



Dear Member,

I am pleased to invite you to SPAE's 48th Annual General Meeting. It is taking place at:

7.30 pm on 22nd May in the Ascot Authority Box of Ascot Racecourse

Light refreshments will be available from 6.45 pm.

Accompanying this Newsletter are the Ascot & Environs Report, the formal Agenda for the AGM, the Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31st March 2019 and the draft Minutes of last year's AGM.

I would like to however focus first on two significant issues facing the Society being the increasing complexity of the planning environment and the recurring deficit in the Society's annual accounts.

As regards the planning environment, we are confronted with an increasing number of significant projects (e.g. the Local Plans for the Royal Borough and Bracknell Forest, and the rejuvenation of Ascot Centre), a rising number of variations to previously approved applications, which in many cases undermine some of the reasons for the original approval, and a number of smaller applications which are frequently inconsequential, but nevertheless require a disproportionate level of consideration. This workload currently falls on the three Planning Secretaries, but later this year Julia Chester will retire from the Committee and we currently do not have a replacement, so the load will fall even more heavily on the two continuing Planning Secretaries. We need to increase significantly the support to the Planning Secretaries if we are to continue to work in protecting our area from inappropriate developments that would otherwise harm its character. This can only be achieved by active participation from the membership, their friends, families and contacts joining or actively supporting the committee.

The recurring annual deficit is a concern as it can restrict the ability of the Society to achieve its objectives. This situation arises basically because our income, primarily coming from membership subscriptions, is static whilst costs increase from year to year. In the short term this can be mitigated by the strength of the Society's overall financial position, which gives us time to improve the position by increasing membership levels and wherever possible by reducing costs. The Committee believes that it is essential to make the Society's social media presence more dynamic and that doing so will lead to both increased membership levels and greater engagement with our communities. The enhancement to our digital presence will have a cost in the short term, but the Committee expects that this will be recovered over the longer term by increased membership.

On the question of reducing costs, the Committee has considered both the cost of the AGM itself and our methods of communicating with members. This review indicates that in future years we should look for a different style of AGM and we should seek to increase wherever possible the use of electronic forms of communication. It is for this reason that we are proposing a change to the Constitution to

facilitate electronic communication as an alternative to postal communication. We urge our membership to provide email addresses for communication as postal communication will need to be phased out over time.

As the review indicates a different and more reactive, style of working in order to reduce any duplication or confusion of roles, the Committee proposes that the positions of President and Vice-President should not be elected at this AGM. In this context, I would like to thank Margaret Morgan for the invaluable support and advice that she has provided to the Society over the years.

It is of paramount importance that there are more SPAE members involved in the critical activities of the organisation. Without more involvement from our members – and new members – the viability of SPAE will be threatened. At the AGM there will be opportunities for members to discuss how they can contribute, practically and actively, to our critical work. Your help with these initiatives would be greatly appreciated and we would welcome discussing this with you and other matters at the AGM.

We look forward to seeing you on 22nd May and so as usual, it would be helpful if you could let me know if you plan to attend.

Patrick Griffin, Chairman

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Ascot & Environs Report

Opposition to proposals in the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead draft Local Plan has been coordinated by the Residents Action Group, a body of organisations which includes SPAE. The Inspector's three-day public Hearing of the Plan resulted in the Inspector requiring the Council to produce additional information which was either missing or viewed as unsatisfactory. Several key subject areas were not even addressed at the Hearing and will not be reviewed until the outstanding issues have been completed. Further activity is not expected until after the May local elections following a Council defined period of purdah on the BLP. It is critical that SPAE (and others) continue with active concentration on the Borough Local Plan in order to ensure the protections and safeguards of our Neighbourhood Plan continue.

Sunningdale

In the Sunningdale area, there have been 160 planning applications for Sunningdale in the period from April 2018 to March 2019, which is very slightly less than the previous year. SPAE either objected to, or commented on, a total of 14% of all applications in Sunningdale parish which is very much in line with our usual level of activity. Some seventy percent of those objected to have been refused, withdrawn or are still pending. We have also represented SPAE's views at the Sunningdale Parish Council Planning meeting, and also attended the Windsor Rural Development Management Panel and the Borough-Wide Development Management Panel on a regular basis. We have also seen fit to make at least one formal complaint to RBWM on the conduct of Councillors at Panel when they failed to follow policy guidelines and we were gratified when this was taken seriously by the RBWM Legal Officer. As a consequence, a training session on the role and responsibilities of Planning Panel members was provided for Councillors by a Barrister.

Very much in line with last year, most applications (24%) in Sunningdale were for domestic extensions, closely followed by proposed work to TPO trees (21%). There were 5 applications for the demolition and rebuilding of a single dwelling, 2 applications for flatted developments, 3 applications to build a dwelling in a back or side garden, and 1 application to convert an annexe into an independent dwelling. All in all, it hasn't been a very exciting year planning-wise!

Just out of interest you may like to know that of the 160 Sunningdale applications 91 (56%) were Permitted/Approved; 15 (9.3%) were Refused; 1 is as yet Undetermined; 12 (7.5%) were Withdrawn; 33 (20.6%) are Awaiting Determination; and 8 (5%) were Partly Permitted/Partly Refused. This latter category are mainly applications for works to trees covered by a TPO and – yes, you've guessed it, sometimes the Tree Officer will permit work to one tree but refuse it for another in the same application!

Over the last year we have noticed an increase in the number of applications to vary one or more Conditions in a permitted planning application. A total of 17 such applications have been made during the reporting period and of course it is not unusual for an applicant to seek to make minor changes as building work takes place. What is unusual and worth commenting on is the number of applications to vary conditions that are being made by one particular developer and/or landowner in respect of three developments in Sunningdale: the former Little House development on Charters Road, and two developments on the A30 London Road - Lime Tree Villas (formerly Lime Tree Lodge), and Littlefield. There is a complex - one might say positively Byzantine - history to all three developments with numerous applications, amendments, refusals, and appeals before eventual permission to develop was granted and it now seems that the developer is attempting to use successive applications to vary conditions in order to make substantive changes which go far beyond what would normally be acceptable as a variation, and which 'appear' to be aimed at transforming the permitted design closer to a design that has previously been refused.

You will be aware that the application to develop the Sunningdale Park site has now been permitted. Last year we noted RBWM's failure to determine some important applications within a reasonable time frame. In particular the decision had not been made about the application by BEN Lynwood in April 2017, to build a new community health centre to provide facilities for patients from the Magnolia House and Kings Corner practices. We are still waiting.

There is also one new application with a great deal of community interest: the application (19/00324) by Charters School for the development of a dual use leisure facility for combined school and community to include 25 metre 6 lane swimming pool, 8 court sports hall, gym, dance studio and ancillary accommodation, along with landscaping and parking areas. In principle SPAE is supportive of the proposal. In many respects this is a good scheme which could deliver benefits for Charters school and the local community. However as many of you will be only too aware this is a Green Belt site and also a traffic congestion hotspot. Overall, we think that much more work needs to be done by the applicant to address the traffic and parking issues in particular as these will be a cause of serious concern for many residents.

Sunninghill & Ascot

Other major developments have been approved and work is getting underway at the Sunninghill Gasholder site and Heatherwood Hospital. There is nothing further to report on the Ascot Centre rejuvenation proposal, which SPAE opposed on the grounds that the 300 dwellings now proposed bear no comparison with the indicative number of 170 homes in the Prince's Foundation report that provided evidence for the adoption of the Neighbourhood Plan. It is perverse that the Crown Estate – one of the landowners in Ascot Centre – is complicit in destroying the Vision prepared by the Prince's Foundation with the help of the community and that provided evidence in support of the Neighbourhood Plan voted in at referendum by a very large majority.

In Ascot and Sunninghill, even more applications have been reviewed this year – 250 – and 34 have been objected to. Some seventy percent of those objected to have been refused, withdrawn or are still pending. The applications included 104 extensions and 232 dwellings.

Winkfield

Following on from the 2018 report on the possible implications of large increases in housing for Winkfield from the BFC draft local plan, we will not now see the final version until Spring 2020. Hopefully the objectively assessed housing need will reflect the recently revised (downwards) estimates of population growth and hence a reduced requirement for housing land in Winkfield.

Otherwise this last year has seen the usual abundance of applications for house extensions, fortunately for their neighbours mostly non contentious. Developers continue, as usual, to push the limits of their approvals by seeking amendments to increase the number of dwellings already approved e.g. Brompton Gardens on London Road or, in the case of Kingswood in Kings Ride, to replace houses with higher density apartments on a green belt site (decision still pending).

Of major significance for preservation of the green belt in our area, was the decision by BFC to refuse the application to demolish Ascot Heath school and replace it on the green belt land opposite. This would have been paid for by the construction of housing on the school site. The refusal is testimony to the persistent campaigning activity for the refusal by local residents coordinated by the North Ascot Residents Association. Hopefully the reorganisation of the existing schools will also satisfy those who also wanted improved school facilities.

PROPOSED CHANGE TO THE CONSITUTION

Clause 15 currently states the following:

15. Any notice required to be given by this Constitution shall be deemed to be duly given if left at or sent by prepaid post to the address of that Member last notified.

We propose that it is replaced by:

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

As such, we wish to amend the Constitution and we seek approval to do so at the AGM (See agenda item 9 that follows).

The 48th Annual General Meeting
7.30pm on 22nd May 2019, Ascot Racecourse

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
 2. Minutes of 47th AGM
 3. Matters arising from the Minutes
 4. Chairman's Report
 5. Treasurer's Report
 6. Membership Report
 7. Election of Officers: the following have been nominated and are willing to serve:

Chairman	Patrick Griffin
General Secretary	Keith Cameron
Treasurer	James Morley
Membership Secretary	Richard Wake
Planning Secretary – Sunninghill & Ascot	Brian Livingstone
Planning Secretary – Sunningdale	
Planning Secretary – Winkfield	Stewart McDougall
 8. Election of Executive Committee: the following have been nominated and are willing to serve:

David Marshall, Bruce Singleton, Peter Standley
- Nominations for Officers and Executive Committee members should be received by the Chairman by 15th May
9. Proposed amendment to Clause 15 of the Constitution
 10. Any other business

STATEMENT of FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	2019	2018
Income		
Subscriptions	£1,225.00	£1,172.00
Donations	£25.00	£88.00
Witan - Dividends & Interest	£420.58	£368.98
NS Bank Interest	£91.44	£78.78
Bank Account Interest	£2.99	£1.19
	<u>£1,765.01</u>	<u>£1,708.95</u>
Expenditure		
Printing & Stationery	£115.59	£17.41
Postage & Telephone	£92.80	£0.00
AGM Expenses	£811.50	£1,352.81
Hire of Halls	£273.00	£398.00
Design Award	£256.83	£634.94
Subscriptions & Donations	£311.00	£256.00
Accountant's Fee	£120.00	£120.00
IT & Office Equipment	£189.23	£24.00
Sundries - Petrol / Travel	£166.10	£223.40
Fund Management	£50.44	£36.41
	<u>£2,386.49</u>	<u>£3,062.97</u>
Operating Expenditure		
RBWM Borough Plan	£500.00	£2,428.00
Consultancy re RBWM Planning Panel Conduct	£500.00	
	<u>£3,386.49</u>	<u>£5,490.97</u>
(Deficit) / Surplus of Income over Expenditure	<u>(£1,621.48)</u>	<u>(£3,782.02)</u>
New Life Memberships	£250.00	£200.00
Increase / (Decrease) in Market Value of Investments in Year	£274.06	£974.39
Accumulated Funds brought forward	£35,694.59	£38,302.22
Accumulated Funds carried forward	<u>£34,597.17</u>	<u>£35,694.59</u>
Represented by:-		
Investment with NS Bank	£10,803.84	£13,712.40
Barclays Business Premium A/c	£3,593.56	£1,765.57
Barclays Community A/C	£1,550.34	£2,211.39
Witan Investment Trust plc shares at market value & uninvested cash	£18,649.43	£18,005.23
	<u>£34,597.17</u>	<u>£35,694.59</u>
Patrick Griffin	Chairman	James Morley
		Treasurer

ACCOUNTANT'S REPORT We have examined the accounts of the Society for the year ended 31st March 2019 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 2019

TREASURER'S REPORT

During the year the Society's accumulated funds decreased by £1,313 to £34,381 primarily as a consequence of the £1,621 deficit for the year exceeding the net growth in the value of the Society's investment in Witan Investment Trust. The increase in value of the Witan investment comprises dividends which are reinvested and increased share price, generating no free cash, as a consequence transfers were made from our deposits with NS Bank to cover the deficit and the increase in our deposit account with Barclays.

The reduction in the deficit for the year is primarily due to a lower level of contributions to RBMW Residents Action Group (£1,928 reduction), payment for planning advice in respect of a governance failure in the RBWM planning process (£500 increase) and a reduction in general operating expenditures (£676 reduction). The reduced level of contributions to the Action Group reflects the status of the Borough Plan which is now in an extended Review by the Inspector. It is possible that there will be further costs in this respect during the current year.

General operating expenditures have exceeded income for the last three years, this position is likely to continue without some structural changes. The major movements in the year are lower AGM costs (£541) and lower Design Award costs (£378). The reduction in AGM costs reflects the reversal of the prepayment made in 2018 and reduced printing costs, the lower Design Award costs reflect the decision to make the award on a biennial basis.

In looking to the current year, it is probable that there will be some level of increased IT expenditure as the Society's IT infrastructure is ageing, and is, also, not readily adaptable to modern social media channels.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

The number of Life Members and Annual Members of the Society currently stands at 800 although the total membership is of course boosted by the support of a dozen or so Resident Associations. This figure represents a decline of 6.3% over the last four years. An analysis of the changes which have taken place over the period shows that whilst the mortality rate is low, the numbers of members moving away from the SL5 postal area each year marginally exceeds the number of new members joining the Society. It is particularly disappointing that some residents who call on SPAE for help or advice are reluctant to join. We therefore urge members to encourage their friends who are not members to support the Society at this crucial time.

MINUTES OF THE 47TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting was held at 7.30pm on 24th May 2018 in the Ascot Authority Box, Ascot Racecourse, with 75 attendees.

The Vice President, Mrs Margaret Morgan, opened the meeting and welcomed everybody and then paid tribute to SPAE President Stuart Errington who died at the end of last year. Mrs Morgan thanked Brian Burgess, who was retiring from the Committee, for his many years of service.

Chairman, Patrick Griffin, outlined the plan for the meeting, noted that written apologies for absence had been received for 26 members. He asked the meeting to confirm the acceptability of the 2017 AGM draft Minutes, after which he explained that the Good Design Award which featured in the 2017 AGM would be a bi-annual event as it would better suit the development cycle.

Mr Griffin pointed out that the Newsletter had reported on development activity in Sunningdale, Ascot & Sunninghill and Winkfield so he intended to deal with Bracknell Forest (BFC) Local Plan, the Royal Borough (RBWM) Local Plan and the Ascot Centre proposals by a consortium of landowners and developers to rejuvenate the High Street.

Bracknell Forest Council has identified sites for housing in its Local Plan which include 450 dwellings at Whitmoor Forest 'Lapland', 48 in Chavey Down, 278 at the London Road landfill site and 500 in Winkfield Row. In Ascot ward alone, this would generate a 37% increase in dwellings. BFC has started the consultation process and SPAE has submitted constructive comments. The next stage of the consultative process is likely to be towards the end of the year. There was some concern about the scale of the development and the absence of an infrastructure plan to meet the proposals, but it was noted that it was not proposed to develop any part of the Green Belt.

Mr Griffin moved on to the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead's draft Borough Local Plan (BLP) and confirmed that SPAE continued to have serious concerns about the Plan's content on several counts: overdevelopment; the "trumping" of the Neighbourhood Plan by over-designation of sites, classifying issues and processes as 'strategic', so ensuring that the BLP takes priority over the Neighbourhood Plan's policies. Another concern is the loss of Green Belt land in the Borough which today is 83%. In the allocations being promoted by the Royal Borough, 85% of the proposed land for development is in the Green Belt.

Additionally, the absence of an Infrastructure Delivery Plan which must accompany the BLP (a statutory requirement) for all the additional services required is vacuous on detail. This includes roads, schools, sewage and inadequate work to satisfy the Duty To Co-operate criteria, which governs joint planning with neighbouring local authorities and means that SPAE concerns have not been satisfied.

Many other resident groups feel similarly and a group of 14 organisations, typically Parish Councils, Neighbourhood Plan groups, Residents' Associations have joined together to form the Residents' Action Group (RRAG) to contest much of the content of RBWM's submitted Local Plan. This Group has used legal and planning professionals to assist and these activities have been funded by members of the RRAG, including SPAE.

The examining Inspector of the Royal Borough submission has set late June to review as Stage 1 the Plan in relation to its mandated requirement to test the legal compliance and soundness of the Plan. This includes

the need for the council to demonstrate it has exercised its Duty to Cooperate with local statutory bodies such as adjacent councils. This we are confident is a failing with the draft Plan.

Mr Griffin opened the Ascot Centre topic by reminding the meeting that the Prince’s Foundation, after widespread consultation, had produced a plan for Ascot Centre which included approximately 170 dwellings based on estimated housing densities north and south of the High Street. The consortium is now proposing 300 homes which is well in advance of the intent of the Prince’s Foundation Vision for Ascot.

On top of this, there are a further 130 homes being proposed at the adjacent Shorts Yard where there is an active planning application. SPAE is actively objecting to this proposed development in addition to the consortium plans for 300 units. However, this is further seriously compounded by plans for new dwellings including at Silwood Park, Sunningdale Park, the Sunninghill Gasholder site, Ascot Station, Heatherwood, Englemere Lodge, Whitmoor Forest and London Road landfill sites as well as Kings Ride and Brompton Gardens in the course of being built. This will total an additional 2,000 dwellings within a 2-mile radius of Station Hill (see below). In turn, that would likely add 4,800 more people and 3,000 more cars.

Site	Housing Units *	Distance from Station Hill
Ascot Centre	300	0
Ascot Station	35	0.3
Shorts Yard	130	0.4
Heatherwood	230	0.6
Englemere Lodge	10	0.6
Oakfield Farm	12	0.7
Kingswood, Kings Ride	57	1.4
Whitmoor Forest	450	1.5
Brompton Gardens, London Road	59	1.6
Landfill Site, London Road	278	1.7
Gasholder, Sunninghill	80	1.7
Silwood Park	75	1.8
Sunningdale Park	280	2
Land to the rear of Forest View	6	2
Total	2,002	

* In Bracknell Forest and the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead draft Local Plans or being promoted or already approved

Questions were asked from the floor during Mr Griffin's report and many of the answers included a request that members use their best endeavours to oppose the scale of development.

Mr Griffin then asked Mr James Morley to present his Treasurer's Report. As the Accounts had been sent out in advance, Mr Morley did not review the Statement of Financial Activities in detail but commented that over five years SPAE's expenditure had been less than its growth in ASSETS largely because of the Witan investment performance. However, two of these years had seen heavy expenditure because of the development of the Local Plan and further significant expenditure may be incurred as the need to challenge the Plan during the inspection process becomes necessary.

The meeting approved the Accounts and agreed to the re-appointment of Porter Garland as auditors.

On General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Mr Morley said that our Privacy Policy will be refined, and data management changes may require money to be spent.

Mr Griffin then turned to the election of Officers and the modified Executive Committee roles described in the published papers. This would be a change to the Constitution as would the proposal to reintroduce an annual subscription at £10 and increase the lifetime membership from £50 to £75. The meeting agreed all the proposals.

Mr Griffin introduced Peter Lerner, Planning Consultant, who made a presentation entitled 'Planning beyond the Boundaries'. Mr Lerner observed that Bracknell Forest Council was planning no new homes in the Green Belt while the Royal Borough was planning 5820 new homes (41% of the total) in the Green Belt. He said that the Town and Country Planning Act of 1947 had provided some protection (Green Belt, National Parks, Conservation standards), order and method and proper process.

However, he believed we need more good design, joined-up thinking (cf BFC and RBWM plans) and public confidence and trust. The current Government's approach required more housing, a higher rate of building, faster decision making, a simplified system, more partnership and infrastructure development. The Government's revisions to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which would be announced following the end of the consultation process in May, could be very significant.

Following questions Mr Griffin thanked Mr Lerner for his talk and closed the meeting at 9.15 pm.