



HADLEY WOOD ASSOCIATION

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2021 AGM

2020/21: SUCCESSES IN DIFFICULT TIMES

2021/22: BUILDING WITH CONFIDENCE

SUMMARY IN SIX CEES: CAMPAIGNS & COVID, CHALLENGES & COMMITTEE, COMMUNITY & CONFIDENCE.

For the sake of brevity, personal credits are limited but huge thanks are due to all the Committee, Centre Manager and many members and others in the community who have contributed over the last year.

Regular reports during the year have been provided in HWAMAIL and Hadley Wood News, with two Zoom public meetings on Green Belt. Committee members (including Trustees) are accessible around Hadley Wood.

Papers for this AGM have been posted on the website, including Draft Financial Statement and community reports. Member questions and comments are welcome at any time and particularly encouraged at and soon after this AGM.

It is important, and a pleasure, that we can resume meetings in person (although Zoom has some advantages). As Fireworks and other events are showing, there is an appetite to come together socially (with continuing due Covid caution). Member participation is much better when we are all in the room. The bar is open before and after.

Taking our summary headings in reverse order, with a note that this is just a report - not the whole story:

CONFIDENCE

We are looking forward to 2021/22 with confidence, to build up our organisation and upgrade our building (the Centre), and celebrate this Jubilee year.

Our membership has reached 770 individuals (up from 447 in 17/18) with resident households 351 (up from 183 in 17/18). A significant upward trend, reflecting a lot of hard work as we show the value of the Association.

We have just enjoyed the fantastic success of Fireworks, a sell out with Centre and Grounds used to capacity, a great community event put on by the Association and a vital fundraiser restored after missing last year. (Very special thanks to Kim Ioannides as Event Organiser). We are looking forward to organising a Jubilee event in June on a similar scale (combined with tree planting), and a range of smaller events through the year, including "Xmas Cheer on the Parade" on 11 December.

Our facilities are in use with Tennis and PreSchool flourishing, Dance and Bridge back in operation, the sports field seeing activities. Hall hires are again active.

We have an assurance through our MP (Bambos Charalambous) from Enfield CEO (Ian Davies) that there is no question about our lease being renewed; it runs now until 2030 but a longer term will enable projects. This is not yet a legal commitment and the terms (including rent) are not yet known.

We have a strong Committee actively promoting the Association. We want to improve several key aspects including services and communication, encourage more events and progress the postponed Centre Upgrade.

We can expect to see a continuing increase in membership numbers, for example with the Green Belt campaign showing the importance of a strong community voice.

We have come through two Covid years with our cash reserves largely intact. Our accounts this year, as explained in our Treasurer's Report, even show a small surplus but this is due to one off items. The underlying position, not surprisingly, is a large drop in income (particularly hall hire). But we have shown our resilience with member response to appeals as well as the continuing contributions from subscriptions and main users.

There are at least three large items which are "missing" from our accounts and which show the need for us to significantly increase income: we have been postponing the necessary upgrade to the Centre (which impacts on hall hire income as well as best use generally); we have not been investing in the Grounds; we have not yet replaced the General Manager (leaving our part time Centre Manager and the Committee coping with too many tasks). Our website and communications need an upgrade as well. We could be providing better (professional) support on planning, and this may include the Neighbourhood Plan. There is much else we could do.

Carpe diem. I am asking the Trustees and Committee to give very active consideration to increasing membership subscriptions - up to doubling, with possible staging and due regard for any special circumstances. This could raise £15,000 pa or more, and enable us to build on current strengths rather than just "make do". Factors include: no increase for twenty years; affordable (£1 pw) and we have shown we deserve this support and provide value.

I ask members to approve the Resolution to support the Trustees in this active consideration of increased fees.

COMMUNITY

The Association is keen to play a leading or supporting role to promote Hadley Wood with other community groups. We are fortunate in having such groups, and it is clear that we have a strong community spirit here from Covid support, campaigns and in many other ways.

Please see the reports of other local organisations in our AGM pack on the website.

We have had an active year also in touch with local councillors and MPs, and other neighbour resident groups on planning and other matters including for Green Belt and the SaveCockfosters campaign which is still live.

COMMITTEE

It is vital for the Association to have active member involvement, as Trustees and Committee members but also in a variety of other ways.

During 2020/21 and for 2021/22, we are fortunate to have continuing Trustees (Robert Wilson, Rupert Mackay, Liz Snape) and our Committee refreshed during the year and now: Robert Feld (Treasurer), Alison Moon (Secretary), Kim Ioannides (Membership Secretary and Event Organiser), Gill Henley (H&S, website), Dawn Wellings (Bar, HWA Security Committee), Julie Nedza (Membership Database and Financial Admin), Helen Touli (benefits, local businesses), Carmelina Petrou (in many ways), Harry Shah and Helen Speroni.

During the year we recorded with the thanks the contributions of retiring Committee members: David Harbott (Treasurer), Katie Michael (Secretary) and David Summers (Planning).

During 2021/22 we must look for new Trustees. Rupert and Liz have given their service for many years. Rupert is retiring as vicar in April; although not immediately retiring as Trustee, he may move away sometime. It is taking too much of my time. We can bring in new Trustees in a convenient way.

CHALLENGES

Apart from the direct health challenges of Covid, we have been dealing with all the user and facilities issues arising.

Managing the Centre & Grounds without upgrades, and unwelcome extra problems with communication, create difficulties. (Apology to all those who have been frustrated in communication with HWA during the year.)

There have been a number of extra challenges with users, and with planning, that have taken up a lot of our attention.

Two campaigns (Barchester and Green Belt) have presented their challenges, which I believe we have met with considerable success.

COVID

Much has been written about this last year and this year. I shall simply note that it has cast a long shadow over the community and HWA. We hope that we really are now out of lockdowns without too much suffering. We look forward to resuming normal activities.

CAMPAIGNS

Again, much has been written. But two calls to arms have been answered.

The determined opposition of the community caused Barchester to withdraw their application. A very special success, without it hanging over us.

Green Belt has prompted a huge effort and tremendous results in planning responses, resident objections

(1,000!) and community interest in protecting our special village. We have benefitted from the active involvement of the Planning Sub-Committee (essentially the Neighbourhood Planning Forum Committee led by Lakis Pavlou, Dawn Welling of our HWA Committee and other immediate neighbours).

We need to build on this through local groups such as HW Conservation Area Study Group and the Neighbourhood Plan.

The continuing Green Belt campaign is a special AGM agenda item. The Appeal affects our Financial Statement in several ways, but we hope the distinction with our normal operations is clear, as Appeal money is fully segregated and single purpose.

Thank you all for your support for your Association and the benefit of Hadley Wood.

Robert Wilson
Chairman
Hadley Wood Association