

**Draft note of AGM held on Sunday 27 October at 5.45 pm
St. Margaret's School, Kidderpore Gardens**

1. Attendees and apologies

Apologies: Barbara Alden, Victoria Barclay, Steven Baruch, Emily Brettle, Nizam Broachi, Noel Brock, Dominic Burke, Sir Stanley and Lady Gwen Burnton, Monika Caro, Maria and Jean-Louis Chaut, Pamela Chesters, Micheline Ellison, Siobhan Ezra, Irene Fine, Lydia and Andrew Glennie, Susan Grossman, Charles Harris, Helen Hort, Janice Lough, Paul McKenzie, Ashley Mitchell, Vinod Nargund, Melissa Reeve, Jane Shaw, Margot Schiemann, Cllr. Andrew Parkinson, Nicholas White, Harlan Zimmerman.

Attendees: Cllr. Steve Adams, Laurence Bard, Margaret Bloom, Lysiane Bysh, Dominic Burke, Valerie and Brian Chalfen, Cllr. Linda Chung, Zarja Cibej, Susan Clayton, Thomas Croft (Thomas Croft Associates), Magdalena Delgado, Barbara Dohmann, Moira Duncan, Kurt van den Eynden, Lt. Col. Karl and Katerina Eze, Anna Fiertag, Hazel and Alan Finn, Sultan Ganji, Janet Gompertz, Byrony and Paul Heard, Lilian Lancon, Susan Lee, Robert Neuer, Lord Joanathan Mance, Tina Marton, Nancy Mayo, Caroline Merrel, Amanda Mitchell, Caroline Mulvin, Claudia Newall, Susan Paisner, Mal Parker, Kesh and Kristiana Patel, Akshaya Prasand, Sara Probert, John Reizenstein, Frances Richardson, Janis Roosepeikar, Alan Sanders, Monika Shah, Marcelle Shulman, Jonathan Silver, Nishtha Soli, Vivek Sood, Lesley South, John Sunley, Sally Tornow, Rev. Alistair Tresidder, Lillian Valchar, Mark Webb, Jenny White (NNA). [57]

2. Accounts

Annual membership subscriptions were down in 2024 at £525, compared with £605 in 2023. This, together with increased running costs of £1,407, meant that the Association returned an operating loss of -£878 in 2024, while net assets fell to £15,060.

Current liabilities of £11,686 are due to unspent grants such as the lost River Westbourne project. It is proposed that a proportion of the cash at the bank be transferred into a deposit account.

Membership subscriptions continue to be needed for ongoing expenses for running the websites and holding the AGMs.

During the third quarter of 2023, Barclays closed The Redington Frognal Association bank account. This coincided with an increased willingness by Lloyds to take on community accounts and a new account was opened with Lloyds Bank.

3. Draft minutes of Forum AGM of 1.10.23

No corrections were noted to the draft minutes of the 2023 AGM and the minutes were formally adopted.

4. Membership update and changes to WhatsApp group

At last year's AGM, the Association Chair, Ann-Marie O'Connor, resigned. She was replaced by Kurt van den Eynden. Kurt moved from The Netherlands to London 30 years ago and has now served as Association Chair for a year.

During this time, the WhatsApp groups associated with RedFrog have expanded to six, as sub groups have been tailored to particular themes and interests. The largest has 170 members.

It was noted that messages posted can be over long and that a moderator is needed. This vacancy remains unfilled.

The Association website has 1,949 active users, with monthly page views ranging up to more than 550.

A membership drive aimed at recruiting 100 households, had some initial impact but, currently, the Association has just 40 members who have paid an annual subscription.

5. Progress since last AGM

Attendees were invited to read the summaries below (in blue font) outlining work undertaken since the 2023 AGM.

i. O2 development and new planning application

Local residents invested much time and money in responding to the O2 planning application 2022/0528/P. A consortium of local groups¹ commissioned an independent expert report on the proposals and whether they represented an effective use of this highly accessible location.

Planning consultants contacted were generally unwilling to represent the consortium, due to a perceived conflict of interest. However, Tony Burton CBE, the Examiner of the Redington Frogna! Neighbourhood Plan and holder of many

¹ The consortium included the Fortune Green and West Hampstead Neighbourhood Forum, WHAT (West Hampstead Amenity & Transport), WHGARA (West Hampstead Gardens and Residents' Association), the Redington Frogna! Neighbourhood Forum, the Redington Frogna! Association, the Netherhall Neighbourhood Association, RMRG (Rosemont Mews Residents' Group), CRASH (the Combined Residents Associations of South Hampstead), the Belsize Society, MARA (Menelik area Residents' Association), GARA (Gondar and Agamemnon Residents' Association), MILAM (Maygrove, Iverson, Loveridge, Ariel, Medley).

planning awards (<https://www.planningsummit.co.uk/tony-burton>), accepted the commission.

A 15-page report recommended rejection of the planning application on many grounds, including:

- demolition of the much-valued O2 Centre, completed as recently as 1998;
- failure to provide significant commercial and local community uses;
- excessive density of 947 people per hectare, compared with a Camden average of 109 people per hectare and an average of 59 people per hectare in Singapore;
- excessively closely-located towers, which reject the established local precedent of high-density, medium-rise solutions. The drawing below shows only heights of 11-12 storeys:



- architecture that is repetitive, poorly detailed and lacks any distinction that relates it to the local context;
- a design approach which is the complete antithesis of the National Model Design Code (a material consideration), resulting in a poor and mediocre design;
- failure to respect and be sensitive to the height of existing buildings in the vicinity, and their settings;
- unacceptable shadowing impacts on nearby properties;
- substantial harm to five Conservation Areas, with significant negative effects beyond the immediate locality;
- inadequate green space provision in an area that is already categorised as having a significant green space deficiency;
- open space provision which is just one quarter of the amount required by Camden's Local Plan;
- inadequate urban greening.

Despite these failures, consent was duly granted by Camden's Planning Committee and neither the Mayor of London nor the Secretary of State were prepared to intervene.

Just this month, residents were informed that Landsec is to submit an updated planning application for the first phase of the redevelopment (the O2 Shopping Centre, car park and Homebase site). This will see an extra one to two storeys added to the planned 13/14 storey blocks, resulting in 650 flats rather than 600.

Public drop-in sessions with the Landsec development team are being held on.
26 October: 11am-3pm
6 November: 4:30-8pm

Public workshops on plans for the community centre, green spaces and connections between Finchley Road and West Hampstead.

28 October, 6.30-8pm. Community Centre design

30 October, 6.30-8pm. Ideas for green space and play provision

4 November, 6.30-8pm. Connections between Finchley Road, West Hampstead, and beyond

Sign up at: <https://bit.ly/4f3gQlh>

It was noted that participation in these engagement events is essential in order to secure some mitigation for the community, such as Section 106 money for improvements to Finchley Road.

The demolition plan will be considered by the Construction Working Group. Camden's priority is for housing and affordable housing growth, including at the expense of other policies, such as open space.

Although the development will be car-free, deliveries and home shopping will generate substantial vehicle movements.

ii. Completion of Branch Hill Pond

In November 2023, volunteers at Heath Hands planted the surrounding bank and hillside with over one thousand wildflower plugs and three thousand spring and summer flowering bulbs. Planting was undertaken during six volunteer sessions, contributing approximately one hundred and sixty hours of individual volunteer time to this project.

The exceptionally wet summer of 2024 meant that the wildflower plugs failed to survive. However, aquatic plants introduced into the pond (from other Hampstead Heath ponds) by City of London Corporation, fared rather better and, by September 2024, water lilies were blooming.

The reddish-brown colour of the water is due to iron in the Bagshot Sand beneath.

Fencing around the pond (to keep out dogs) is to be concealed with native honeysuckle and dog rose. Once this is in place, a wildlife camera will be erected to record wildlife sightings.

Branch Hill Pond with water lillies in bloom



The motivation for seeking grant funding to reinstate the pond was twofold: up to 90% of lowland ponds were lost during the last century and the spring beneath Branch Hill Pond is thought to have been the source of the River Westbourne.

A Heath Hands volunteer noted that, while many of the flowers had become submerged as the area of the pond expanded, those planted on the bank beneath the trees have prospered and should be in bloom in spring 2025.

iii. Gardening for Wildlife booklets

During June 2024, booklets were delivered to all RedFrog addresses with access to open space. They have also been used by Camden's gardening team and sent to Greenspace Information for Greater London, City of London Corporation and the London Natural History Society.

This is a very informative booklet with good tips on how to maintain a garden environment in which nature can thrive.

iv. Project to green the cattle trough triangle at the junction of Platt's Lane and Hermitage Lane.

Earlier in the year, LB Barnet removed the tarmac in preparation for planting to benefit biodiversity this autumn.

6. Camden School Travel Plans and Healthy School Streets update

The Healthy School Streets Consultation: St Margaret's School and St Luke's CoE School, ran for four weeks, from 27 February to 18 March 2024.

A summary of the consultation findings has not been made available.

In response to a Member's Enquiry from Cllr. Adams, RedFrog has learnt that Camden does not carry out modelling for traffic displacement.

"Traffic flow data have been collected for the streets with proposed restrictions and surrounding streets. If an HSS scheme goes ahead, it would be implemented as a trial and further baseline traffic flow surveys would be carried out before the trial begins and for traffic displacement during the trial period."

RedFrog submitted a number of Fols, including one on parking fines (PCNs) in Arkwright Road between April and September 2024. The data show that no PCNs were issued during term time school drop off and collection times. This would tend to support residents' long-held view that the school run is not being policed.

The specification for Camden's 2019 parking contract is not publicly available. Yet the 2009 specification states [in para. 2.4.2.3] that,

"It is critical that the Service Provider adopts a proactive approach to identify areas of concern and adapt enforcement to resolve the problem by means of an enforcement presence. Further, the Service Provider shall engage in a dialogue with the Council on how deployed resources are best utilised, using a combination of local knowledge and enforcement expertise. Historically, particular areas of non-compliance have been in areas surrounding:

- schools, namely at school start and end times within school term time"*

RedFrog would like to understand why Camden does not proactively enforce the school run, instead of developing Healthy School Streets schemes (for certain roads only) and without any consideration of displaced traffic.

RedFrog has sought legal advice concerning the consultation process. It is considered that the consultation was flawed in that it was for show, rather than to listen, with misrepresentation and a failure to adhere to procedural flows.

A Change.org petition attracted 1675 signatures against the proposed road closures. However, Camden has declined requests to meet with RedFrog and it is likely to be difficult to persuade Camden to listen to residents' concerns.

St. Margaret's School is likely to be particularly affected, as 46% of its pupils are dropped by car.

Traffic congestion may be expected to increase in Platt's Lane, Briardale Gardens and Heath Drive. The scheme does not address excessive traffic speeds, notably in Redington Road, where speed cameras are needed.

The consultation findings have not been made public. It is likely that the Healthy School Streets initiative is a means of raising funds. However, not all residents disagree with the proposal.

For the Healthy and Safe Streets scheme covering Dartmouth Park, Camden is working together with LB Islington. The aim of Healthy and Safe Streets schemes is to make Camden less permeable to traffic originating outside the borough and its opposition to cars is clear in the Camden Local Plan. This is also the policy of the Mayor of London. While it is acknowledged that car ownership cannot keep growing, it is unfortunate that TfL has reduced the frequency of the number 13 bus service.

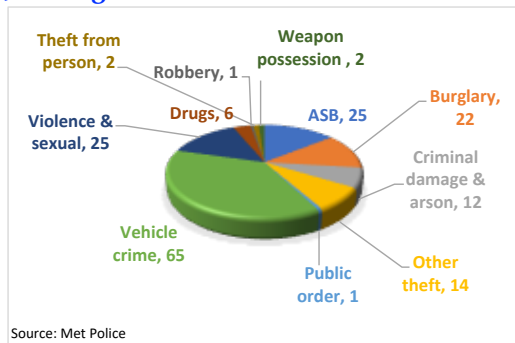
7. Crime update

Reported crime data for the lower super output areas which correspond to the Redington Froggnal area show vehicle crime, burglary, violence and antisocial behaviour to be particular concerns.

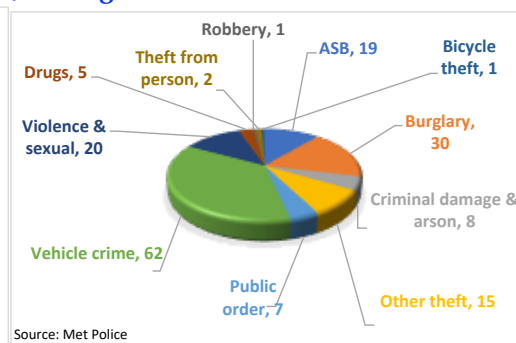
Crime rates do not appear to have increased.

Reported Crime in RedFrog (corrected right-hand chart)

Jan-Aug 2023: 175 crimes



Jan-Aug 2024: 170 crimes



Residents feel increasingly unsafe in the area. The WhatsApp Neighbourhood Watch group provides helpful alerts to suspicious behaviour. Residents should not fear criticism for posting details of the appearance of suspicious characters.

8. Street trees maintenance

Over the years, there has been considerable disquiet over Camden's excessive and brutal street tree pollarding programme. Veteran plane trees were being pollarded to beyond the previous pollarding points, once every two years, harming both the trees and the leafy character of the Conservation Area. This harm is noted in the Redington Froggnal Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan.

The pollarding led to concerns for the health of the veteran plane trees, which have been displaying signs of stress, eg excessive epicormic growth and fungal growths (leading to a number of fellings).

But a RedFrog LCIL project to assess the health of these veteran plane trees (by fluorescence testing of the leaves) was rejected by Camden's Tree Manager.

However, it seems that there may have recently been a change in Camden's practice and a new contractor appointed.

Concerns remain about the impact of pollarding on the trees' potential lifespans.

9. Philip Jones Associates report for Hampstead Transport Partnership

The survey remains open, with some 600 responses having been received. The consultants are currently working through them.

The next public meeting will be 7pm 27 November, 2024 at St Stephens Church above the Royal Free. The consultants will be feeding back to the public the results of their studies and suggestions for solutions.

It was noted that the study is an attempt to solve the problem which Camden should be addressing and that it has been created partly through the introduction of a 20 mph speed limit without any enforcement cameras.

10. Situations vacant

- i. O2 Construction Working Group representation
- ii. UCS Construction Working Group representation
- iii. Marketing assistance, eg LinkedIn content
- iv. Neighbourhood Watch representation.

The Association would like assistance with any of the above roles and also for running the website.

11. Elections

Kurt, Laurence and Nancy were re-elected as Chair, Treasurer and Secretary, respectively.

Nizam Broachi had offered to act as the liaison point between RedFrog Association and the Met Police Frogna Safer Neighbourhood Team. In his absence, Nizam's appointment was proposed by Kurt and seconded by Vivek. Tina offered help with Hollycroft Avenue.

12. AoB

Items I, ii, iii, v and vi were not discussed, due to time constraints.

- i. 99 Frogna
This concerns a Grade II listed building. It lies just outside the RedFrog area, but is a very significant application. The developer is seeking to replace an existing extension with larger extensions, add a new mansard roof extension and construct a deep basement in an area close to Branch Hill Pond and the lost River Westbourne. It has serious implications for subterranean (groundwater) flow and slope stability.



- ii. Camden Planning Guidance on Amenity and artificial light and noise disturbance
[Camden Planning Guidance Amenity, March 2018](#) addresses nuisance from artificial light and noise.
- iii. Spanish Steps at the junction of Netherhall Gardens and Finchley Road
The public realm here was designed to replicate the Spanish Steps in Rome, but was never fully completed and now attracts anti-social behaviour.

Although the site lies just outside the RedFrog area (but within the Frognal ward), RedFrog could consider participating in an LCIL-funded project to improve the public realm here, if supported by residents.

Further information about the Spanish Steps is available at:
<https://www.redfrogassociation.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/RedFrog-history-2002-to-2020.pdf>



- iv. Traffic speeds and litter
Concerns have been raised about speeding cars in Heath Drive and, at times reckless driving, and submission of a petition to the Council has been requested.

A need for greater attention to keeping the streets tidier and free from graffiti and flyposting has also been noted.

Speeds of up to 100 mph have previously been recorded in Redington Road.

- v. Safer crossings for Finchley Road
LCIL funds were awarded for a project to provide safer crossings. Will TfL be taking any steps to address the problem, as a result?

- vi. Exhibition at Burgh House celebrating Hampstead's ponds.
Local artist, John Richardson, has a number of paintings, including of the newly reinstated Branch Hill Pond:
<https://www.burghhouse.org.uk/whats-on/exhibitions/an-urban-escape-hampsteads-ponds-people-and-places>

30 October to 10 November 2024



13. Q&A with drinks and refreshments.