the in-combination effect with proposals for Ascot Centre reported at the last AGM.

At Heatherwood Hospital, building will be finished by July 2020 and the fit-out by July 2021 when Frimley Trust will move in. Full planning applications for the dwellings to be built where the hospital is today will likely be submitted in 2020.

The pressure on SPAE had grown during the year with the number and complexity of planning applications.

Mr Morley then presented the **Treasurer's Report** and referred to the accounts contained in the meeting papers. He pointed out that for four of the last six years SPAE had operated at a loss and for the other two years the surplus was minimal. The solutions would be to increase income by attracting more members and / or cutting costs. Cost reduction would be difficult as expenditure on IT was overdue and social media presence was a need. The Accounts were accepted.

The **Amendment to Clause 15 of the Constitution** was described by Mr Griffin and the meeting confirmed acceptance of the amendment which reads: Any notice required to be

given by this Constitution shall be deemed duly given if sent either to the email address of that Member or to the postal address last notified.

The Chairman then dealt with the **Election of Officers** and the **Election of Executive Committee** and the meeting endorsed the listed nominees. Mr Griffin pointed out that there was no nominee for Planning Secretary Sunningdale and there was an urgent need for members to volunteer for active involvement, not only to cover Sunningdale but share in the substantial and increasing workload in Sunninghill & Ascot. He referred to application for membership forms left on each seat asking for members to each pass on to friends and family to encourage them to join SPAE. Also, on the seats were “declaration of interest” forms for members to complete should they be interested in assisting with the day-to-day running of the Society.

Once the formal proceedings of the AGM had been completed, the Chairman introduced a discussion on the future of SPAE. The backdrop was that the planning landscape was becoming more complex resulting in more effort being distributed between fewer committee members. This was exacerbated by three experienced committee members standing down and the difficulty of replacing them.

Members were asked for their ideas on how the membership could be expanded, thus increasing income, and how new blood could be introduced to the committee. A range of suggestions were made such as recruitment leaflets, publication in local magazines and harnessing what social media could offer.

The general theme was that the subscription level was far too low. It was pointed out that the subscription level was complicated by having life and annual memberships. Despite operational issues and different views on the correct subscription level for annual membership (from £10 to £25), the meeting agreed that rates should be increased. Mr Anderson proposed a motion, seconded by Ms Tombs, for the subscription for existing annual members to be increased to £10pa. This was agreed.

Donations and legacies however should be actively encouraged.

Subsequent note: As the proposed motion would require a change to the Constitution, the Committee will consider how best to proceed.

At the end of the discussion, Ms Chester reminded the meeting that the combination of increased income and increased member involvement would ensure SPAE’s success and that those who would come forward would receive a thorough induction into SPAE’s work, which has been very successful.

Following this debate, the Chairman thanked Margaret Morgan and Julia Chester, who are standing down from the committee, for their support. He then made a presentation to Peter Standley for the contribution he has made to the community in local planning for SPAE over nearly 20 years.