

St John's Residents Association AGM

Minutes of Meeting



Meeting Details

Date	04/09/26
Time	19:00
Location	St John's Community Hall
Chairperson	Neil Evans & Sarah Kench
Minute Taker	Neil Evans

Attendees

- Neil Evans (NE) Sarah Kench (SK): Chairs
- Committee Members: Norma Dinnie-Weall (NDW), David Williams (DW), Sarah Evans (SE), Neil Evans (NE), Adam Weaver (AW), Philip Davis (PD), Zoe Kench (ZK), Karl Groome (KG), Andrew Wright (AW)
- Councilors in Attendance: Paul Smith (PS), Councillor Natalie Sommers (NS)
- Members in Attendance: Approx 40

Agenda Items & Discussion

1. Welcome: Annual General Meeting of St John's Residents Association

Cllr Natalie Sommers explained the process of the AGM attendees. NS then asked if there were any attendees who wished to stand for any positions. There were no other nominations for any of the positions or committee members. Last year's positions were all nominated and seconded and the results are set out below:

First Vote: St John's Residents Association re-election to the following positions:

Co-Chair: Sarah Evans and Neil Evans

Secretary: Vacant

Treasurer: Karen Wright

Communications Officer: Zoe Kench

Committee Members:

Sarah Kench

Philip Davis

Norma Dinnie-Wealle

Andrew Wright

Karl Groome

Adam Weaver

David Williams

No votes or no other nominations for the positions

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There were also no objections to the banking arrangement which will continue as set out below:

The signatories on the Barclays Bank Account will be

- Sarah Evans
- Neil Evans
- Karen Wright

With the requirements of a minimum of 2 signatories for transactions.

Second Vote: St John's Fields Action Group

Chair: Sarah Kench

Secretary: Vacant

Treasurer: Karen Wright

Communications Officer: Zoe Kench

Planning Officer: David Williams

Ecology & Social Media Officer: Norma Dinnie-Wealle

Fundraising Officer: Adam Weaver

Committee Members:

Sarah Evans

Neil Evans

Philip Davis

Andrew Wright

Karl Groome

No votes and no other nominations for the positions were received

Zoe then played a video to show what progress the St Johns Fields Action group had made.

Updates on the Local Plan (SK):

SK:

- Colchester City Council planning department commissioned two reports on landscape (The Landscape Partnership) and on ecology (Place Services) in direct response to the reports that St John's RA and Welshwood submitted as part of the Reg 18 public consultation. These "experts" largely agreed with our evidence. They highlighted specific risks in terms of ecology and landscape particularly in relation to Bullock wood and Welshwood. They made very clear recommendations including the requirement to undertake a full ecology survey including of wintering birds of two separate winters, a full hydrology study to calculate the size of the buffer around Bullock Wood and estimate that 40% of the whole site

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needs to be “green space” to achieve all the mitigations and protections they have recommended. They also indicate that it is unclear therefore whether 2000 houses can be accommodated in PP9.

- The planning department has made some amendments to the document on PP9 as a result and list some, though disappointingly, not all of the recommendations from these two reports in the new draft Local Plan. It still quotes a “minimum of 10%” open space, does acknowledge that 2000 houses may not be achievable but pushes the responsibility of the additional surveys recommended to a future developer.
- Colchester City Council approved the draft Local Plan to go through to the next stage known as Reg 19.
- A final public consultation will be open until 13th October 2026 at 1600 for both individual residents and groups to respond.
- This consultation asks comment on a very specific question and responses will go through to a government planning inspector in December.
- At this next Reg 19 public consultation stage we have to show that the Local Plan (specifically PP9) is “unsound” :

There are 4 tests of soundness:

- 1) **Positively prepared**- the plan builds on a strategy to meet the area’s development and infrastructure needs, including housing and sustainable growth
- 2) **Justified** –choices made a backed by clear evidence and stand up as the best strategy compared to other reasonable alternatives
- 3) **Effective**- the proposals are realistic and actually deliverable over the lifespan of the plan
- 4) **Consistent with National policy**

What does that mean for PP9 (our fields)?

- The infrastructure funding (£939m) is not secured
- The ecology and hydrology evidence is not complete (full survey on the impact of Bullock Wood) have not been done
- How PP9 will be split between housing, green space and retail has not been defined.
- The viability of 2000 homes have not been demonstrated.
- Occupation trigger plans for the delivery of infrastructure have not been defined.

Conclusion: The plan for PP9 has too many unanswered questions and is therefore unsound because every site on a Local Plan must be deliverable otherwise the whole plan is undeliverable

SK: The public consultation is now open until 13th October, and we need residents to submit their views again . We have produced a “cheat sheet” to walk you through the process and this will also be available on our Facebook page.

We then had a Q&A session where attendees were able to ask committee members and Cllr various questions. These include requesting clarification on what we are aiming for. SK confirmed in Reg 19 we need

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to evidence that their plan for PP9 is undeliverable and therefore unsound but also to put as many conditions on development that it becomes financially unviable for a developer (which is what happened with Middlewick).

Fundraising update (Adam Weaver):

AW:

- Adam provided an update on what funds have been raised over the last year and what we have spent the money on. See details below:

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ST JOHN'S RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

Income & Expenditure Statement • 1 November 2025 to 3 September 2026

TOTAL INCOME	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	SURPLUS
£13,145.26	£8,649.36	£4,495.90

INCOME		EXPENDITURE	
GoFundMe donations	£6,858.84	Planning fees (Carpenter)	£2,250.00
Fundraising events	£4,265.00	Objection report (Carpenter)	£2,000.00
Council donation	£1,000.00	Arboricultural study	£1,020.00
Bank balance introduced from SJRA	£1,008.02	Bullocks Wood report & survey	£972.00
Interest received	£13.40	G S Trew media consultancy fees	£1,250.00
TOTAL INCOME	£13,145.26	Hall hire for event	£257.50
		Leaflet printing	£115.72
		Hotel prize	£289.00
CLOSING FUNDS		Quiz prize	£100.00
Balance held in bank at 3 September 2026	£4,417.40	Bingo/raffle books & strawberries	£71.94
Cash float held	£78.50	Liability insurance	£89.60
TOTAL FUNDS HELD	£4,495.90	Barn dance band deposit	£100.00
		Website annual subscription & domain renewal (SK)	£133.60
		TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£8,649.36

During the period, the Association received £13,145.26 and spent £8,649.36, producing a surplus of £4,495.90. Closing funds comprise £4,417.40 in the bank and a £78.50 cash float.

Prepared for presentation at the Annual General Meeting 4th Sept 2026

- Adam thanked the residents for all their support so far, and reminded them of the next fund-raising event, a barn dance on the 27th November 7pm to 11pm. Tickets are £15 per ticket and further information will be shared.

The meeting closed and refreshments were available.

During the social chat after the meeting had finished we had 2 volunteers

Sue Jones – New Secretary for SJRA

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Brian and Susan Mitchell – Who would like to join the committee to help our fight.

Minutes produced by Sarah Kench and Neil Evans