

APRIL 2026



SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF ASCOT AND ENVIRONS

The Society for the Protection of Ascot & Environs
55th Annual General Meeting

7.30 pm on Thursday, 21st May at Royal Ascot Golf Club
Winkfield Rd, Ascot SL5 7LJ

Contents

1. Annual General Meeting Agenda
2. Minutes of the 54th Annual General Meeting
3. Executive Committee Report 2025-26
4. Statements of Financial Activities - 2025-26

The 55th Annual General Meeting

7.30 pm on Thursday 21st May

AGENDA

1. Welcome and Opening Remarks
2. Apologies for absence
3. Minutes of 54th AGM
4. Matters arising from the Minutes
5. Planning Report
6. Treasurer's Report

Statement of Financial Activities (2025-26)

7. Election of Officers: The following have been nominated and are willing to serve:

Chairman

Vice-Chairman

General Secretary	Keith Cameron
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Treasurer	Mark Bingham
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Planning Secretary	Simon Gledhill
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Membership Secretary	Jayne Webster
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8. Election of Executive Committee: The following have been nominated and are willing to serve:

Peter Deason, Patrick Griffin, Paul Hastings

Nominations for Officers and Executive Committee members should be received by **14th May 2026**.

9. Any other business



SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF ASCOT & ENVIRONS

29th May 2025

MINUTES OF THE 54th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting was held at 7.30 pm on 29th May 2025 at Royal Ascot Golf Club, with 32 attendees.

Introduction

SPAE General Secretary Keith Cameron welcomed everybody. The draft Minutes of the 53rd AGM were approved, with any matters to be addressed by this meeting. He made special reference to committee members who had stepped down during the year, namely, Caroline D'Aulerio, Robert Gregory, Gary Morris, and Peter Spooner.

Christina Hill Williams RIP

Patrick Griffin introduced the tribute to Christina Hill Williams, who had sadly died in early April. She had been President for four years and had been a source of great support and guidance to the committee. Clive Williams, Christina's husband, gave a presentation on her life and selfless service to Berkshire. This included her civic responsibilities (deputy Lord Lieutenant and High Sheriff) as well as her involvement with health care and the natural environment.

Planning Report

Simon Gledhill, Planning Secretary, presented the report on planning activities during the year. There had been nearly 600 planning applications determined. There was consistency with previous years in respect of geographic spread. However, there had been evidence of more aggressive tactics by developers, including sneaky means of exploiting planning regulations with permitted development rights to avoid putting in full planning applications. The SPAE performance in responding to planning applications had been very good. Where SPAE had submitted objections for building and property development, only just over a quarter were permitted. This highlighted our success when our Councils permitted nearly two-thirds of such applications.

Details of the current applications in Ascot Centre, namely Shorts and London Square were presented. Whilst there have been improvements, they still fall short of what was envisaged in the Neighbourhood Plan and Local Plan. Whilst the focus had been in Ascot Centre, the buildout of sites at Sunninghill Square (previously the gasholder), Sunningdale Park, Heatherwood Royal and Ascot Oaks (behind the Mercedes Garage) was reported on.

Ascot Placemaking

Patrick Griffin made a presentation about the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for Ascot Placemaking, mainly for the centre of Ascot. Its purpose is to build upon and provide more detailed advice or guidance on the Ascot Placemaking policy (QP1c). The SPD falls well short in many areas, most notably the provision of parking for visitors, shoppers and workers, the provision of community facilities and adequate public transport. As for cycling, there appears to be an exaggerated importance placed by the Royal Borough. Following the consultation on the draft SPD at the turn of the year, the Council seems determined to secure its adoption this summer.



Government Announcements

Patrick Griffin presented a resume of government announcements going back to December and then brought the members up to date with recent statements.

First, Devolution will be the biggest change in Local Government in 50 years, where the existing structures will be replaced with Unitary Authorities (500,000 populations) within Strategic Authorities (at least 1,500,000 populations), the latter having their own elected mayors. The potential options for Berkshire were discussed with the changes coming into force in 2028, preceded by mayoral elections in 2027. Adjacent counties (Surrey, Hampshire, and Oxfordshire) have already put forward initial proposals to the Government, which would mean they would be a year ahead of Berkshire.

Second, the Planning & Infrastructure Bill, now past the Committee stage in the Commons, was discussed. The intention of this Bill includes facilitating the delivery of 1.5 million homes by 2029 and major national infrastructure programmes such as access to the electricity grid, new reservoirs and transportation. There are, however, proposals in the evolving Bill announced this past week, which involve the role of councillors in deciding planning applications. This could mean planning committee reforms, including councillors being stripped of powers to decide on applications, for example, fewer than 10 homes, this being left to officers. The proposals include mandatory training for councillors. A consultation on these measures, which also include land banking, slow build-out and compulsory purchase, runs for eight weeks.

Finally, the headline in the December Government announcement was “Grey Belt” where there would be a distinction based on whether land was performing well or not so well against the purposes of Green Belt. The purposes of Green Belt include preventing urban sprawl and settlements merging, and so it’s hard to understand what would be the difference between small sprawl and major sprawl. After all, sprawl is sprawl. The announcements in December may have masked an equally important matter. Housing delivery targets for councils have escalated with Windsor & Maidenhead and Bracknell Forest having increased by respectively, 82% and 25%. Those will put increased pressure by developers to have approved speculative applications with shortfalls on housing delivery.

Treasurer Report

Mark Bingham presented the financial statement for the year. Income was in line with the previous year, but expenses had increased, in part because of delayed posting of expenses in the financial year. The statement showed a surplus of £31,938.98 although almost all the reserves are subject to the volatility in financial markets.

Membership records showed 715 life and annual members, of which 362 were annual, where the annual subscription is £12. A recent reconciliation identified 105 members as being up to date with payments, 124 members in arrears (likely because standing orders have not been increased), and 133 members that had defaulted. Those in arrears were urged to increase their annual payments. Those who have defaulted are a cause of serious concern, as it means the number of SPAE members is being significantly inflated by as many as 130. Mark Bingham urged attendees to encourage friends to join, as SPAE was doing a very good job in protecting the character of our area by holding our councils to account on planning matters.

The Accounts were approved by the Meeting.

Marketing Report

Jayne Webster made a presentation about the progress being made in marketing and public relations. A budget had been assigned to make residents more aware of SPAE and what it does on behalf of the local community. The first stage has been an article in the Ascot & Sunninghill Community magazine, and this will be followed by flyers to be distributed locally. TC Communications, a local marketing agency at Kings Ride, Ascot, has been actively working in promoting SPAE, and has included SPAE on its website, where it focuses on "People & Planet". Jayne Webster made an impassioned plea for attendees to help in recruiting new members and attracting volunteers.

Election of Officers & Committee

Keith Cameron received agreement from the Meeting for the Election of Officers to be taken by a single vote, and the vote approved the following appointments:

General Secretary	Keith Cameron
Treasurer	Mark Bingham
Membership Secretary	Jayne Webster
Planning Secretary	Simon Gledhill
Committee	Peter Deason
Committee	Patrick Griffin

The roles of Chairman and Vice Chairman are in abeyance.

Questions And Any Other Business

Questions and comments were taken from the floor.

Q. What is the current status of Mill Ride Golf Club?

A. There is speculation that Maidenhead Golf Club will move to this location.

Q. What does SPAE feel about being involved in local WhatsApp groups for promotion?

A. SPAE is actively wishing to expand its social media presence, recognising being on such groups would involve the administrators issuing an invitation acceptable to their group members.

Closing Remarks

Keith Cameron thanked everybody for their attendance and participation, and the meeting closed at 8.50pm.

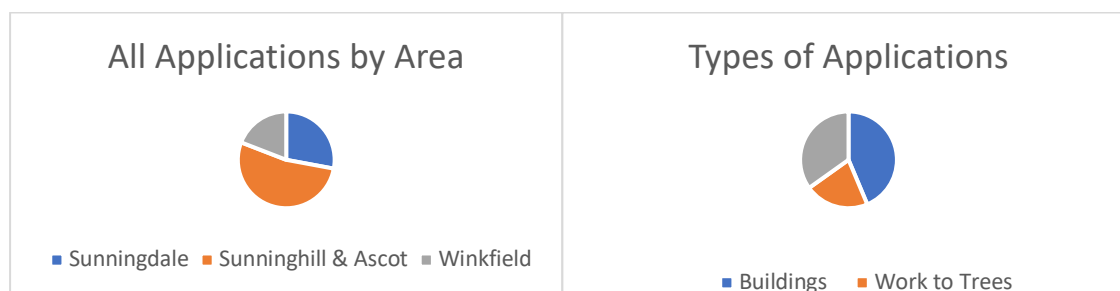
Executive Committee Report 2025-26

Planning Report - 1st April 2025 – 31st March 2026

1 Planning Applications by Type and by Parish Area

There have been 591 planning applications determined. Of these, Sunningdale accounted for 165 (28%), Sunninghill & Ascot 313 (53%) and Winkfield 113 (19%).

There were 258 (44%) FULL applications, i.e., building and property development, and there were 127 (21%) for works to trees. The remainder include certificates of lawfulness, discharges of conditions and whether prior approval was required for permitted development.

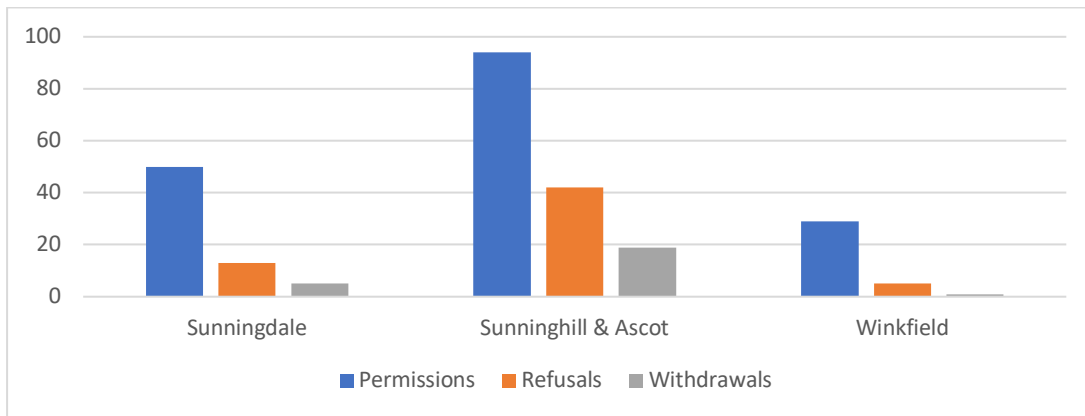


2 Planning Applications for Building Development

Council Performance – Permissions, Refusals and Withdrawals by Parish Area.

Of the 258 FULL applications determined across the three parish areas, 85 (33%) were refused or withdrawn, with permissions granted for 173 (67%) applications. Permissions were 74%, 61% and 83% in, respectively, Sunningdale, Sunninghill & Ascot, and Winkfield.

Full Applications - April 2025 - March 2026				
	Sunningdale	Sunninghill & Ascot	Winkfield	Total
Permissions	50	94	29	173
Refusals	13	42	5	60
Withdrawals	5	19	1	25
Total	68	155	35	258
Permissions	74%	61%	83%	67%

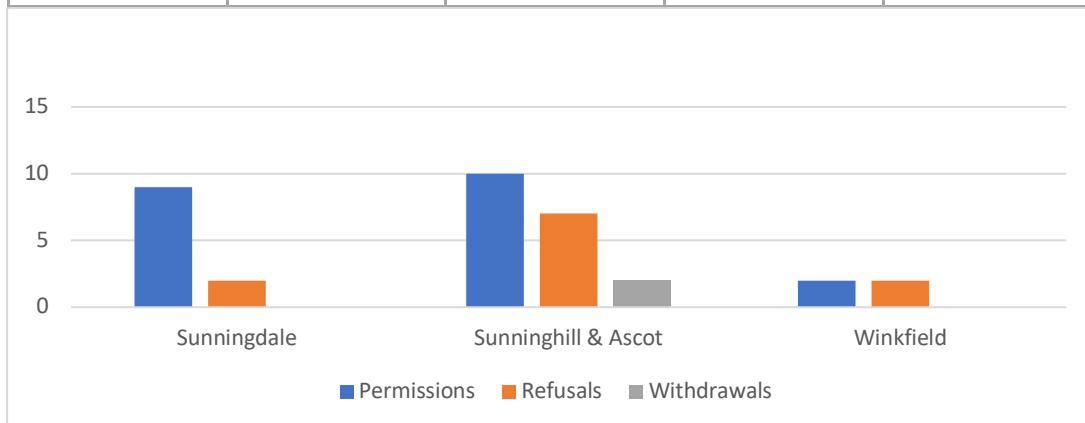


3 SPAE Performance in Objecting to Planning Applications

SPAE Performance – Permissions, Refusals and Withdrawals by Parish Area.

There were 86 submissions made by SPAE to planning applications, comprising 34 objections where 13 (38%) have been refused or withdrawn.

Planning Application Objections - SPAE Performance				
Decisions	Sunningdale	Sunninghill & Ascot	Winkfield	Total
Permissions	9	10	2	21
Refusals	2	7	2	11
Withdrawals	0	2	0	2
Total	11	19	4	34
	18%	47%	50%	38%



The analysis does not include 52 applications where comments were submitted, of which 18 were refused.

4 SPAE Performance on Planning Applications Appealed

SPAE Performance - applications which have subsequently been appealed to the Planning Inspectorate.

SPAE has responded to eight of the twenty-two planning applications that had been appealed and then determined by the Planning Inspectorate between April 2025 and March 2026. All eight were dismissed.

Appeal Objections - SPAE Performance				
Decisions	Sunningdale	Sunninghill & Ascot	Winkfield	Total
Allowed	0	0	0	0
Dismissed	3	2	3	8
Total	3	2	3	8
	100%	100%	100%	100%

Simon Gledhill – planning@spae.org

Treasurer's Report

The 2025/2026 income was similar to that of the past few years at just below GBP 1,500.

Ongoing expenses such as IT, AGM, hire of hall for committee meetings, and accountancy fees were either kept in line with previous years or reduced. Advertising was significantly lower than last year.

Extraordinary expenses of GBP 5,900 were incurred relating to legal fees for advice on one particular planning application decision in Ascot.

The above-mentioned legal fees were financed mostly from the partial sale of the long-standing WITAN investment held with Hargreaves Lansdown (GBP 5,000) plus the use of funds held with Barclays bank. Please see second financial schedule for details.

Mark Bingham – treasurer@spae.org

Statement of Financial Activities – 2025-26

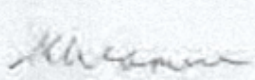
SOCIETY FOR PROTECTION OF ASCOT & ENVIRONS (SPAЕ) STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2026

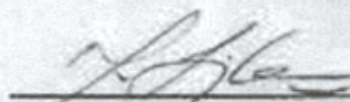
	<u>2026</u>	<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>
Income:			
Subscriptions	1,347.00	1,200.00	1,074.00
New Lifetime Memberships	120.00	120.00	240.00
Donations		50.00	155.00
Bank account interest	23.98	26.87	21.54
Total Income	1,490.98	1,396.87	1,490.54

Expenditure:			
Legal fees	5,900.00		
IT and related	515.88	515.88	701.88
AGM and meetings	449.51	632.48	170.88
Hire of halls from Parish Council	216.00	324.00	321.00
Accountancy review fee	186.00	174.00	162.00
Advertising	79.14	371.99	
Subscriptions and donations	60.00	60.00	85.00
Miscellaneous	57.50		
Total Expenditure	7,464.03	2,183.35	1,483.36

Surplus/(Deficit) of Income over Expenditure	(5,973.05)	(786.48)	7.18
Increase/(Decrease) in Market Value of Investments in the year	1,576.31	1,664.62	3,313.63
Accumulated Funds brought forward	31,938.98	31,060.84	27,740.03
Accumulated Funds carried forward	27,542.24	31,938.98	31,060.84

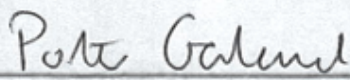
Represented by:			
Hargreaves Lansdown Fund Account	23,794.54	27,218.23	25,553.61
Barclays Business Premium Account	2,006.35	1,837.69	1,810.82
Barclays Community Account	1,741.35	2,883.06	3,696.41
	27,542.24	31,938.98	31,060.84


Keith Cameron - Secretary


Mark Bingham - Treasurer

Accountants' Report

We have examined the accounts of the Society for the year ended March 31, 2026 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

27 April, 2026



Statement of Financial Activities – 2025-26

SOCIETY FOR PROTECTION OF ASCOT & ENVIRONS (SPAЕ)

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2026

Reconciliation of Account Movements 2025/2026

		Hargreaves Lansdown	Barclays Premium	Barclays Community	TOTAL
Balances April 1, 2025		27,218.23	1,837.69	2,883.06	31,938.98
Income:	Subscriptions			1,347.00	1,347.00
	Lifetime Membership			120.00	120.00
	Bank interest		23.98		23.98
Expenditures				(7.464,03)	(7.464,03)
Transfers:	Intra-bank	(5.000,00)	5,000.00		-
	Inter-bank		(4.855,32)	4,855.32	-
Change in market value		1,576.31			1,576.31
Balances March 31, 2026		23,794.54	2,006.35	1,741.35	27,542.24





SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF ASCOT AND ENVIRONMENT

55th Annual General Meeting

Royal Ascot Golf Club, 21st May 2026

Agenda

- 7.30 Welcome and Opening Remarks
- 7.35 Guest Speaker
- 7.55 Apologies, Minutes of 54th AGM, Matters arising
- 8.00 Planning Report
- 8.10 Ascot Developments
- 8.20 Government Announcements
- 8.30 Treasurer's Report
 - Statement of Financial Activities (2025-26)
- 8.40 Election of Officers and Executive Committee
- 8.50 Closing Remarks

Keith Cameron

Jack Rankin, MP

Keith Cameron

Simon Gledhill

Patrick Griffin

Patrick Griffin

Mark Bingham

Keith Cameron

Keith Cameron

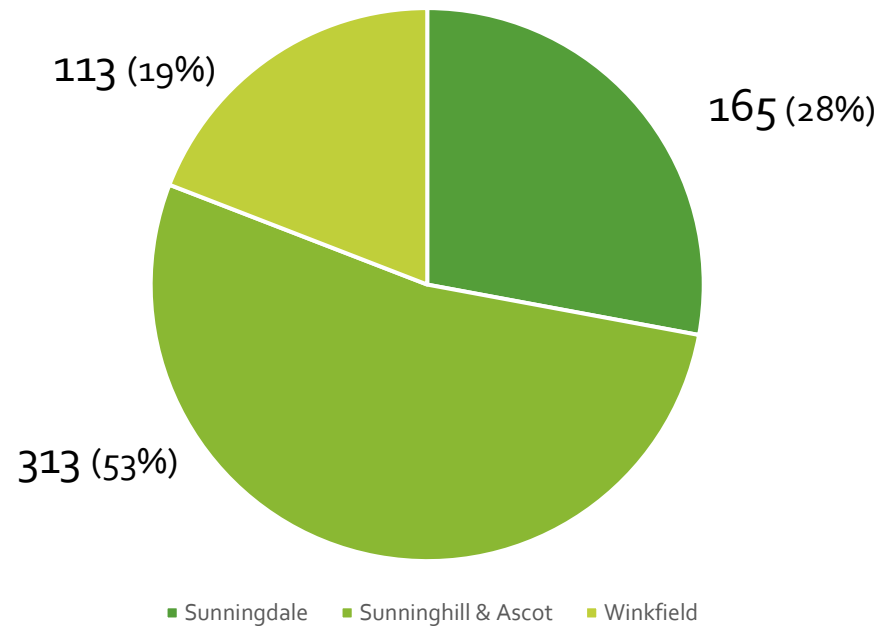
PLANNING REPORT

Simon Gledhill

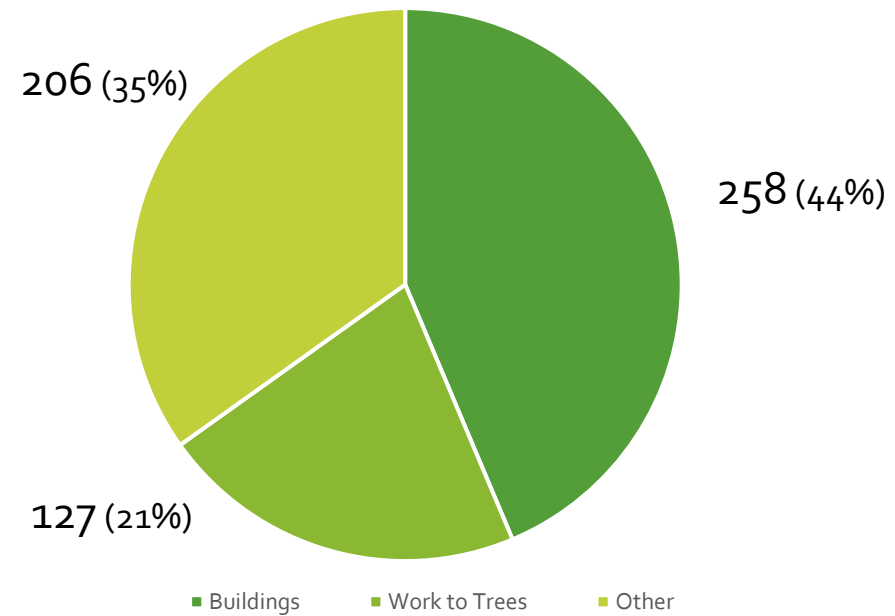
Planning Applications 2025-26

591 Applications

All Applications by Area



Types of Applications



Planning Applications 2025-26

SPA Performance - Objections

Decisions	Sunningdale	Sunninghill & Ascot	Winkfield	Total
Permissions	9	10	2	21
Refusals	2	7	2	11
Withdrawals	0	2	0	2
Total	11	19	4	34
	18%	47%	50%	38%

86 submissions in total

- 34 objections with 13 refused or withdrawn
- 52 where comments made

SPA Performance - Appeals

Decisions	Sunningdale	Sunninghill & Ascot	Winkfield	Total
Allowed	0	0	0	0
Dismissed	3	2	3	8
Total	3	2	3	8
	100%	100%	100%	100%

McClaren Garage – 26/00952

- Dwellings all flats (48)
 - Market – 34
 - Affordable – 14
- Parking (4 spaces)

Ground Floor



Block A

Block B

Pantiles (formerly Railway Hotel / Jagz) - 26/00975

- Dwellings (44)
 - All flats, none affordable
- Parking (3 disabled spaces)

Ground Floor



Hurst Lodge - 26/00311

- Dwellings
 - Houses 26 (affordable 3)
 - Flats 21 (affordable 4)
- Parking 116 spaces



Ongoing Developments



- Sunninghill Square – 76 homes
- Sunningdale Park – 293 homes
- Heatherwood Royal – 230 homes
- Ascot Oaks – 81 homes



SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF ASCOT AND ENVIRONMENT

ASCOT CENTRE

Patrick Griffin

CALA – 24/01844

- Dwellings (90 units)
 - 75 houses (24 affordable)
 - 12 apartments (all affordable)
 - 3 self-build
- Parking (140 spaces)
- Area 2.97ha
- Decision notice issued September 2025



Shorts – 25/01116

- Dwellings (127)
 - 98 houses (13 affordable)
 - 29 apartments (15 affordable)
- Parking (222 spaces)
 - 3, 4 & 5 beds 190
 - 1 & 2 beds 32
- Decision notice issued December 2025



London Square – 25/01050

- Community hall and an arts space or small cinema / civic offices and meeting rooms, a community café, and rooms (including a large hall) for hire to local groups – **318 sqm!**
- Dwellings (101)
 - 26 houses, 32 apartments, 40 affordable apartments, 3 self-build
- Parking (135 spaces)
 - Dwellings 114, visitors 14
 - Commercial 3, car club 2, community (parish) 2
- Decision notice awaited



GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

Patrick Griffin

Local Government Reorganisation

- Unitary authorities of 500,000
- Strategic authorities of greater than 1,500,000
- Two stages, with Berkshire authorities in second
 - proposals to Government this year 2026
 - Shadow Council Elections May 2027 and go-live April 2028
- Surrey (1.25m) special case - 2 unitary authorities, East and West (October 2025)
- Four of six devo fast track areas decided (March 2026)
 - Norfolk (950k) and Suffolk (800k) – 3 unitary authorities each
 - Hampshire (1.9m) and Essex (1.9m) – 5 unitary authorities each





SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF ASCOT AND ENVIRONMENT

TREASURER REPORT

Mark Bingham

Statement Of Financial Activities – 2025-26

SOCIETY FOR PROTECTION OF ASCOT & ENVIRONS (SPAE)			
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2026			
	2026	2025	2024
Income:			
Subscriptions	1,347.00	1,200.00	1,074.00
New Lifetime Memberships	120.00	120.00	240.00
Donations		50.00	155.00
Bank account interest	23.98	26.87	21.54
Total Income	1,490.98	1,396.87	1,490.54
Expenditure:			
Legal fees	5,900.00		
IT and related	515.88	515.88	701.88
AGM and meetings	449.51	632.48	170.88
Hire of halls from Parish Council	216.00	324.00	321.00
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Miscellaneous	57.50		
Total Expenditure	7,464.03	2,183.35	1,483.36
Surplus/(Deficit) of Income over Expenditure	(5,973.05)	(786.48)	7.18
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Accumulated Funds carried forward	27,542.24	31,938.98	31,060.84
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Barclays Community Account	1,741.35	2,883.06	3,696.41
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<i>Keith Cameron</i>		<i>Mark Bingham</i>	
Keith Cameron - Secretary		Mark Bingham - Treasurer	
Accountants' Report			
We have examined the accounts of the Society for the year ended March 31, 2026 in conjunction with the books, records and information supplied to us by the Treasurer and confirm that they are in accordance therewith.			
<i>Porter Garland</i>	Communication House		
Porter Garland	Victoria Avenue		
Chartered Accountants	Camberley, Surrey		
	27 April, 2026		

**PROPOSAL for ADOPTION of ACCOUNTS
and APPOINTMENT of REPORTING
ACCOUNTANTS**

Statement Of Financial Activities – 2025-26

SOCIETY FOR PROTECTION OF ASCOT & ENVIRONS (SPA)					
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2026					
Reconciliation of Account Movements 2025/2026					
		Hargreaves Lansdown	Barclays Premium	Barclays Community	TOTAL
Balances April 1, 2025		27,218.23	1,837.69	2,883.06	31,938.98
Income:	Subscriptions			1,347.00	1,347.00
	Lifetime Membership			120.00	120.00
	Bank interest		23.98		23.98
Expenditures				(7,464.03)	(7,464.03)
Transfers:	Intra-bank	(5,000.00)	5,000.00		-
	Inter-bank		(4,855.32)	4,855.32	-
Change in market value		1,576.31			1,576.31
Balances March 31, 2026		23,794.54	2,006.35	1,741.35	27,542.24

Election of Officers & Committee - Nominees

- Chairman
- Vice-Chairman
- General Secretary Keith Cameron
- Treasurer Mark Bingham
- Membership Secretary Jayne Webster
- Planning Secretary Simon Gledhill
- Committee Peter Deason
- Committee Paul Hastings
- Committee Patrick Griffin





SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF ASCOT AND ENVIRONMENT

QUESTIONS AND ANY OTHER --- BUSINESS



SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF ASCOT AND ENVIRONMENT

CLOSING REMARKS



SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF ASCOT AND ENVIRONS

SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF ASCOT & ENVIRONS

21ST MAY 2026

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE 55TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting was held at 7.30pm on 21st May 2026 at Royal Ascot Golf Club with 41 attendees.

Introduction

Keith Cameron, General Secretary, welcomed everybody to the meeting including Jack Rankin MP who spoke to the meeting about community issues, local government operations and current planning concerns following which he took questions from the floor.

The meeting approved the Minutes of the 54th Annual General meeting.

Planning Report

Simon Gledhill, Planning Secretary, presented the report on planning activities during the year. There were nearly 600 planning applications determined with roughly half in Sunninghill & Ascot, a fifth in Winkfield and the remainder in Sunningdale. 86 submissions to the councils have been made, and of the 34 where objections have been submitted, approximately 40% have been refused or withdrawn.

The SPAE performance in objecting to planning applications had dropped over the year and there appear to be two reasons for this. The first is that the “tilted balance” in favour of permitting applications has become very tilted due to the shortfall in the five-year supply of new dwellings in the borough. This shortfall has appeared since housing delivery requirements on the borough were increased by 80% during 2025.

A second reason may be that officers are giving less weight in their deliberations to the policies in the Ascot, Sunninghill and Sunningdale Neighbourhood plan (2013-26). These policies remain in force, unless there is conflict with later Local Plan policies which there seldom is. However, this does emphasise the need to update the NP so that borough policies are put in the context of the local neighbourhood and this work is currently being carried out by the parish councils.

Simon Gledhill reported on recent planning applications. Two separate proposals have been submitted for Ascot railway station. First, at what was the Railway Hotel and Jagz,

an application has been submitted for 44 apartments in two four storey blocks squeezed into a 0.2ha site. There would be no parking provided other than three disabled spaces. Second, at what was the McClaren garage, an application has been submitted for 48 apartments in two four storey blocks also crammed into a 0.2ha site. There would be four parking spaces provided. The design we believe of both represents extreme over-development.

With Councils promoting “active travel” - walking, cycling, as sustainable alternatives to private car use – developers are being increasingly encouraged to propose car-free developments. In our area with limited public transport (other than the rail network in this instance), this is completely impractical and unsustainable.

An application has been submitted at Hurst Lodge on Bagshot Road to replace the vacated school, where the proposal is for 47 dwellings. From Ascot Station and Sunningdale Station, the site is in an unsustainable location being respectively 3.2km and 4.2km away requiring private vehicle usage. There is no public footpath on Bagshot Road near the site further emphasising that private transport will be essential.

The buildout of sites at Sunninghill Square, Sunningdale Park, Heatherwood Royal and Ascot Oaks was recorded.

Patrick Griffin made a presentation about Ascot and developments in the central area where there are three active sites. First, the Cala site, which is to the east of the High Street where work has already started. This is a housing site with 75 houses and 12 apartments with an additional three self-build units. Second, at Shorts which is to the rear of the Cala site. Again, a housing site with 98 houses and 29 apartments. Work has yet to begin. Finally, London Square which is the west of the High Street which is a mixed-use site where 26 houses and 72 apartments are planned, with an additional three self-build units. There would be 1,775sqm of commercial / retail space.

A revised proposal, submitted in spring 2025, aroused particular concern with the community for several reasons. First and foremost, the lack of a large enough community space. Adopted Council policy documents indicate a space requirement for 600sqm-700sqm. The proposal only provides for 318sqm of community space.

The application was recommended for approval by Councillors in October, who voted 4-2 to approve in spite of SPAE and the Parish Council engaging a planning solicitor to write to councillors urging refusal. This outcome was advised to SPAE members in November. We have since taken legal advice. We await the formal decision notice finally being issued with its planning conditions. SPAE members will be kept informed once this has happened.

Government Developments

Patrick Griffin presented an update on Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) which will be the biggest change in local government in 50 years. There will be Unitary Authorities (500,000 populations) within Strategic Authorities (at least 1,500,000 populations). The first changes were announced in October 2025 with Surrey forming a strategic authority (1.25m population) with two unitary authorities, East and West averaging 600k-650k populations with transition to the new structure in April 2027.

Further announcements have recently been made in relation to four of the six Devolution “fast-track” council areas. Norfolk (950k population and Suffolk (800k population) will each have three unitary authorities. Hampshire (1.9m population) and Essex (1.9m population) will each have five unitary authorities. This indicates there are already variations in the optimum size of unitary authorities ranging from 300k to 600k.

The population of Berkshire is 950k so this may leave scope for between two and three unitary authorities. Proposals will need to be submitted to government shortly with a view to Shadow Council Elections taking place in May 2027 and go-live April 2028.

Treasurer Report

Mark Bingham presented the Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31st March 2026. This Statement had been included in the documents circulated before the meeting. Mark summarised the income and outgoings as similar to previous years except for £5,900 spent on legal fees in relation to the London Square planning application.

There is a requirement for formal acceptance of the 2025-26 Accounts which was carried by a unanimous show of hands and for the (re)appointment of Porter Garland as auditors which was also carried unanimously by a show of hands.

The election of Officers and Executive committee Members followed, and the meeting confirmed that all those named on circulated documents should be confirmed in their posts for a further year.

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|------------------------|----------------|
| ○ General Secretary | Keith Cameron |
| ○ Treasurer | Mark Bingham |
| ○ Membership Secretary | Jayne Webster |
| ○ Planning Secretary | Simon Gledhill |

Committee members: Peter Deason, Paul Hastings, Patrick Griffin.

The roles of Chairman and Vice Chairman are in abeyance.

Keith Cameron thanked everybody for attending and asked for help in recruiting new members. Pointing out that the Society had an ageing membership he asked the meeting to encourage friends, neighbours and relatives to join SPAE. He also asked those present to come forward themselves, or for their friends and neighbours to join the Committee – the activity was not technical, took an acceptable amount of time and was both productive and rewarding.

The meeting closed at 9.05pm.