

**Ashtead Neighbourhood Forum**  
**Minutes of the Meeting held on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2013**

<b>Place</b>	The Ralli Room, Ashtead Peace Memorial Hall 10.00 - 12.20 pm
<b>Present</b>	Jean Bradley (JB), Daphne Burnett, Bob Cane (BC), Ray Cane, Bryan Davis (BD), Andy Ellis (AE), Zoe Green, Roy Guy (RG), David Harper, David Hawksworth, Elizabeth Hrywniak (EH), Jim Malynn (JMa) Denise Newman (DN), Glynis Peterkin (GP), Marie Pigden, Peter Smith, Di Stirling (DS), Alex Tombs, Tony Tuley,(TT) Pam Ventham-Smith and Patricia Wiltshire.
<b>In attendance</b>	Jane Smith (JSm) MVDC and Jack Straw (JSt) MVDC
<b>Apologies</b>	Maggi Altham, Gordon Chilton, James Close, Mary Cooper, Tony Cooper, Mark Everett, Paula Hancock, Paul Hancock, Nigel Herbert, Kathy Lewis, John Morgan(Jmo), Sue Stansfield, Glynis Gatenby.

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Action</b>
<p><b>1. Introduction, Minutes of the Last Meeting and Matters Arising</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TT welcomed everyone to the meeting and announced that since the last meeting ACV had received the resignations of John Busby and Caroline Cardew-Smith due to relocation.</li> <li>• The minutes of the last meeting were then approved and signed.</li> <li>• TT stressed the importance of members sending their apologies if unable to attend a Forum Meeting.</li> <li>• The ACV website is in the process of being redeveloped. TT urged members who have yet to send in photos or accompanying information about themselves for the website to do so quickly. About fifty words should be sufficient.</li> <li>• It was noted that the results of the Village Day Survey have yet to appear on the website. TT assured the meeting that they will do so as part of the new website.</li> </ul>	AE
<p><b>2. Green Belt Boundary Review.</b></p> <p>TT began his overview of the work undertaken by ACV by saying that since the last meeting the group had received training in the land sustainability process and had also been given help by Jane Smith and Jack Straw of MVDC. He stressed that the recommendations for each of the areas, based on the criteria of 'Merging, Encroachment, Setting/Character', was not a proposal to build but an assessment of the contribution that each piece of land made to the Green Belt.</p> <p>TT then ran through the 'Merging, Encroachment, Setting/Character' assessments for each of the areas under review and the conclusions drawn at the end of the process.</p> <p>The following points were raised during the process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As part of the definition of 'Merging' the report should say 'neighbouring' not neighbourhood'.</li> <li>• It would be helpful to have a glossary of technical terms such as SSI added at the end.</li> <li>• It was confirmed that Area J had been treated as part of the original Area B in the original survey as seen by the village. A note to this effect had been included in the document.</li> <li>• The final sentence of the Area C footnotes is to be struck out.</li> <li>• There was a long discussion involving Area H and ACV's GBBR recommendation for that area because it is a possible site for the</li> </ul>	TT TT TT

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<p>relocation of the Leatherhead allotments. For further details of the discussion see Item 3 in the minutes. The conclusion was that the recommendation wording should stress that there should be 'no introduction of urbanising features'.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regarding Area J, the matter was raised that, by allowing houses on the Garden Centre plot it could be considered as affecting the economic activity of the village. JSm pointed out that what was being evaluated at this stage was the Green Belt and that the local economy was not a consideration as part of that assessment process.</li> <li>• BD pointed out that Area J is close to the boundary with Epsom, who could develop there resulting in the loss of an important wildlife corridor. JSm was able to tell the meeting that MVDC are in contact with all the councils on their boundaries and would hear if Epsom were to consider building there. It appears that Epsom are looking to build within their existing developed areas and not on the outskirts.</li> <li>• All the areas having been discussed the Forum accepted the report and agreed it should be released to the whole village for its consideration. AE assured the meeting that if changes were asked for then they would have to be made but he felt that based on past evidence the village was in general agreement with the conclusions already drawn.</li> </ul>	TT
<p>There was some further discussion regarding the implications of the recommendations put forward:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• JB and BD asked if there was any idea how many houses could be built on the two areas being put forward as possible sites for development (F and J). JSt explained that it was impossible to say until planning applications had been put forward. Also, until MVDC have considered the GBBR for the whole of Mole Valley and assessed each site, the number of houses required in a particular area could not be confirmed. In addition, if it were to be decided that Gatwick was chosen for further development, the pressure for housing could shift away from Mole Valley.</li> <li>• JMa pointed out that both F and J were a long way from the basic facilities of the village. AE said that once sites had been earmarked the next stage was to consider their suitability. GP added that the sites would be subjected to a Sustainability Appraisal system consisting of nineteen criteria and a decision would be based on those results.</li> <li>• EH put forward that if dwellings for the elderly were to be created on either F or J then the development should include the basics of a surgery and access to facilities to allow for independent living such as a shop.</li> </ul>	
<p>TT asked the meeting if anyone was interested in a bus trip to view each of the Green Belt sites. There was definite support for such an exercise and David Hawsworth and Pat agreed to help in describing each of the areas in situ. A Saturday morning was chosen to be the best time. This is not to be confused with David and Pat's offer of a field walking exercise to help understand their ecological assessment work.</p>	TT
<p>JSm said that later in the Green Belt process there would be an opportunity to look at small anomalies such as areas where the Green Belt boundary goes through part of someone's garden. She confirmed that if an area within the green belt already has buildings on it, the buildings do not prevent it from retaining its Green Belt status.</p>	

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<p><b>3. Leatherhead Allotments.</b></p> <p>a. <u>Change of Proposed Site</u></p> <p>JSm explained that the area south of the railway line at H was now one of a possible number of sites for the relocation of the Leatherhead allotments, but not the sole one. Allotments can be permitted on green belt land in that they are not inappropriate but there would need to be planning permission for access and sheds. It is a policy of MVDC that allotments are not lost and the final decision will be made through the planning mechanism at MVDC. ACV, as the official body of Ashtead, is in the strongest position to make the feelings of the village known regarding the allotments.</p> <p>b. <u>Approval of our stance on this site.</u></p> <p>It was agreed that the Forum did not wish to see allotments on the site and a tighter rewording of the conclusion for Area H on the GBBR had been agreed as above.</p> <p>AE noted that ACV had had a request from the agents for this possible development to speak to the Forum about allotments. This had been declined at this stage, although ACV would have an informal discussion with them. Once all submissions for development had been received, AE would arrange for an opportunity for all of them to speak to the Forum.</p>	AE
<p><b>4. GBBR Responsibility.</b></p> <p>a. <u>Impact of new timing on Ashtead Forum</u></p> <p>TT confirmed that the Government had recently decreed that only district councils are able decide on changes to the Green Belt Boundary. He then ran through the document that showed the parallel timelines for MVDC to make its GBBR decisions and that of ACV for producing its NDP. It showed that the NDP cannot be issued until after the GBBR is finally approved in early 2015. After that, the NDP would have to be examined which would not occur until Spring 2016 at the earliest. He explained that ACV had considered this new protracted set of timings at their last meeting and it had been agreed to at least complete the GBBR because it felt that the voice of the village should be heard. He hoped that the Forum would agree to stay with the task.</p> <p>JSt stressed that Neighbourhood Forums still had a valuable role to play but by handing the task back to the councils it meant that there could be a district-wide, consistent approach to the Green Belt Review across the whole of Mole Valley. JSt acknowledged the complication created by the GBBR and urged that it must not kill any aspirations if the Green Belt were to be released.</p> <p>The areas pitched to the council by developers will still be sent to ACV to be considered by the village. During the MV consultation period, ACV can still be doing valuable work such as looking at potential sites within the built up areas and agreeing on the design and character of new buildings so that no time is lost once the go-ahead is given.</p> <p>JMa asked why it was necessary to consult further and was told that once the GBBR was finalised it was necessary to do so for it to be adopted as policy. GP further explained that consultation so far had been based on the Green Belt Review but from now on it would be on the NDP proper.</p> <p>BC asked if the NDP could be finished a year earlier. AE thought this not possible because ACV won't know the decision regarding the Green Belt boundaries by then. RG asked if there could be a contingency plan based on nothing changing. To which JMa added that that would allow ACV to go ahead and then adjust</p>	AE

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<p>accordingly. ACV to consider this approach.  It was agreed that the Forum should continue.</p>	
<p><b>5. Communications Approach</b></p> <p>AE ran through the timetable of publicity and consultation planned for the next three months which will include the next ACV newsletter to be distributed to the whole of the village and various press releases.</p> <p>An Open Day was planned for January and it was agreed that this should be held on 18th January 2014 in Ashtead Peace Memorial Hall.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">AE outlined a possible approach to the Forum Open Day and that is to start with a half hour session for special invitees who are in touch with the local community such as the local councillors and local MP in order to get their reaction. Thereafter it would be open to the general public.</p> <p>AE stated that after publication of the Green Belt review recommendations, ACV would be calling for sites to be put forward for development. Each of these would be assessed against that document and the 19-point criteria and the conclusions passed to Mole Valley in April 2014.</p> <p>Nigel Herbert of the publicity group had asked for the newly created Twitter account to be made known. The address is <b>@ACVComms</b> where regular tweets and updates relating to Ashtead Community Vision's work can be followed.</p> <p>PW also suggested the use of "Streetlife" (<a href="http://www.streetlife.com">www.streetlife.com</a>) which was interesting because many topics concerning Ashtead residents are discussed publicly.</p>	
<p><b>6. AOB</b></p> <p>a. David Harper informed the meeting that following the various surveys undertaken by the housing group, ACV has produced an initial estimate for how many dwellings will be needed by the village and their character. The figures had been sent to Planning Aid (the professional body put in place to help groups undertaking NDPs) for their assessment but they had not as yet responded.</p> <p>b. AE formally thanked Pat Wiltshire and David Hawksworth for all the hours of work they had put in on behalf of the group in assessing the Green Belt.</p>	
<p><b>7. Date of Next Meeting</b></p> <p>The dates of the 2014 Forum meetings are as follows: 8th February, 17<sup>th</sup> May, 9th August and 8th November. Note that the May date is not the second Saturday as the hall is unavailable.</p>	All