



Aldbrough Hatch – Gravel Extraction Bund. Pat O'Grady

ALDBOROUGH HATCH DEFENCE ASSOCIATION WWW.AHDA.ORG.UK

AHDA

Open Space Newsletter

Nov 2023

ISSUE 39

From the Chair

Many thanks to all those who braved the cold on the 21st November to attend the AGM!

Whilst there were not many at the meeting, the agenda was a full one and it was an opportunity to thank Ken Morgan, our Treasurer for all his work and to wish him well and to introduce and thank Glenn Harvey into the role as Treasurer. Membership can now be paid through BACS and details are available.

We ask if you are able to come and support Chris at the Scrutiny Committee on the Monday 27th November and the Cabinet meeting on Thursday 30th November to press Cllrs to start the important work on updating the information on biodiversity at Fairlop Waters/Plain.

The last time this was done was in 1997, these surveys are meant to

If you were unable to make the AGM

Your membership donation can now be paid by Bank Transfer

Account Name: AHDA

Sort Code: 20-89-56

Account number: 20672971

be done every 5 years, the Council when pressed have previously stated that they are awaiting direction from the Greater London Authority.

Our GLA Member, Keith Prince asked the Mayor of London whether Councils do have to wait for direction from his office and the reply was NO. The council are expected to get on with the work, ready to be submitted to the

mayor's office within the next 2 years.

Discussions moved to the Council 'leasing' off large areas of our public parks, noting Valentine's Park and Melbourne Field, which has been 'leased' to a Crazy Golf company.

We totally disagree with the Council 'offering' the public open space of Oakfields to West Ham, who are being urged to move from their site in Billet Road, so that Bellway Homes can build more homes. Emma from Bealonians updated us and asked for our support to ensure this public space, home to hundreds of residents to play sport and walk their dogs, is kept in use for THEM.

The first planning application for 153 homes has been submitted by Bellway Homes – and I would urge you to go online and look at what is planned. It is ghastly. The planning application is 3024/23

and you can submit your comments.

The AHDA believes building on toxic land is NOT the way forward.

We are concerned that the newly purchased Park School in Ilford is totally unsuitable for use as an extension of Little Heath School, a special needs school, and that over time, the Council will force Little Heath to move permanently to Ilford.

Planning permission for the Gravel Extraction between St Peter's and the Riding School was given over 4 years ago and was said to last for 8 years. The AHDA are concerned that gravel extraction will now start either late

this year or early next, prolonging the predicted timescale for extraction and therefore disruption to residents. We are urging the Council and Bretts to maintain both Footpath 93 and 94 -both used by 10% of the population.

Finally, my thanks to Jenny, my valiant Vice Chair, who is willing to step in for me and whose knowledge and help is invaluable, to Gaby who manages to tame the technology and find 'lost' memos at short notice, to Chris and guide in all things green and pleasant and to Glenn for looking after our finances. Thank You.

I wish all of you a very Merry Christmas and a Peaceful, Healthy New Year. Vanessa

The Dick Turpin Orchard Needs your help!!

Volunteers are needed to help with the Orchard 2 or 3 times a year to help with grass cutting, pruning, and harvesting. Free apples for all that help out!!



Please contact Jenny if you can help:
jaygspace@yahoo.co.uk

We have been campaigning for about 8 years for Redbridge to update its Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) and for an up to date Nature Conservation Strategy/ Nature Recovery Plan.

Last carried out 26 years ago. How long? Yes 26 years!

There's been nothing but excuses. The latest is they are waiting for the GLA. We have now disproved this with the help of Keith Prince our GLA Representative. Will they agree to do the work the hell they will total complacency when we are in a National Biodiversity Crisis!

The Borough lost its Senior Nature Ranger nearly a year ago and still no replacement. The council now buys in expertise from Essex County Council with no local knowledge base.

**WHAT A WAY TO CARRY ON THEN BOAST WHAT A GOOD JOB THEY ARE DOING FOR NATURE!
From Protect Fairlop Plain.**

Bridleway 93

The Bridleway is used daily by members of the public commuting to and from the train station and school as well as horses.

Questions have been asked continuously about who is responsible for the hedgerow, ditches and the Bridleway. Especially by AHDA member Sharon who for over a year has been contacting Redbridge to get the problems resolved.

Proposals for lighting the Bridleway have been suggested by the police but MUST be subject to Nocturnal wildlife study as the whole of Fairlop Plain is a declared Site of Nature Conservation Importance.

The Hedgerow was .. trimmed(?) ... all the cut branches were left in situ which have blown into the ditches.

No attempt has been made to properly manage the hedge which is getting so high and over weighted at the top it is in danger of collapse.

During the recent Gravel Meeting it was stated that Brett will be responsible for the Bridleways, hedgerows, and paths.



Aldborough Hall Nature Reserve

New sign boards are to be installed so that The Aldborough Hall Nature Reserve gets its name as an acknowledgement of the significant contribution made by Ron Jeffries (Our Ron!).

Although when that will happen has yet to be confirmed. We are 'reminding' Redbridge about this as the announcement was in August 2023.



Notes from the Gravel meeting 21/11/23

The Bentonite wall has been finished. This wall prevents toxic substances leaching into the surroundings. The contractor has yet to confirm its completion and the certification is awaited.

When this is done, the gravel extraction can begin, however, given the time until Christmas and the weather conditions, we were told that the extraction process would finish on or about the 22nd December and resume in the New Year.

The Aldborough Nature Reserve has been confirmed as meeting all the requirements for it to be signed off and handed back from Bretts (gravel extraction company) to the Council.

We were told that the footpath leading from Aldborough Road North will have work done to it, to restore its width of 1.5m and they also said they would address the point Jenny made at the meeting, that there is a large dip just beyond the gate.

Maintenance has taken place to the hedge alongside the church, although there are more discussions about clearing the ditch and disposing of the 'waste' cutting and restoring the gaps in that hedge.

The hedging and path along Aldborough Road North were done and the path (opposite the Dick Turpin), which does mean that wheelchairs and buggies etc. can now use this in safety.

The ditch stills need to be cleared on the same side at the Dick Turpin. But the section between the farmhouse and Dick Turpin has been missed out.

Also raised was the hedge and tree situation adjacent to the old allotments at the top of Painters again at the beginning as this was missed off last minutes and was to be taken up again.

The replanting of the hedge that was burnt out on Aldborough Hall Farm along Oaks Lane. We asked Bretts if there was an intention to replant it this season. Apparently, it's on the to do list but under discussion.

Footpath 94 – to restore the bollard to prevent pizza and food deliveries and to prevent vehicles using this as a delivery cut through. Also, the Council's management agent, Savills seeks to instruct/order the work to restore the pathways, which are badly holed, and water filled on Footpath 93.

Approximately 10% of the population use these pathways to access Barkingside, Fairlop Waters and beyond.

The Newt Fencing from the area outside the working perimeter of area E needs to be removed.

We brought to the Group's attention that fly tipping is occurring again on Painters Lane and investigate the possibility of CCTV.

THE MOST POPULAR POSTS ON OUR WEBSITE AND FACEBOOK!

[Fairlop Waters consultation](#)

[Aldborough Hall Nature Reserve - naming](#)

[Gravel Extraction meetings](#)

[Billet Road, Bellway, contaminated land & development](#)

[Valentines Park](#)

[Oakfields, West Ham United, Public land.](#)

The Aldborough Hatch Defence Association (AHDA) Annual General Meeting 21/11/23

Minutes

Present: Vanessa Cole (Chair), Jenny Chalmers (Vice Chair), Glenn Harvey (Treasurer), Gaby Laws (Secretary), Emma Newell (Bealonians FC).

1. Welcome and Introduction

The Chair welcomed our members including our new members.

2. Apologies for absence.

Cllr Jyotsna Islam unable to attend due to Mayoral event, Cllr John Howard. Members: Chris, Shirley, Suzanne and David.

Unfortunately we have not received a response to our invitation from Cllr Lebo Phakoe (Aldborough Ward).

3. Minutes of last AGM agreed and noted that tonight's Agenda is not very different from the last.

4. Treasurer

Vanessa thanked Ken Morgan for his work as treasurer and who felt he had to resign having been unwell for some time but is now getting back on his feet.

An Executive Meeting was held in September to appoint a new Treasurer. Vanessa asked Glenn who is Church Warden of St Peter's Church and Treasurer. Glenn kindly agreed to take on this role.

A new bank account has been set up which allows for Members to pay their membership donation by direct transfer. Bank Details were provided to members and will be on our website and in our Newsletter for those who were unable to attend this evening. Shirley Rudge has audited the accounts.

5. Councillors' Update

Cllr Howard provided a report for us to read out this evening. This is the first AGM he has been unable to attend. Vanessa read the following report to members and Cllr Howard has said he will answer any questions received:

"First of all, I would like to thank all the members of the Aldborough Hatch Defence Association for their work across the course of the last year. The AHDA continues to help us work with residents, identify issues, and help find solutions.

Their work helps to make our community a better place and I look forward to continuing working with them into the next year.

Fairlop Gravel Liaison Group

I chair the local gravel working group which acts as a conduit between various parts of the council, Brett and local residents. We continue to work on on-going issues such as land ownership, hedge maintenance and updates from the gravel work.

Our main focus is around holding the gravel extractors to account and getting action on hedge and footway maintenance.

Speeding on Aldborough Road North

We have an ongoing problem with speeding along Aldborough Road North. When we've previously investigated the surveys from the council haven't reached the standard needed for speed interventions.

We would urge all residents who are interested in slowing down the road to please get in touch with us - aldborough@redbridgelabour.org.uk

Development at Billet Road

Bellway Homes are looking to develop the area around Billet Road for housing, with the entire site providing around 1,000 homes. The first and second phases of the site are probably due to come to the planning committee around March 2024.

We have so far met with local residents who are opposed/want to amend the proposal, as well as meeting with the developers themselves and the council's planning team.

As West Ham United are looking to move their academy training ground from Billet Road to

Oakfields, we are trying to work with the council to ensure all the various sites work together rather than producing separate plans - if any plans were to be approved.

Investment in our parks

The Labour administration continues to invest in our parks and open spaces. Hainault Forest has had a revamp and now provides a cafe and fresh children's play area.

Valentine's Park is getting a new Lido, alongside a cafe and community space. We're also expanding Fairlop Waters with a series of improvements. Including open-air swimming and a new visitors center near Barkingside Station. While the council develops these proposals, we look forward to working with residents and the AHDA to feed into these designs.

General Casework issues

We continue to pick up casework from local residents. We would urge anyone to report any issues to aldborough@redbridgelabour.org.uk. You can also book into one of our monthly surgery appointments."

Cllr John Howard

john.howard@redbridge.gov.uk

www.facebook.com/AldboroughLabourCllrs

(Member Questions on this report detailed at the end of these minutes.)

6. AHDA reaction to Cllrs' report:

Investment in Parks: Valentines Park – small adverts appeared in the Ilford Recorder which seems on to cover Melbourne fields where the fun fair used to be. It would seem that a crazy golf type entertainment company will be taking a lease for the area. There are concerns from local residents as to what hours they will be open, and the lights and noise produced from this across the park.

Fairlop Waters and SINC. The public consultation was a farce, they had already decided what they want to do. A beautiful green space, a Country Park. It's not a game or play area, we have urban parks for that. A Country Park is for nature first. No one in the council takes this to heart, improve biodiversity not a sculpture. All the 'improvement' schemes but none improve nature or Biodiversity. We continue the fight to make sure it's not spoilt.

Redbridge lost Francis Castro to the GLA. The GLA said the SINC Fairlop Waters and Fairlop Plain should be considered a Site of Metropolitan Importance, yet the Council have dragged their feet over this for years.

The Council have said they are waiting for the GLA before reviewing SINC's and Greenbelt. They need to be surveyed as normally a survey is followed by any improvements necessary to maintain them. The fear is that the delay is intentional. Surely everyone including the Council recognise how important the green spaces, green belt and SINC are to health and mental wellbeing. We are learnt this during the pandemic.

7. Oakfield, Billet Road development, Little Heath School

Billet Road -Bellway have bought sites A (Hainault House – landfill area) and have an agreement to purchase Site B (the landfill area). Willow Farm (Site C & D) are Council (public) owned. Site E where St Chad's Well is, is owned by Countryside. The Council appear to want to bung as many homes there as possible. The landfill area and Hainault House require an



Environment Permit and the process is open to scrutiny. The Planning Committee approved the application to cap the land before the EA Permit has been issued. Now all of sudden West Ham United are to have Oakfields.

West Ham will take over public space that hosts local grassroots clubs, the Save Oakfields Campaign was successful in stopping its release from green belt.

Emma (Bealonians): West Ham Academy only have 100 kids, the grassroots clubs have 600. West Ham won't sign unless they get planning permission for 4 pitches. All this space is currently open. Kids need playing fields. There's No Premier clubs without grassroots clubs. There's been a massive increase in girls joining the clubs due to the Women's success. West Ham have Rush Green and Chadwell Heath. The Pavilion was a charitable donation to the community.



Vanessa: I knew Jack Carter, a philanthropist, and a Quaker. He wanted to leave a legacy.

Jenny: When the Olympic Stadium was built, they initially wanted to cap the contaminated area. Instead, they had to sift and clean all the land. The land is now saved for future generations and the park there is beautiful. Capping the contamination will do nothing but squeeze the contamination in to the land and water.

Vanessa: Our purpose for speaking at the Council Planning meeting was to ensure that the work reaches the standard. The EA need to stand there and check what comes in to cap the land to ensure that when it's finished its safe.

The Council own Willow Farmland their agents are Savills, Bellway's Agents are Savills. Savills are taking a fee from both.

Members questions:

It's a conflict of interests if Savills are acting for both sides?

What about the Tennis Club and Nursery?

8. Little Heath School

The Council recently bought the old girl's school in Ilford which they intend to turn into a Special Needs School. Jenny and AHDA members commented that it is totally unsuitable, the school was condemned, the corridors are too narrow for wheelchairs, there's no car park.

It seems likely that pupils at Little Heath School will be moved to the new school in Ilford if they are ever able to make it a suitable place for children with special needs.

9. Gravel

Huge soil bunds and they are still waiting for the Bentonite wall to be signed off next month. Depending on the weather it may not be until spring. The re-charge trench is beautiful to behold, right next to the church. Permission granted 5 years ago and they still haven't started the excavation.

Across the road, Dick Turpin took 12 years still not finished the pumping stations. Things can double in time.

Lots of archaeology finds have been reported going back to Roman times. They won't be able to build on the gravel extracted areas for some time. Its green belt and will be restored to its original use.

10. Footpaths

Brett have taken responsibility for the hedges. Aldborough Road North was a nightmare with pedestrians having to walk in the road. Along footpath 93 we are asking for the hedge and ditch to be sorted out.

Vanessa confirmed that although under the lease Brett stop short of Footpath 93, they have taken responsibility for it.

Jenny stated that things have been neglected, drug users still there. The hedges cover the footpath and are collapsing as they are top heavy.

Members question: will the council cut the hedges, answered by Vanessa 'No its now the responsibility of Bretts'.

11. Fly tipping

Once again there's fly tipping on Painters. Its been reported by several members. It appears that the Council do not have an Environment team and there is no one to deal with it.

Member pointed out that there is CCTV there and all they need to do it look at it.

Members' Questions for Councillors

1. Why are Councillors not replying to emails? Should they be replying within 10 days as standard practice?
2. Why have surgeries been cancelled with little or no warning?
3. How many Environment officers are there? Why aren't they able to get fly tipping cleared?
4. Are there sufficient Environment officers to deal with the Billet Road contaminated landfill and EA requirements?
5. In what way and for what reason do you want to ensure applications for Billet Road and Oakfields 'work together'.
6. When will the new sign for Aldborough Hall Nature Reserve go up?

These questions have been emailed to Cllr Howard who will be getting back to us but has sent the following answer to questions 1 and 2.

"I can only speak for myself, but I think I've only cancelled one surgery. We ask people to make a booking, so we know who is turning up and a rough outline of the problem. On the email front, I try and get back to people as soon as I can, although I appreciate this varies."

The Aldborough Hatch Defence Association (AHDA)
Working with local residents and the council since the 1960's to ensure
Aldborough Hatch and environs, is a pleasant place to live.