

THE HIGHAMS PARK PLANNING GROUP

DRAFT MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

On Wednesday 15th October 2025 at 7:30 pm

At All Saints Church, Church Avenue, Highams Park, E4 9QZ

Attendees: 90

(1) Welcome & introductions

Gordon Turpin (GT) welcomed members to the tenth Annual General Meeting of the Highams Park Planning Group (HPPG) and, the meeting being quorate, acted as Chair for the meeting.

GT welcomed the mayor of Waltham Forest, Councillor Tony Bell, to the meeting and thanked him for his support over the years both as a councillor and as a member of HPPGs committee.

GT extended John Moss's apologies as he was unable to attend the AGM due to a prior commitment to attend a meeting of the Walthamstow Almshouses.

(2) Agree minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as presented.

(3) Matters arising from minutes of last meeting

There were no matters arising.

(4) Update on the Regal Cinema Development

GT advised that due to ill health the representative from Mammoth Capital who was due to give an update on the Regal was unable to attend but had passed on some information for GT to relay to attendees at the meeting.

All planning conditions have now been satisfied. A statutory form relating to highways alterations at the Hale End Road End of Beech Hall Road was overlooked during the sign-off process and this has delayed commencement of works. The form has now been submitted and work on the site is expected to begin within the next few weeks.

During the construction period, the Hale End Road junction with Beech Hall Road will be closed to vehicle traffic and the parking bays adjacent to the Regal will be suspended. Vehicles requiring access to Beech Hall Road will have to enter via Studley Avenue or one of the other feeder roads. These measures will be implemented to allow delivery of materials and equipment to the site without blocking Hale End Road.

Pedestrians and bicycle will still have access to Beech Hall Road at the junction with Hale End Road.

Mammoth Capital have interest from a number of operators in running the cinema but due to commercial sensitivities during negotiations, they are unable to reveal who these operators are.

In answer to a question from the floor GT confirmed that the following planning conditions still remain in place:

Before the cinema is opened, the developer can sell 17 flats in the Regal development. Once the cinema's shell and core are finished, up to 28 flats can be occupied before the cinema is in use, but only if the developer gets written agreement from the council. The total number of residential units planned is 33.

(5) The Boathouse at Highams Park Lake

Tristan Vetta, who is the City of London's Land Agent attended the meeting to inform people about what had caused the fire at the boathouse and the future of the site.

The cause of the fire is unknown but it is most likely accidental arson caused by intruders trying to steal metal pipework from the building.

The landing stage has been fenced off temporarily to prevent harm to people from collapse of the building.

The building will be demolished. This may take some time to arrange as a specialist contractor will be required, as the building is built into the retaining dam of the lake so special care needs to be taken to prevent collapse of the dam.

There are no plans to build flats or residential properties on the site nor will the site be repurposed as a car park.

The most likely outcome will be reprofiling of the land to create attractive landscaping from The Charter Road to the lakeside, similar to the existing spillway to the west of the boathouse.

The City Corporation will be undertaking a public consultation at some point in the future. Tristan said he would send details to GT to circulate locally.

(6) Update/Refresh on HPPG and the HP Plan & Projects

GT provided details of some of the projects and activities that HPPG has been working on over the past year and thanked committee members and volunteers for all their hard work and support in enabling these projects.

1. HP Plan Updated

The Highams Park Neighbourhood Plan (HP Plan) has been updated to ensure that this Amended Version of the Plan (September 2025) updates references within it to ensure consistency with the December 2024 version of the NPPF, the 2021 version of the London Plan, and Local Plan Part 1 (LP1) 2020-2035, which was adopted in February 2024. As these changes were not material, no consultation was required.

The amended HP Plan is available to view on HPPGs website at [HP Plan as amended September 2025](#)

2. NCIL Agreement signed with LBWF

As a neighbourhood development forum with an adopted neighbourhood plan, HPPG is entitled to a share of NCIL monies for use in local infrastructure projects. NCIL is a levy charged to developers to help offset the impact of development. The Council is currently holding £ £5,026.23 on HPPGs behalf. In May 2025 HPPG

entered into an agreement with the Council on the mechanism for release of these monies for projects as and when required.

3. *Monitoring of planning applications*

HPPG continues to monitor planning applications and comments when it is deemed necessary.

4. *Climbing boulder and monkey bars in The Highams Park*

HPPG worked with the Council's Parks team on the installation of the monkey bars and climbing boulder in The Highams Park and contributed £1,700 through our project arm, Highams Park Community CIC (HP CIC), to help ensure the project went ahead.

5. *Donor for HP Food Aid 'Big Give' campaign*

In 2024 HPPG acted as donor for the HP Food Aid 'Big Give' campaign and donated £1,500. The money was raised for the donation by organising concerts at All Saints Church.

GT said that HPPG will be the donor again in 2025 and was looking to raise funds from the upcoming John Ongom Concert on Saturday 18th October.

6. *Decoration of the coffee cabin at Highams Park Station*

HPPGs Arts and Culture team worked with local art school, Art-K to brighten up the coffee cabin on Highams Park Station with a 'Weaver Line' themed mural. HPPG provided the funding for this.

7. *Kiddies' mural in Signal Walk*

HPPGs Arts and Culture team also worked with Art-K to provide a child friendly mural on the wall by the play area in Signal Walk. HP CIC funded this project.

8. *Ongoing conservation works at the lake by the Highams Park Snedders – including restoration of the bluebell patches*

9. *Brookfield Meadow and Listen to the River Ching Project*

There are two related projects going on behind Highams Park School.

- *The 'Listen to the Ching' project.* The Highams Park Snedders have been working with the Ching Action Group to prepare the ground and install benches and sculptures along the Ching bank.

the Ching Action Group have been working with pupils from Joseph Clarke School as part of the 'Make it Happen' grant. The pupils have attended a willow weaving workshop and a session with a composer who is creating a musical piece with them about the sounds they can hear around the Ching and their reactions to being close to it.

The money for this project was provided by a grant to the Ching action Group under Waltham Forest Council's 'Make it Happen' funding programme. HP CIC acted as fundholder for the grant.

- *Brookfield Meadow.* The Council's Neighbourhoods team asked the Highams Park Snedders to help clear the land behind Highams Park School of scrub to improve sight lines, as many people had complained that the area felt unsafe. HPPG decided that this was an opportunity to create a beautiful community space. With the permission of the Council, the Snedders are now working to create a sustainable meadow and

community orchard on this site. The developers of Highams Park School, Bowmer Kirkland, have kindly agreed to assist the Snedders by reprofiling the site to remove stumps and other trip hazards.

10. Bog Planting Project

Funded by a grant from the City Bridge Foundation the Snedders have been working on creating a bog garden at the north (smelly) end of Highams Park Lake to improve the habitat for amphibians, birds and insect life; as well as improving the appearance of that area.

11. Ongoing litter picking sessions

12. Highams Park Signal Box

GT advised that Network Rail (NR) has agreed to offer HPPG a lease for use of the Signal Box. A 'Heads of Terms' for the lease has not been received yet but it will be an internal repairing lease (which means that HPPG will only be responsible for the interior of the building and NR will be responsible for maintaining the fabric of the building and the exterior paintwork, etc).

GT thanked Roger Torode (RT) for lobbying NR since 2018 to ensure the Signal Box is preserved as a landmark building and is made available for use by the community. RT said the lease will be rent free but we are not sure what uses will be allowed yet. However, we have been advised that commercial uses will not be allowed, so there is no possibility of a café returning to the Signal Box.

If the lease negotiations are successful, we aim to drawdown the NCIL monies for internal works in the Signal Box.

GT will update people as negotiations of the terms of the lease progress.

13. Events

HPPG continues to organise many local events, including the following:

- Spring Festival (with the Friends of Highams Park) - next event 17th May 2026
- Arts & Culture Trail – next trail 1st to 17th May 2026
- Love Hale & Library Day & Vintage Market -next event 9th May 2026
- Celebrating 200 Years of the railway in Highams Park
- Picnic in The Park (with the Friends of Highams Park) – next event 6th September 2026
- Autumn Market
- Christmas Tree & Carols at the Library - next event 28th November 2025
- Christmas Fayre – next event 7th December 2025

(7) Highams Park Community CIC (HP CIC)

HP CIC is the project arm of the Highams Park Planning Group and acts as the fundholder for grants provided by third parties for local projects.

HP CIC is the leaseholder for both the Humphry's Café community hub and the HP Station Rooms. It is our intention that HP CIC will also be the lessee for the Signal Box.

Both assets continue to perform well and provide an income stream to support local projects.

(8) Financial position

HPPG's financial position was presented to the attendees.

(9) Election/Re-election of Coordinating Committee members

GT advised that Dan Rouse and Liz Jones had stepped down from the committee and offered a vote of thanks for their support over the years.

The other members of the committee were put forward for re-election and elected unanimously by attendees at the meeting.

A list of committee members is provided below:

Gordon Turpin	Chair
Janet Charlesworth	Deputy Chair
Mike Payne	Secretary
Geoffrey Carter	Treasurer
Camille Hastings-Prosser	General Member
Tony Bell	General Member
John Moss	General Member and Compliance & Legal
Rob Varney	General Member
Sharlene Sarolli	General Member

(10) Any other business

No other business was tabled for the AGM.

(11) Closure of meeting

The business of the meeting was concluded at 8:25 pm and attendees were invited to stay for the guest speakers.

(12) Guest Speakers

– Council Regeneration Team

An update was provided by Zoe Sellers and Silvia Amoros from the Council's Regeneration team on the status of projects proposed for Highams Park with monies from the 'Local Regeneration Fund' (previously known as the Levelling Up Fund).

(13) Refreshments and informal discussions.

Attendees were invited to stay for refreshments and informal discussions.