



Minutes of the 2025 Annual General Meeting

The 2025 AGM was held at St. Stephen's Church. Approximately 40 people attended.

Welcome message

Chairman Penny Bagnall-Smith welcomed the members and introduced special guests:

- a) **Joe Powell** - MP for Kensington and Bayswater
- b) **Councillor Max Sullivan** - Cabinet Member for Streets
- c) **Councillor James Small-Edwards** - London Assembly Member for West Central and Deputy Cabinet Member for Renters & Regeneration
- d) **Councillor David Boothroyd** - Cabinet Member for Finance and Council Reform
- e) **Councillor Maggie Carmen** - Deputy Cabinet Member, Adult Social Care, Supported and Specialist Housing
- f) **Diana Natabona** - Housing Operations Manager, Central Team 4, Notting Hill Genesis
- g) **John Zamit** - Chair SEBRA
- h) **Sophie Massey-Cook** - Chair Bayswater Residents' Association
- i) **Fiona Fleming-Brown** - Chair Pembridge Association, RBKC
- j) **Sally Sampson and Mary Moore-Mason** - Co-chairs of Hereford Road Association
- k) **Jerry Bell** - Head of Planning for Westminster North

PBS – relayed apologies from police representatives who sent late notice that they were unable to attend the AGM

PBS - gave a general overview of the purpose of NHENF and the types of issues we focus on.

Approval of Minutes from previous AGM

NHENF Secretary Steven Clutton (SC) asked for approval of the previous AGM minutes by show of hands and approval was given. No objections were raised. SC noted that the minutes are published on the NHENF website and NHENF would answer any questions sent via email to info@nottinghilleast.org.uk

Report from Treasurer

NHENF Treasurer Glenn Taylor (GT) gave an overview of sources of income (donations) and usual running costs (admin, insurance, events) and noted that NHENF generally operates at a small annual loss. The bank statements were presented showing a closing balance of £7,473.00 which is down by £327.00 for the year. GT stressed the importance of donations to the organisation and noted that we now accept donations via the website, card reader, or cash. Formal approval of the accounts was requested and given by show of hands. No objections were raised.

Constitutional Amendments

NHENF Chair Penny Bagnall-Smith (PBS) presented a summary of proposed constitutional amendments that had been sent to all NHENF members via email 28 days prior to the AGM. She offered her thanks to David Moss, Shane Porter, and Jacky Porter for review the existing constitution and providing guidance in drafting the amendments. It was also noted that the constitution can be

found on our website. Formal acceptance of the amendments was requested and given by show of hands. No objections were raised.

Steering Group re-election

NHENF Chair (PBS) introduced the two new members of the Steering Group that had joined since the previous AGM, Shane Porter and Arianna Sangalli. PBS also noted that NHENF is always looking for new Steering Group members if anyone wished to volunteer. Formal approval to re-elect the current members of the Steering Group was requested and given by show of hands. No objections were raised.

Upcoming Events

Events Co-ordinator Arianna Sangalli (AS) presented an overview of upcoming NHENF events and noted that details would be circulated closer to the event dates once known

- a) Spring Aperitivo
- b) Summer Picnic
- c) Litter Pick-up day
- d) Swap Day was confirmed for June 14th.

Ideas were also presented for potential events

- c) Weekly coffee hour
- d) Talks
- e) Supper Club
- f) Dog show in Shrewsbury
- g) Garden tour by a plant person
- h) Late spring plant swap
- i) Knowledge scavenger hunt

AS – invited all NHENF members to make suggestions for events

SC – gave an overview of the upcoming Swap Day, with details of the location and purpose of the event and encouraged all members to join in.

Local Area Questionnaire

NHENF Chair (PBS) explained why NHENF members had been sent a link to questionnaire about the local area. She explained it had come from working with other local neighbourhood associations in response to the large commercial development at 90 Westbourne Grove, and the recognition that developers may not be familiar with residents' views on the local area. The questionnaire will help NHENF collect these views to create an information pack for developers, public realm designers and planners. This pack will explain the special qualities of our area that residents wish to retain or improve. The questions included:

- a) What do you like most about the area?
- b) What do you like least about the area?
- c) What improvements would you like to see?
- d) Ideas for our retail and retail streets?
- e) How would you describe the neighbourhood?
- f) What makes it special?

SC – explained how to access the questionnaire via the website

ACTION - collect survey opinions and create an information pack for developers, public realm designers and planners.

Guest Speaker: Councillor James Small-Edwards

James gave a brief update on the following topics

a) Oxford Street Pedestrianisation

James sits on planning and regeneration committee with formal role to respond the Mayor's consultation on Oxford Street and noted the main concerns raised by the committee were

- traffic diversions to surrounding streets
- accessibility for those with mobility issues
- policing this area which has a high crime rate by national standards

b) Planning for Westminster

James will be chairing the planning and regeneration committee and invited views from neighbourhood associations and individual residents. He noted the London Plan is due to be updated so now is a critical time for planning input

c) Housing

James discussed the push from central government to build more houses in London but noted that our area is very central and therefore already densely populated. The outer boroughs are likely to see more direct impact of housing policy changes, but he invited views from all present

d) Policing

James expressed disappointment that the police were unable to attend the AGM. He will be re-joining the Police and Crime Committee this year and noted that while crimes such as burglary, robbery, and violence against person are trending down, there has been a rise in theft and shoplifting, and these are his priorities for neighbourhood policing

e) Transport

James noted that central government has moved from annual budget allocation to three-year allocations, which will allow TFL greater freedom to invest in capital intensive projects. James will be advocating for more step-free access tube stations. The mayor has set a target of 50% of stations by 2030 but James would like to go "further and faster". He also noted he will be pushing for new carriages for the Bakerloo line as these are the oldest still in service.

Update on Public Realm Projects

Pedestrian Crossings

Councillor Max Sullivan, Cabinet Member for Streets, explained the remit of this cabinet role (street cleaning, rubbish collection, parking, street safety) and gave an update of the proposed pedestrian crossing on Great Western Road. Max had attended a workshop at the St Mary of the Angels school where children raised concerns about crossing Great Western Road using just the existing zebra crossing and expressed the opinion that the addition of crossing signals would be beneficial.

PBS – asked if there would be traffic surveys to assess the impact of the proposed changes and Max confirmed that impact assessments would always be done with a new crossing or crossing upgrade.

Max noted that a number of pedestrian improvements are linked the Westbourne Grove development scheme and praised NHENF for raising the profile of both Westbourne Grove and Five Ways. He noted that the scheme crosses multiple neighbourhood association boundaries, so it a was significant achievement to get WCC onboard.

PBS asked for an update of the Ledbury Road crossing and attending members noted that crossing Ledbury Road was dangerous and asked if the fact this road is the boundary between WCC and RBKC was causing delays. Max noted that RBKC are the lead highways authority on Ledbury Road, so WCC having been petitioning them for action.

Fiona Fleming-Brown (FFB) noted that Pembridge Road Association had already reported speeding incidents and near misses on Ledbury Road and raised concern that the proposed private member club on Ledbury Road with capacity for 185 diners would further add to the traffic problems. She also noted that the construction process itself, with large construction vehicles and frequent road closures, was already very disruptive the neighbourhood and expressed concern that late night hospitality to 1:30am six nights a week would negatively impact the residents of the area. Max agreed to exchange contact details with FFB to discuss these issues further.

An attending member noted that traffic light on corner of Chepstow Rd and Westbourne Grove is often out of service without notice and the public must cross unsafely. Max agreed to investigate this issue.

Max noted that only the UK and Ireland demand that zebra crossing have flashing lights and this raises the cost from £10,000 to £100,000 to install the electrical capacity. WCC are doing trials in ten locations across the city to install zebra crossings without the flashing lights and assess the impact this has on vehicle and pedestrian behaviour. Hopefully the findings will allow crossing without lighting, and this will allow new crossings to be added more easily in the future.

SF asked the outcome of the RBKC traffic survey conducted in 2024 on Ledbury Road. FFB answered saying that the advice based on traffic survey was not to introduce traffic calming installations. Max noted his personal frustration that local authorities can't enforce speeding laws, only the police have the power to do this. WCC have asked central government to grant this power to local authorities.

SF asked if the new style zebra crossing without lights would be possible on Ledbury Road. Max confirmed it would not be possible as Ledbury Road would not be classified as "side road".

SF asked what was required to move the Ledbury Road crossing forward to completion. Max agreed to chase RBKC for activity.

SF informed those attending that a consultation on Great Western Road traffic lights has been opened on the government portal Common Place and encouraged members to give their opinions.

SC informed those attending that a link to the Common Place portal can be found on the "useful links" page of the NHENF website.

Five Ways Project

Steering Committee member David Rea (DR) gave an update on the Five Ways project and was happy to report that it had been included in the WCC "place making" scheme for Westbourne Grove and hoped this would ensure that Five Ways becomes a focal point for the area with safe crossing.

Max Sullivan again praised NHENF for campaigning on the Five Ways and getting it from an ambition to a project that is moving forward to action. DR noted that NHENF have already attended a workshop on the subject at City Hall, and another workshop is scheduled for May. DR also noted a project update from WCC is expected in June.

Attending member asked when the current construction on the "corner building" at Five Ways was due to complete. NHENF was unable to provide an answer to this question.

The same attending member asked what the building was going to be when completed. FFB answered that it would be “three apartments, a gym, a vegan café, and a spa”.

Needham Road

Vice Chair Suzanne Forte (SF) provided an update on the Needham Road project. SF noted that when project proposals were ranked by voting at the 2022 AGM, the Needham Road project ranked in the top five. SF showed slides of various resident proposals for Needham Road from workshops and consultations spanning from 2018 to 2025. SF noted that funding has always been an issue for this project, and following the latest WCC consultation in 2024, WCC are only able to offer sufficient funds to install tree peninsulas. WCC assured residents there would be no loss of parking bays to accommodate this proposal. WCC identified the large leaning tree near the Cock and Bottle pub as requiring removal but stated four new trees would be planted. SF noted that NHENF asked if residents could choose the species of trees and WCC did not respond.

SF noted that residents had larger ambitions for Needham Road than just installing tree peninsulas and that NHENF continues to feedback this view back to WCC. The response from WCC has been that installing tree peninsulas now does not prevent a larger scheme later.

SF discussed the possibility of connecting the Needham Road project to the Westbourne Grove High Streets Improvement Programme. At a workshop for the Westbourne Grove scheme potential locations for street markets were discussed and NHENF suggested Needham Road as an ideal location. Including Needham Road would require the current boundary for the Westbourne Grove project to be extended slightly, but this might be possible.

SF presented further slides of ideas for Needham Road that residents had proposed, including wider pavements, narrow crossing points, more trees, rain gardens, and benches.

SF then asked those attending if NHENF should push to have a larger Needham Road project included in the Westbourne Grove project, or whether we just stop at the four tree peninsulas being offered by WCC.

ACTION - feedback received from those attending was that NHENF should push for a larger scheme at Needham Road by joining to the Westbourne Grove High Streets Improvement Programme.

St Stephens Garden Update

SF noted that after many years of discussion and effort the pergola at St Stephen’s Garden had been reconfigured and chess tables have been installed. SF shared a story about a community installing a long wooden table in a park for community dining events. SF asked those attending if this was something they would like to see added to St Stephen’s Garden between the pergola and table tennis table.

An attending member asked what would be in this space without the proposed table. SF noted there is a grass patch there, but it is balding. SF also noted that children currently play ball on this patch of ground and called on the group for any other ideas. SF suggested a planted children’s garden to start the ideas conversation. Members attending asked if children currently use the space. SF noted there is a school nearby and playground area is heavily used. Some members attending expressed support for the idea of children’s garden. SF repeated the call for ideas and asked members to email suggestions.

ACTION - PBS noted there is a notice board in the park and that NHENF will post a notice calling for ideas for St Stephen’s Garden.

Street Trees update

SF presented a slide of the ten new street trees planted in the area. An attending member asked who has responsibility for watering them. SF noted they have bags around the base to protect them. Max Sullivan stated that the tree team will monitor young trees while they are still being “nursed”.

Drinking Fountain

SF noted that at past AGMs and in the Neighbourhood Plan the idea of drinking fountain has been suggested, perhaps two tiers with a dog bowl option for Shrewsbury Gardens. SF noted that there are standard products available for purchase, but perhaps a local design competition would result in something more sculptural.

ACTION - there was strong support from those attending for NHENF to pursue a design competition for a drinking fountain.

Front Gardens update

Chair Penny Bagnall-Smith (PBS) presented an update on loss of front gardens to paving. PBS noted NHENF have been in conversation with WCC about the interpretation of the permitted development rules with respect to paving over gardens. NHENF is concerned that the rule allowing an area of 5m² to be paved is being interpreted as 5m x 5m, instead of 5m x 1m. PBS noted that paving a larger area is permitted provided the paving is SUDS compliant, and this drainage standard is important as members have been reporting that buildings insurance companies are starting to deem our neighbourhood a surface flood risk, making it difficult to obtain insurance.

PBS noted that NHENF wishes to inform the local community that planning permission is required to pave more than 5m² of a garden and invited Jerry Bell (JB), Head of Planning for Westminster North, to explain how this might work through a process known as an “informative”. JB explained this is a public information leafleting exercise, with the WCC logo, and agreed to provide an update on whether this will be possible on this issue.

ACTION – follow up with Jerry Bell on whether public information leafleting exercise is possible for front garden paving over issue

PBS also noted NHENF has been reviewing an increasing number of planning applications with provision for bin storage areas in front gardens. PBS expressed concern that perhaps applicants have misunderstood guidance on the WCC website that applies on to *new developments* only and therefore used the opportunity of the AGM to inform those attending that bin storage areas are not mandatory for existing properties.

Garden Competition

Steering Group member Brenda Morrison (BM) reminded those attending that NHENF holds an annual front garden competition. Resident’s gardens that are visible from the street are judged by BM and Richard Perkins (ex-Chair of NHENF). There are two categories, Garden and Balcony/Patio, and judging will take place in late June or early July. The winner will be announced at the annual Winter Party.

SUDS defined

Steering Group member DR noted that SUDs was mentioned during the discussion about front gardens and thought it would be helpful to inform those present this acronym stands for “Sustainable Urban Drainage” which means having surface that absorb water rather than having it run off into the street. This is achieved by using permeable materials and helps alleviate flooding caused when drains

overflow. Head of Planning, Jerry Bell, re-iterated that SUDs is requirement for paving over 5m2, but not under this limit.

Question re: specific Notting Hill Genesis property

Attending member asked about the poor garden maintenance of the Notting Hill Genesis property on the corner of Hereford Road and Talbot Road. Diana Natabona (Housing Operations Manager, Central Team 4, Notting Hill Genesis) said that her team is aware of this property and they are trying to engage with the residents.

Guest Speaker

Joe Powell, MP for Kensington and Bayswater

Introduced himself and stated that he is holding ward-by-ward community meetings to get resident views on local, national, or international issues. He noted that the next Bayswater meeting would be a coffee afternoon, June 20th 2pm -4pm. These meetings are in addition to regular surgeries, and his office can be contacted via email to book an individual appointment if required.

Joe listed the following parliamentary campaigns he is involved in that have a local impact

- St Mary's hospital has been moved back on the government programme for new hospitals, but funding has been delayed until mid 2030's. Joe and others have successfully campaigned to secure an immediate three-year planning budget so that the St Mary's project can work towards full planning consent. This will allow private capital investment to be pursued with the hope of accelerating the project.
- Short-term letting of residential properties is an issue that effects all of Westminster, but Bayswater has a particularly high concentration of rental properties. The ambition is to regulate private short-term letting activity by having Westminster join a pilot programme to register all short-term lets. This will require properties to have a unique ID for letting that can be traced across multiple letting platforms (e.g. AirBnB, Booking.com) and thus allow effective application of London's 90 day per year maximum rule. Joe expressed the personal view that he is in favour of going further and devolving power to local government through the licensing system to give councils the ability to restrict the total number of short let permits issued.
- Regulation of dock-less rental E-bikes, particularly Lime bikes, is another issue Joe is campaigning on. Central government has committed to devolving greater powers to London councils in the current parliamentary session. This should give WCC greater control over parking areas and the sharing of fines, which currently go entirely to the rental companies. And the upcoming Crime and Policing Bill will also introduce a new offense specifically targeted towards overpowered electric delivery bicycles. This will give police the authority to more easily seize and impound bicycles that do not conform to power rating restrictions.
- Safe house is the biggest single reason residents contact Joe for surgery appointments, and this relates to damp, mould, and poor repairs in both social and private rental sectors. The government intends to lift standards for rental properties, including a mandatory 24-hour emergency repair window for damp and mould. The three largest social housing providers in Joe's ward (Notting Hill Genesis, Peabody, and Octavia) have already committed to improvement on repairs, damp and mould, and communications. The next step is to extend this level of commitment to private landlords as well, and new legislation may be required to achieve this via the Renter's Rights Reform Bill.

Joe invited question from the floor and thanked NHENF members for hosting him at our AGM.

Neighbourhood Plan update

Chair Penny Bagnall-Smith (PBS) reminded those attending that NHENF's Neighbourhood Plan is still moving through the regulatory stages necessary to get it approved. She noted the last draft is available on the NHENF website and invited comments via the usual email address, info@nottinghilleast.org.uk. PBS noted that the current requirement is to complete a Basic Conditions Statement, and NHENF has applied for some funds from the WCC ward budget to pay for professional assistance with this complicated task.

PBS explained that another requirement from WCC is that we poll NHENF members asking for personal details such as age, educational attainment, and employment status. The NHENF Steering Group felt some of the questions are intrusive and are therefore "pushing back" on this requirement with WCC, but PBS explained we may lose this battle and be forced to send a questionnaire to all members asking for these details. PBS apologised in advance for this. Vice Chair Suzanne Forte noted that if the questionnaire is sent, members are not obliged to answer it, but it will help us compare the composition of NHENF with that of the wider neighbourhood, which is what WCC is interested in.

90 Westbourne Grove update

Chair Penny Bagnall-Smith (PBS) provided an update on the large development at 90 Westbourne Grove that has been the subject of multiple consultations and presentations. PBS noted that the developers are currently revising their proposals in response to issues raised with the scale and lack of greenery. After the revisions, a formal planning application will be submitted to WCC following the usual process.

ACTION – the presentation slides relating to the 90 Westbourne Grove development will be published on the NHENF website for those who wish to review in greater detail. This includes a survey conducted by the developers.

Any Other Business

An attending member noted that the ATM cash point at 90 Westbourne Grove (Sainsburys) is the only local one available and hopes that some arrangement will be made to ensure a local ATM is retained. In answer, another attending member pointed out that the new Post Office on Westbourne Grove offers a cash point when it is open. Max Sullivan pointed out the open hours are very generous at 6am to 9pm, seven days a week. Max asked local residents to support the new Post Office by using its services and making other purchases from the store.

Meeting Adjourned

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m. and attendees invited to stay for pizza and drinks.