

*Shaping the future,
safeguarding the past*

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Society's AGM will be held at 8pm on Wednesday 14th May 2025 at the Methodist Church , 11 - 13 Ashley Road, Epsom KT18 5AQ. Members are requested to arrive by 7.45pm for refreshments so that a prompt start can be made to the business of the evening. After the business of the AGM there will be a talk from Councillor Steven McCormick on 'Local Government Reform – what could it mean for Epsom and Ewell?'

Agenda:

1. Welcome and opening remarks.
2. Consideration of the minutes of the 2024 AGM, attached.
3. Consideration of the Annual Review for the year 2024/25, attached.
4. Consideration of the Report and Accounts for year ended 31 December 2024, attached.
5. Election or re-election of Officers/ Committee members who have agreed to stand for re-election.
6. Any other business

By order of the Committee

Margaret Hollins

Chair

47 The Parade

Epsom KT18 5DU

MINUTES OF EPSOM CIVIC SOCIETY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD AT MYERS STUDIO, EPSOM PLAYHOUSE, EPSOM AT 8PM ON 25/4/2024

Margaret Hollins (Chair) welcomed everyone to the meeting and for attending despite other attractions taking place, notably the Pink Floyd concert in the Playhouse.

PRESENT: Most of the committee, and members.

APOLOGIES: Mark Bristow, Linda Bristow, Ishbel Kenward, Doug Kenward, Geoff Delamere, Val Delamere, Roger White, Angela White, David Triggs, Sue Doughty, Rob Austen, Liz Austen.

MINUTES OF 2023 AGM were taken as read and accepted.

Acceptance Proposed by: **Steve McCormick**

Seconded by: **Angela Clifford**

Carried without objection or abstention.

ANNUAL REVIEW

Although taken as read, Margaret Hollins (Chair) said that there were a few matters she would like to flag up for the meeting. She first thanked the committee members for their hard work and the road representatives, and she also wanted to thank the many supporters for their work behind the scenes, their expertise on planning and providing articles on local history for the newsletter.

The current key focus of the Society was the progress on the Local Plan, and she was very pleased to welcome Councillor Steve McCormick to the meeting and he had agreed to answer questions later.

She touched on events planning and said the Society

wished to set up social events that members would want to attend but several had had to be cancelled due to lack of support.

She spoke on succession planning for the committee and said that most members of the committee were covering more than one role and pointed out that Nick Lock, the Treasurer, was also on the Downs Liaison Committee.

It was proposed the Annual Review be taken as read.

Acceptance Proposed by: **Tricia Ladd**

Seconded by: **Sheila Wadsworth**

Carried without objection or abstention.

FINANCIAL REVIEW AND ACCOUNTS: Presented by Nick Lock (Hon. Treasurer)

NL hoped that everyone could see a copy of the accounts. There was not much new, the subscriptions were slightly higher and donations lower. This is due to more members paying direct which makes it difficult to differentiate between subscriptions and donations. There had been no increase in the number of members, but subscriptions had increased to £5 a house and £3 for an individual.

Members would note that there was a new item for tax on the accounts. Provision for tax had never had to be made before as not enough interest had been earned on the £42,000 legacy left 10 years ago as interest rates had been rock bottom since then. Interest rates had now risen and as well as the Barclays current account the Society now had an account with National Counties and PayPal as well as a fairly large amount in a bond at the Cambridge & Counties which had earned nearly £1400 in interest. The Society had to pay tax as it was not a Charity and going forward the possibility of the Society becoming a Charity might had to be gone into.

The publication and stationery bill had gone up due to re-printing the membership leaflets and the Newsletters getting longer.

NL then touched on the social activities and confirmed the difficulty of finding outings that people like to go on – particularly when bookings have to be made way in advance, and it can be found nearer the time that the income ends up less than the expenditure. The social event for the road reps cost £200+. The rest was lost on the trip to Sonning due to unsold tickets. The Society has a large credit note from Sonning if any members wish to take advantage of this as it needs to be used within two years.

Net income was over £1000 and reserves nearly £43,000.

An enquiry was raised about the Tree Fund and NL explained that some two years ago at the request of the Epsom Tree Advisory Board the Society collected donations towards planting trees in the Borough. A sizeable amount of money was passed over and NL said that when the Tree Fund had grown again a cheque would be written to the Tree Advisory Board.

NL confirmed the accounts had been signed off and gave his thanks to Brian Atkinson for acting as the Society's Auditor.

Acceptance Proposed by: **Angela Clifford**

Seconded by: **Liz Frost**

Carried without objection or abstention.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS

MH began by paying tribute to Bob Hollis, the Vice Chair of the Society who had been a heroic member of the committee but due to other commitments was having to stand down at the end of the year. He had been fantastic to work with and would be hard to replace having done lots of work with members and non-members and had been the leader of the Society's outreach work.

BH said it had been a great pleasure to be part of the Committee for the past six years and he was sorry to have to depart.

Re-election of Chair – Bob Hollis, Vice Chair, stated it gave him great pleasure to propose the vote re-electing Margaret Hollins as Chair as she did way too much work for the Society.

Acceptance Proposed by: **Sheila Wadsworth**

Seconded by: **Steve McCormick**

Carried without objection or abstention.

MH then explained that as Bob Hollis was leaving the committee the Society would not be re-electing him as Vice Chair and that meant that the Society now had a vacancy for the Vice Chair and sadly still had a vacancy for the Hon. Secretary.

Re-election of Treasurer - The re-election of Nick Lock as an assiduous Hon. Treasurer as well as contributing greatly to the Society was proposed

Acceptance Proposed by: **Steve McCormick**

Seconded by: **Liz Frost**

Carried without objection or abstention.

Re-election of Rest of Committee Members was proposed:

Michael Arthur Planning

John Mumford Planning

Mark Bristow Webmaster

Ishbel Kenward Membership

Eleanor Bland Minutes and Events

Jan Lanigan Events

Linda Bristow Events

Aurelie Paoli Climate Change and Sustainability

Carol Reed Newsletter

Acceptance Proposed by: **Angela Clifford**

Seconded by: **Anne Arthur**

Carried without objection or abstention.

Margaret Hollins thanked all the members of the committee for their support and again mentioned the problem of succession planning.

Membership

Ishbel Kenward was unable to attend the meeting, but it was confirmed that membership was currently 1586, one of the largest memberships in UK Civic Societies.

Events

Eleanor Bland asked the meeting in view of the Treasurer's comments if members would let her know by the end of the year whether they would be interested in a trip to Sonning next year.

She also asked for any members who were interested in Ian West's trip to The Durdans on the 30th June to let her know.

AOB

Angela Clifford enquired as to whether the Society could spend some of its funds to help increase the number of members. NL said that he was not against using funds to gain membership but queried whether the Society would need to spend money on open meetings for the local plan and when would be the best time for that. It would also, probably influence membership.

Steve McCormick was then introduced and agreed to answer the question of the timing of the local plan. The Regulation 18 draft plan which had been consulted on last year would be back for public consultation in January next year. The Council had some key decisions to make and more refinements following the Regulation 18 plan. The revised Regulation 19 plan would be put in front of the LPPC committee in November and if the LPPC supports it will come to full Council in December and then out to public consultation in January.

He explained that the public cannot shape it between then and now and information is being gathered behind the scenes. He said that the Council regards the ECS as a critical friend.

All comments on the Regulation 19 plan from the public will be captured and shared with the Planning Inspector.

MA enquired whether this meant that there would not be any further amendments by the Council, but it would be left to the Planning Inspector.

Steve McCormick stated that no modifications had been made to the Regulation 18 responses and Regulation 19 responses would be showed unmodified to the Inspector. The Regulation 19 plan will take account of some of the responses to the Regulation 18 plan and will add more detail. Infrastructure details will be in Regulation 19 consultation.

MH enquired whether there was a local plan communication strategy for the Borough or a wider communication strategy for the Council – as things might get tough in some areas.

Steve McCormick said there would be an updated communication plan to support Regulation 19 – it is difficult to get information out, but he is always happy to turn up and speak. The most emotive area is the green belt and people just say “don’t build on the green belt” but do not realise that the Council is spending £2 million on providing temporary accommodation. It is a hugely complex area and if the Civic Society want to run sessions on matters of interest he will happily speak to MH and JM about attending these.

Angela Clifford stated that she had responded to Regulation 18 consultation, but others had asked her “what’s the point?” Steve McCormick confirmed that the Council do take notice, and the responses are used to refine and structure the plan. AC said that this needs to be put out in the public domain.

An enquiry was raised as to whether the green belt controversy had caused changes to the height of brown field developments. Cllr McCormick explained that the Council could not use 2018 data but had to use the 2014 data and that most people who signed the green belt petition did not really understand that 36% of the green belt already has development on it.

He asked the meeting how high they would wish development to go in the town centre?

MH thanked Steve McCormick for speaking to the meeting and for his offer for help.

Guest Speaker

Margaret Hollins welcomed the Guest Speaker, Sir Edward Clay, who is a member of the Society and a Road Representative. Sir Edward was High Commissioner (ambassador) to Uganda and was accredited also on a non-resident basis to Rwanda and Burundi. He covered the period of the genocide in Rwanda. He had been a volunteer 30 years before helping the UNHCR run camps for Rwandan refugees when the then-government first started persecuting and driving out their own fellow-citizens – a process that culminated in the genocide of 1994. As High Commissioner in Kenya, he was also the British Permanent Representative to Habitat and the UN Environment Programme. He served also twice (in junior roles) in eastern Europe during the Cold War, where private property was officially scorned by the regime but privately mourned by many. In Cyprus, he saw how grief and outrage over the alleged expropriation by one part of the nation of properties owned by the other community of their fellow-citizens complicated the search for a settlement of the fifty- (or sixty-) year old problem of the divided island. Sir Edward is a North Yorkshireman by birth, his wife is from Epsom, and they had married in Ewell and although, due to his profession, they had moved around they have been grounded in Epsom for 40+ years.

Sir Edward thanked MH for her welcome and spoke on his long experience of volunteering and home thoughts from abroad. His main themes

focused on the governing of human settlements i.e. planning, population, increase in cities and towns, as the world is urbanising at an increasingly fast rate, particularly in Africa. He asked whether we define a nation by the importance of land or its population, land rights or community and tribal identities, contrasting experiences and attitudes in Cyprus, Russia, Eastern Europe in the Cold War and the British approach to its territories abroad, in Kenya and in Africa more generally. Sir Edward went on to discuss demographics and chart the growth in world population, with particular reference to African cities in Kenya, Nigeria, and the Democratic Republic of Congo, the challenges presented by rapid growth, and the need for good governance and planning to deliver key infrastructure and develop their resilience to the impacts of climate change. He reflected on the value of land and community, the benefits of rounded towns and well-planned places, and common experiences, lessons to be learned and challenges managed both abroad and at home. Sir Edward finished by saying that scrutiny of what is happening around us is the greatest gift of the Society as all politics are local.

Margaret Hollins thanked Sir Edward Clay for his thought-provoking and wide-ranging talk and presented him with a gift from the Society. The meeting closed at 21.45.

ANNUAL REVIEW May 2024 – April 2025

The past year has been one of highs and lows for the Society. Welcoming Simon Alford to the committee has been a great pleasure. Simon's energy, enthusiasm and expertise has proved to be an enormous benefit, and we are delighted to have him on board.

We were very pleased to recruit new members at our display in the Ashley Centre, as well as having the opportunity to chat to members and friends who dropped by.

Three particular highlights in terms of this year's events: sincere thanks must go to Johanna and Andreas for generously hosting another popular and most enjoyable visit to 'Durdans' and thanks to Eleanor Bland and Ian West for organising on behalf of the Society; special thanks to Ishbel Kenward for organising the Society's annual social event for our wonderful road representatives at a new venue, Epsom Sports Club, and with a new afternoon format that made the most of the spring sunshine; joining September's Party in the Park celebrations for the Rotary Club of Epsom's 100th year of volunteer work, where we recruited new members and had a chat with people who stopped by, including our new MP.

Inevitably, the progress of the Borough's draft Local Plan continued to occupy much of the Society's attention. The new government's planning priorities and reform agenda added further challenges with new targets and deadlines, necessitating much 'behind the scenes' activity for us. Over the summer, and liaising with Civic Voice, we worked on putting together a response to the government's consultation on reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework. This took a considerable amount of time, and special thanks must go to John Mumford, Mark Bristow, Geoff Delamere and Michael Arthur for their input which enabled us to submit our response by the September deadline. This was our seventh response in four years to planning consultations from successive governments. Thereafter we returned our attention to the at times uncertain and tortuous pathway of the draft Local Plan towards the Regulation 19 public consultation, corresponding with councillors, the council's planning team and others

on connected matters. That pathway necessitated recommendation from the Licensing and Planning Policy Committee (20 November) and approval by the Full Council (10 December). The council's launch of the 6-week consultation period on 20 December was both necessary to meet government deadlines as regards progressing this version of the Plan and additionally challenging for the Society's committee members as regards responding to it. The submission deadline of 5 February gave enough time for the Society to submit representations but not to organise a meeting for ECS members and members of the public.

This brings me to this year's core 'low' for the Society: the committee has been particularly stretched this year, as flagged up in our Summer 2024 newsletter. One significant consequence of the timing of the above events (enlarged upon in our Spring 2025 newsletter) has been a delay in newsletter publication. By way of an update, two of the Society's Officer posts remain vacant (Vice Chair and Hon. Secretary), and we are also in need of a newsletter editor, publicity lead and archivist for the coming year. Remaining committee members have been heroic in keeping the Society, its website and social media going, but in the medium to long term the situation we find ourselves in is unsustainable. Given the submission (10 March 2025) of the draft Local Plan to the Planning Inspectorate, we do anticipate returning to a more frequent newsletter publication schedule in future, nevertheless succession planning is an increasingly urgent priority for the Society, and it is essential that volunteers come forward from our membership base within the next twelve months. By April 2026, the Society will need a new Minutes Secretary, and a new Chair, in addition to filling the vacancies above.

Despite our staffing challenges, the Society continued its meetings with EEBC's Head of Place Development, representatives from SCoRA, and Chairs of the Planning and Licensing and Planning Policy committees respectively. As the need arises, we continue to have meetings with individual councillors on local issues, as well as with our members.

Many thanks to Michael Arthur, John Mumford and more recently to Simon Alford, who continue their

diligent scrutiny of planning cases (applications and appeals) submitting representations on the Society's behalf including in connection with the major redevelopment proposals for the former Southern Gas Network site in East Street. These cases are and will continue to be chronicled in our newsletters. Meanwhile, we are still waiting for information on our nominations for local listing which we submitted in 2021.

Eternal thanks to Mark Bristow whose quiet efficiency in the management and maintenance of the Society's website ensures it remains up-to-date and a valuable resource for members and non-members alike. Nick Lock's wise counsel and practical support across a range of the Society's activities, together with his dual brief as Hon Treasurer and the Society's reporter on the Downs, remain bedrock elements to our functionality. Likewise, Eleanor Bland's generous giving of her time to the core functions of Minutes Secretary and events planning lead. Ishbel Kenward's dedication to and efficiency in her role as Membership Secretary is exceptional in managing the Society's significant portfolio of membership and subscriptions. Aurélie Paoli has unstintingly given her assistance and expertise with informative and insightful articles on sustainability. Jan Lanigan's meticulous attention to detail in helping organise various events and her willingness to step in at short notice to deputise as Minutes Secretary is enormously helpful. It's a huge bonus that my fellow committee members have extensive local knowledge.

Special thanks to our road representatives and to Sue Doughty for her outstanding leadership with our newsletter distribution and delivery, not forgetting her patience and understanding over the past year's interruption in publication. Special thanks also to those members of the Society whose time and expertise enrich our newsletter contributions and events support to keep the Society going.

This year sees the departure of three committee members. Grateful thanks go to Carol Reed for her contribution to the Society's communications and newsletter production over the years. We have been fortunate to benefit from Carol's professional expertise, despite her extensive work commitments. As Carol steps down from her roles as newsletter

editor and publicity lead, we wish her well with her future plans. Thanks also to Linda Bristow who has generously given her support to the Society's events planning in recent years, in addition to her considerable volunteering responsibilities elsewhere. The Society owes Philip Clifford, who for very many years has been the Society's Hon. Archivist, an enormous debt of gratitude for his diligence and dedication in cataloguing the Society's papers. Best wishes to Linda and to Philip.

David Rowe (Hon Photography Archivist) continues in his role, as does the Society's Hon Auditor, Brian Atkinson. Their essential work, for the most part 'behind the scenes', is greatly appreciated. Thanks also to Max and the entire team at the Rising Sun for our continued use of their function room for the Society's committee meetings for this past year.

Margaret Hollins

Chair of the Committee

OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE

The following members have agreed to stand for election to the positions described:

Chair: **Margaret Hollins**

Vice Chairman: Vacancy

Hon Secretary: Vacancy

Hon Treasurer: **Nick Lock**

Other Committee members:

- **Simon Alford** (Heritage)
- **Michael Arthur** (Planning)
- **Eleanor Bland** (Minutes, Events)
- **Mark Bristow** (Webmaster)
- **Ishbel Kenward** (Membership)
- **Jan Lanigan** (Events)
- **John Mumford** (Planning)
- **Aurélie Paoli** (Climate change and sustainability)

Hon Archivist: Vacancy

Hon Photographic Archivist: **David Rowe**

Newsletter Editor: Vacancy

Publicity: Vacancy

Hon Auditor: **Brian Atkinson**

EPSOM CIVIC SOCIETY

INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT - YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

	2024 INCOME	2024 EXPENDITURE	2023 INCOME	2023 EXPENDITURE
Subscriptions	4,130	-	3,939	-
Donations received	579	-	316	-
Bank Interest & Charges	1,632	23	1,393	41
Tax	-	326	-	279
Subscriptions paid to other societies	-	550	-	550
AGM	-	444	-	429
Publications & Stationery	-	914	-	1,670
Postage & Phone	-	85	-	137
Insurance	-	238	-	231
Conferences	-	112	-	-
Equipment purchase	-	-	-	47
Website	-	120	-	95
Printing & Photocopying	-	422	-	157
Sundry Expenses	-	47	-	213
Social Activities	-	251	4,776	5,506
Total income / expenditure for year	<u>6,341</u>	<u>3,532</u>	<u>10,424</u>	<u>9,355</u>
LESS Expenditure	<u>(3,532)</u>		<u>(9,355)</u>	
NET INCOME / (EXPENDITURE)	<u>2,809</u>		<u>1,069</u>	

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2024

RESERVES

Represented by:

General Balance b/f at 1/1/2024	42,933	Barclays Bank current account	347
Tree Fund	40	Barclays Bank deposit account	5,595
		PayPal account	34
Net income / (expenditure) in year	2,809	National Counties BS account	7,283
		Cambridge & Counties Bank account	31,245
		Sundry debtors (Note 1)	2,259
		Pre-payments	-
GENERAL RESERVES AS AT 31/12/2024	45,742	Less:	-
TREE FUND AS AT 31/12/2024	87	Sundry creditors & accruals (Note 2)	(934)
TOTAL RESERVES AS AT 31/12/2024	<u>45,829</u>	NET ASSETS	<u>45,829</u>

Note 1

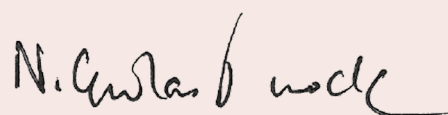
Sundry debtors includes interest accrued but not yet paid of £1,253, and part of the value of a credit note of £1,184 from the Mill at Sonning Theatre provided in respect of tickets purchased for an outing in 2023 that were not used. The credit note has been written down by 15% (£178) to reflect the discount on offer to members who may wish to use it to purchase tickets via the society. Any amount of the credit note that cannot be used will need to be written off in future accounts.

Note 2

Sundry creditors includes an accrual of £605 for tax due but not yet paid on gross interest included in income for the years 2023 and 2024.

TREASURER'S REPORT

In my capacity as Treasurer, I have maintained the accounting records of the Society and prepared the above accounts to reflect the income and expenditure for the year to 31st December 2024.



N J Lock

Hon. Treasurer
13 February 2025

AUDITOR'S REPORT

I have audited the above accounts, which have been prepared by the Treasurer, in accordance with auditing standards. In my opinion the above accounts present fairly the income and expenditure of the Society for the year to 31st December 2024.



Brian Atkinson

Hon. Auditor
13 February 2025