



SOUTH NEWNHAM
NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

MINUTES OF THE EGM
Held on 27th May, 2025.

Present :

For the Committee, Jean Bevan, Andrew Whitaker, Roger Sewell, Lynn Hieatt, Olwen Williams.

Members: Richard Andrewes, Andrew Bryce, Tim and Angie Cole, Fiona Crawford, Lori Cunningham, Richard Dyball, Tania Elliott, Pam Gatrell, Jean and Brian Glasberg, Eleanor Jones, Ruth Lambert, Tony and Rita Langford, MM McCabe, Sandie Mercer, Neil Petersen, Hans and Janine Petersen, Bruce Ragsdale, Ruth Rattenbury, Shirley Sewell, Cynthia Smale-Adams, Roger and Claire Smith, Janet Whitaker.

Apologies: Fay Bendall, Georgie Bevan, Hugh and Jane Clough, Vic Gatrell, Alan Jones, Peter and Pam Landshoff, Gabriele Reifenberg.

Jean Bevan chaired and welcomed members to the meeting and announced that a special letter had been received by Lynn Hieatt from the HM King Charles III, acknowledging the adoption of the Neighbourhood Plan. Lynn explained that the Forum had been formed in response to the then Prince of Wales's initiative called BIMBY, beauty in my back yard, and the Neighbourhood Plan was the result. Lynn read out the letter and in this he "commended the dedication shown by local residents, planning officers and the team in the South Newnham Neighbourhood Forum to create the scheme".

Jean Bevan asked Andrew Whitaker to lead the EGM meeting. He explained that following the adoption of the Neighbourhood Plan, the purpose of the Forum had changed, and we needed to make three changes to the Forum's Constitution.

Before the formal proposals were considered Andrew described some of the work that Forum has done as a Statutory Consultee. He described three proposed developments that the Forum has objected to in whole or in part in its role as Statutory Consultee in the last year. These included Owlstone Croft Condition 14 regarding the Construction Management Traffic Plan submitted for access to Owlstone Croft and the submission of a Public Right of Way to the Definitive Map for Cambridgeshire for a footpath along Short Way, the Cambourne to Cambridge Guided Busway and the Barton Road Greenway.

One member present asked several related questions about how and from whom the Forum Committee solicit input in their role as a Statutory Consultee. Andrew replied that it is the Committee that responds as a Statutory Consultee and it does so on

behalf of Forum members. He explained that the Forum Committee has engaged consistently and extensively with Forum members over the past 8 years on a wide range of local planning matters. It was stated that all residents of South Newham are welcome and encouraged to join the Forum.

Jean Glasberg, a past member of the Forum Committee, explained how the Forum Committee considers and responds to planning applications, and that the Committee's response focuses on whether or not the planning application complies with the policies in the Cambridge City Local Plan 2018 and the Neighbourhood Plan.

The Three proposals for changes to the Constitution as set out in the Notice were:

Proposal 1 – following adoption of the Neighbourhood Plan, the Forum's purpose has changed from preparing the Neighbourhood Plan, and becomes: "To monitor the implementation of the South Newnham Neighbourhood Plan during the period 2025-2041 in accordance with Section 8 of the Neighbourhood Plan"

Proposal 2 – the Forum has been a Statutory Consultee on planning matters since being established in 2017, something that hasn't been included in the Forum's Constitution and should be. So, we propose to add a new bullet point to the purpose of the Forum in the Constitution which states: "To fulfil the role of a Statutory Consultee on applications for planning permission."

Proposal 3 – with the workload of the Committee reduced now that the Neighbourhood Plan has been approved, our 3rd proposal was that "There will be a Management Committee of 6 members, elected annually at the Forum AGM".

The Proposals were voted on and carried.

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Jean Bevan Chaired the meeting

Membership Report. We have been actively encouraging more members to join, especially from the Gough Way Estate, where membership is low. The Forum has 9 new members and a total membership of 107 members.

Finance. In May last year, the Forum appealed to members for donations to continue with the work on the Neighbourhood Plan. A total of £875 was donated, of which £450 was spent on a Planning Consultant for help with the Plan, £385 on printing and £40 on Social Club Hire. The members of the committee personally paid for the website update and additional printing costs for the Referendum. We will be appealing for further donations this coming year to pay for ongoing expenses of around £350. Members donated £138 which contributed to the hire of the venue and refreshments at the AGM on 27th May, 2025.

Neighbourhood Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan was adopted by the full City Council in February 2025 and is now being used by case officers as part of the Cambridge Development Plan.

Writing the Neighbourhood Plan was more work than any of us had imagined and a steep learning curve in policy writing. The Forum was helped by Planning Officers who also helped with our responses to the Independent Examiner. We submitted a Plan with 15 policies, and only one was deleted by the Examiner. This was the Climate Change policy on Flood Risk, and this will be covered by Local Plan policy 32 .

The Examiner concluded that the Neighbourhood Plan set out a positive vision for the future of the neighbourhood area and “serves a clear purpose to respond to specific development pressures and to improve the quality of design of new development”.

The Neighbourhood Plan comes at a critical time when Cambridge is moving towards a unitary authority. Having a Neighbourhood Plan in place will ensure that any new service will have access to local detail, as laid out in our Evidence Base and Policies for determining planning applications. The Policies in the Neighbourhood Plan strengthen similar policies in the Local Plan, for example Neighbourhood Plan Policy SNNP 1 Protecting and Enhancing Biodiversity in our Green Infrastructure Network and Local Plan Policy 69.

The role of the Forum will now change to one of Monitoring the Implementation of the Neighbourhood Plan. In March a meeting was arranged by the Management Development Team of Greater Cambridge Shared Planning to review the content of the Neighbourhood Plan and intent of the policies of the Plan. Sixteen Planning Officers attended, mostly representing the West of Cambridge and the meeting was led by Lizzie Wood, the Principal Planning Policy Officer, who headed the team working on the South Newnham Neighbourhood Plan.

The Forum members described the intent and wording of all fifteen policies and were asked some specific questions on policy wording, but they were also asked about the context of each policy and the neighbourhood in general. Policies that attracted most discussion were protecting biodiversity, connectivity network, green roofs, residential amenity and sub-dividing houses.

Officers asked about the make-up of the green infrastructure network and we responded that this detail was available in the Evidence Base. Officers asked about our lanes and surfacing treatment, and we highlighted Mud Lane and Short Lane, as good examples of lanes attractively surfaced for pedestrian use.

We asked Planning Officers for their guidance on green roofs and now understand that there is an internal standard for this which isn't published, and we will now receive a copy of the specification. Officers asked about the residential amenity policy SNNP12, and we referred to over-development that has occurred resulting in lack of privacy with overlooking and loss of light.

During the Referendum opposition was raised to some of the policies in the Plan and we carefully responded to all points raised. Since the Referendum we have consulted with the Planning Authority to check that our responses were sound and they have confirmed that we accorded with Planning Policy. The Neighbourhood Plan is not “black and white” and all policies will be interpreted within the context of each planning application. It will now be up to the Planning Authority to make these judgements.

Website. The website has been updated since the adoption of the Neighbourhood Plan. Jean Bevan thanked Roger Sewell for administering this for the Forum.

Forum Committee. Four members of the Committee, Jean Bevan, Andrew Whitaker, Roger Sewell and Olwen Williams are willing to continue next year. Bruce Ragsdale has stood down and Lynn Hieatt who started the Forum 8 years ago, and has continued to support it all along is also standing down. We have asked her if she would kindly be an Honorary Committee Member, so that we can tap into her knowledge and experience from time-to-time, which Lynn has agreed to do. We received nominations for two new committee members both of whom worked on the Neighbourhood Plan. Neil Petersen worked on the evidence gathering for the Community Assets and Tania Elliott, did all the research underpinning the Heritage Assets section of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Jean Bevan asked members from the floor to nominate each of the six members who have expressed willingness to stand and a vote was taken on each nominee by a show of hands.

Jean Bevan thanked everyone for all their support during the year and invited them to join in a celebratory drink.