

Acton Hill Neighbourhood Forum

APPLICATION FOR DESIGNATION OF A
NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA AND FORUM

1. INTRODUCTION

For the past year, a group of neighbours in our area has been meeting to discuss the formation of a neighbourhood area and forum. After a consultation with all the households in our neighbourhood, and taking advice from the community consultant Tony Burton, we would like to apply for the creation of a neighbourhood area and forum.

The proposed neighbourhood is in the London Borough of Ealing.

The details of the proposed area and forum are as follows:

Area name

Acton Hill

Forum name

Acton Hill Neighbourhood Forum

Forum constitution

See Appendix A (page 11)

Support from at least 21 individuals who live or work in the area

See page 9

Forum contact details

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2. DEFINING THE ACTON HILL NEIGHBOURHOOD

We have reviewed the considerations for defining a neighbourhood area provided in the Government's Planning Practice Guidance and consider Acton Hill to be a suitable area for designation. Our proposed area is the island of Acton streets shown on Map 1. We form a distinct network of roads which naturally relate to each other, and which have a shared history.

a) Our shared history

This area of Acton, which has long been known as Acton Hill, largely consisted of open fields until the end of the 19th century. The Tithe Map of 1831 shows the exact boundary of our area, which then consisted of six fields. Two of the fields belonged to the Wegg Estate, administered from The Elms, the mansion house which now forms the central part of Twyford Church of England School; the remaining four fields belonged to East Lodge, a private house which stood on the site now occupied by Tesco Express on the Uxbridge Road. Please see Map 2.

In 1898, the streets and houses which form Denehurst Gardens, Willcott Road and Hillcrest Road were laid out on the two fields which had belonged to the Wegg Estate. By the time of the 1901 census, most of the houses in these streets were occupied. Meanwhile, King Edward's Gardens and Whitehall Gardens, which were laid out on the East Lodge fields, seem to have been completed by 1904. A book of the time says: 'Across Gunnersbury Lane and westward to the Acton boundary the space has been rapidly filled up with a good type of medium sized houses, in a very pleasant situation and convenient to the lines of tramway which border this section on the northern side.'

As far as we can determine, the boundaries of the area date back to the mid 18th century, and possibly earlier.

b) Our shared style and character

The houses for the whole area were built in the Edwardian style, with wide roads, airy homes, gable ends, small front gardens, and a variety of wooden porches, balconies, half-timbering, and details from the arts and crafts movement. Council minutes from 1904 show that the streets were planted with mop-headed acacia trees and silver birches. The style of the housing and streets gives the neighbourhood a warm, distinctive



Map 1: The proposed neighbourhood area.



Map 2: The 1831 tithe map, with the modern street plan overlaid. The two fields of the Wegg Estate are in blue; the four fields belonging to East Lodge are in orange.

and cohesive character. One local resident describes the area as a 'serene and peaceful corner of this busy city'.

c) The proposed boundary

The boundary we propose for the Acton Hill Neighbourhood has a core area comprising of the following roads:

Denehurst Gardens
Hillcrest Road
King Edward's Gardens
King Edward's Place
Whitehall Gardens
Willcott Road

We think it also makes sense to include the houses and businesses on the major roads which define our area: on the south side of High Street and Uxbridge Road, and the west side of Gunnersbury Lane, as follows:

High Street and Uxbridge Road: From the Red Lion & Pineapple (281 High Street), via Pure Gym (283 High Street), nos. 305-389 Uxbridge Road, to West Lodge Court

Gunnersbury Lane: From the Red Lion & Pineapple, via Bronnley Court, to 2-44 Gunnerbury Lane

d) Why we have chosen this boundary

We considered several factors in choosing the proposed boundary:

- The geography of the major roads defines the area for us.
- The history of the fields on which the area is built suggests to us that we are working within a natural unit of land that has been recognised as such for a long time.
- The neighbourhood was built in a short time-frame (1898-1904) and has a consistent visual character across all the core streets.
- These streets feel to local people like an easily identified and cohesive neighbourhood.
- The proposed east and south boundaries of our neighbourhood follow the line of the W3 9 postcode boundary.

- A previous Residents' Association for Acton Hill (in the 2010s) covered the same streets as our core area. Prior to that, an Acton Hill Residents' Association existed in the 1960s to resist the efforts of the Prudential Building Society over the extension of leases and buyouts in Acton Hill. The streets covered by this association were exactly the same as those in our core area. We believe this shows the stability of our neighbourhood's identity.
- Over the past 2-3 years, a good number of neighbours in our core streets have been in conversation with each other about controversial house developments, and this has created the desire to become actively involved in a positive way forward for our streets.
- The streets immediately to our north and west are included in the Greater Central Acton Neighbourhood Area. We understand that our boundary cannot overlap with theirs, and so their boundary supports ours on the north and west sides.
- West Lodge Court, on the north-eastern corner of West Lodge Avenue, has not been included within the boundary of the Greater Central Acton Neighbourhood Area, and so we would like to include it within our proposed area to ensure it is not left out.
- We discussed whether to include streets in the Mill Hill Park area, to the south-east of our neighbourhood, which have a similar character and history to ours, but they are separated from us by Gunnersbury Lane, and have their own separate identity as part of the Mill Hill Park Conservation Area.

3. THE NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

A small group of neighbours has been meeting over the past year to discuss setting up a neighbourhood area and forum. We have consulted with all the houses in the proposed neighbourhood (see page 9) and believe we are a 'qualifying body' for the following reasons:

a) The express purpose of our forum is to promote and improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of our neighbourhood area.

b) Our membership is and will remain open to:

- People who live or work in the area.
- Businesses and community organisations which operate in the area, through their appointed representatives.
- People who are elected members of local authorities, any part of which falls within the area, who can become ex officio members.
- People who have a material and ongoing social, cultural, economic or financial interest in or involvement in the area.

c) Our membership will include a minimum of 21 individuals drawn from different parts of the area and different communities.

d) We have a written constitution (see Appendix A).

4. SUPPORT FOR THE FORUM

Our proposing group of approximately 10 local residents has been meeting over the past year. In that time, we have worked on gaining local support for a neighbourhood forum in the following ways:

a) Letter drop

In June 2018, we canvassed opinion on setting up a Neighbourhood Forum in the area by carrying out a letter drop to all the properties in the streets of our proposed area. This included local businesses, as well as residential properties. We delivered over 500 letters and received over 80 responses, all positive.

Please see Appendix B (page 17) for the text of the letter, and Appendix C (page 20) for the names of supporters.

b) Facebook group

We also set up a Facebook group in order to make the process as inclusive as possible for local residents. The group currently has 41 members and is being used by residents and one of our ward councillors to post news, comment and consultations. It is at this address:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/ActonHillNeighbourhood/>

c) Ward councillors

In addition, we also contacted our three ward councillors (Cllr Yvonne Johnson, Cllr Mik Sabiers, and Cllr Josh Blacker) to inform them of what we are doing and to request their support. Cllrs Johnson and Blacker have responded and given us their support.

d) Local comments

We received a good number of comments in response to the letter drop. All the comments we received were positive and supportive for the creation of a Neighbourhood Forum. For balance, we were hoping to include in this application critical or negative comments, too, but we did not receive any. A selection of comments received shows the response of people in our area for establishing the forum:

'Very good idea! Much appreciated' – Henry Jaworski

'I believe this is a very good idea. I am all for it. Wishing you success' – Dr Yashvant Patel

'I'm afraid I don't have the spare time to get involved much, but wish to lend my support for the initiative' – Roman Krawec

'Thank you to all those who have taken this initiative, which I fully support' – Marta Jenkala

'I fully support the creation of this group' – Liz and Jonathan Cousins

'I am very supportive of the idea of a Neighbourhood forum' – Dr Mary Shannon

'I would like to be included in the forum and completely agree with the points raised' – Tanya O'Rourke

'Very interested in joining your forum. Great idea and good for the community' – Christina Monson

'We appreciate and welcome your initiative to establish a Neighbourhood Forum' – Masako and Peter Wollin

'I thank you for taking some decisive action for the neighbourhood. I will say "YES" to joining the neighbourhood forum' – Deena Rooney

'Great idea! and much needed. Count us in' – John and Marie Higgins

'We would like to be included in the forum and completely agree with the points raised. We too are also concerned about how lack of proper planning regulations could potentially ruin our community' – Tanya O'Rourke

APPENDIX A

ACTON HILL NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM CONSTITUTION

The constitution we have agreed is as follows:

1. Our name

Acton Hill Neighbourhood Forum.

2. Our purpose

The purpose of our forum is to promote and improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of our neighbourhood area.

3. Our area

The forum covers the area of Acton Hill shown on the attached map. It comprises of the following streets:

Denehurst Gardens
Hillcrest Road
King Edward's Gardens
King Edward's Place
Whitehall Gardens
Willcott Road

The area also includes the houses and businesses on the south side of High Street and Uxbridge Road, and the west side of Gunnersbury Lane.

4. Our membership

a) Full membership of the forum is open to:

- People who live in the area.
- People who work in the area.
- People who are elected members of local authorities, any part of which falls within the area, who can become ex officio members.

- People who have a material and ongoing social, cultural, economic or financial interest in or involvement in the area.

- Businesses and organisations which operate in the area, via their appointed representatives.

b) Membership is by application. Applicants will be accepted for membership by:

- Expressing support for the aims of the forum.

- Showing they fulfil one of our membership criteria (4a above).

- Providing their contact details, which the forum commits to store and use in line with GDPR.

c) Applicants may be refused membership, or have their membership revoked if they fail to meet the membership or application criteria (4a and b above), or if they act in a way that contradicts the purpose of the forum (2 above). Any person or organisation whose membership is revoked has the right to appeal to a general meeting of the forum.

d) Non-voting membership is open to any person who does not qualify for full membership (4a above).

5. Management committee and officers

a) The day to day business of the forum is conducted by the Management Committee. The committee consists of between 7 and 13 full members of the forum, elected by a general meeting. Councillors and others elected to public office for any part of the area are not permitted to serve. Membership of the committee expires at every AGM, and members are eligible to stand for re-election for up to a maximum of five years.

b) The committee may co-opt up to three additional voting members, whose term expires at the next AGM. Part of the aim of this is give the committee the best possible balance in representing the local community.

c) The committee elects from among its members the following officers: Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, and any other officers needed. Their roles include:

Chair – Chairing all committee and general meetings; exercising a casting vote in the event of a tied vote; being jointly responsible with the Treasurer to answer to the general meeting on the conduct of financial affairs of the forum.

Vice Chair – Chairing meetings in the absence of the Chair.

Secretary – Handling the administration of the forum; taking the minutes of meetings; processing applications and keeping the records of membership; ensuring compliance with data protection.

Treasurer – Handling all the financial business of the forum; preparing financial reports; answering to the general meeting on the financial affairs of the forum (jointly with the Chair).

d) The committee meets at least three times a year. For voting purposes, five members are needed for a quorum.

e) The committee is able to appoint sub-groups for specific projects.

f) The committee keeps minutes of all its meetings. These can be seen by any member of the forum by applying to the Secretary.

g) Forum members may apply to attend any meeting of the committee by contacting the Secretary. Attending and speaking at the meeting are at the discretion of the Chair.

6. Meetings

a) The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of all members is the controlling body of the forum.

b) The date of the AGM is decided by the Management Committee, and is no later than three months after the end of the forum's financial year.

c) Forum members are given at least 21 days notice of the time and place of the AGM, plus the agenda.

d) Nominations for election to the committee are invited in advance of the AGM. They must be proposed and seconded in writing by members with the signed consent of the candidate. Nominations are submitted to the Secretary at least three days before the AGM.

e) Election of members of the Committee may be taken by a show of hands of members, or if requested by a majority of the meeting,

by ballot of those present at the AGM. Voting proceeds by ranking the candidates in order of preference, and counted by the single transferable vote method. The meeting may appoint one or more scrutineers to act as returning officers, and advise the Chair on the results.

f) The AGM may agree to consider any urgent business which has arisen since the meeting was called. A vote of not less than two-thirds of members present at the AGM is needed for this.

g) A Special General Meeting (SGM) may be called by the committee, or by a request to the Secretary of at least 21 forum members. The meeting must take place within 28 days of receiving the request.

7. The business of the AGM

The business of the AGM includes:

a) A report from the Chair on the activities of the forum since the previous AGM and its plans for the forthcoming year.

b) A report from the Treasurer as to the financial position of the forum.

c) Consideration and approval (if thought fit) of the accounts for the previous financial year, together with an independent examination of the accounts if the turnover exceeds £5,000 for the relevant year.

d) Appointment of an independent examiner to report to the following AGM on the accounts for the current financial year if the turnover is forecast to exceed £5,000 for the relevant year.

e) Consideration of any motion which has been submitted by at least 10 members of the forum in time for circulation with the notice of the AGM.

f) Election of the Management Committee for the forthcoming year.

g) Any other business as required by the constitution or directed by the committee.

8. Conduct of general meetings

a) Thirteen members (or one-fifth of the forum membership, if fewer) constitute a quorum at a general meeting.

b) Voting at general meetings are by show of hands of forum members (except as described in 6e above for the election of committee members).

c) The committee produces a written record of each general meeting and makes it publicly available.

d) Conflicts of interest must be declared. Members who have a conflict of interest should withdraw from discussion and voting on the issue in question.

e) Forum members are entitled to appoint a proxy to vote on their behalf at general meetings. Proxy appointments must be received by the Secretary not less than 24 hours before the meeting.

9. Finance

The finances of the forum are arranged as follows.

a) The Forum's accounting period is annual, ending on 30 April.

b) Accounting records are maintained for six years. On winding up the forum, the records shall be kept for two years. Records are available for inspection by any member on giving at least 10 days notice.

c) The forum maintains a bank or other appropriate account in the name of the forum, which is controlled by a mandate requiring the signature of the Treasurer and one other Management Committee member.

d) The forum's accounts are made publicly available within three months of the forum's financial year end.

e) The forum may raise funds by donation, grants, or other means to be used in furtherance of the forum's purpose.

10. Interpreting our constitution

a) In the event of any question arising where the interpretation of this constitution is in doubt, or where it is silent, the committee has the power to act according to its own interpretation and at its discretion.

b) Other than as may be required by law, amendments to this constitution may only be made by a majority representing at least two-thirds of the members present and voting at a quorate general meeting.

c) Any requirement in this constitution for notices or reports to be distributed to members of the forum shall be deemed to be satisfied if they are sent to by email, by posting on the forum website, or by other electronic means. Forum members may request hard copies, but the committee reserves the right to make a charge to cover costs, at the same time taking into consideration any disability requirements.

11. Duration of the forum

a) The duration of the forum is for five years from the date of designation, unless it is previously wound up or extended by resolution at a general meeting.

b) If the forum is dissolved, any remaining assets will be distributed to the community organisations which remain as members at that date. The proportions of the distribution will be decided by the committee, which will retain responsibility for completing the distribution for a period ending six months from the date of dissolution.

APPENDIX B

NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM LETTER

The letter below was printed out and then hand-delivered to all the properties in our proposed neighbourhood area on the weekend of 8-10 June 2018.

8 June 2018

Dear Acton Hill Neighbours

CREATING A NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

Our patch of Acton has become a planning and building battleground in the past two or three years. It seems that almost every time a neighbouring house comes up for sale, property developers snap it up and try to turn it into a block of flats.

That's how 30 King Edward's Gardens was demolished, and five houses were shoehorned into what was once its family garden. And it's the sad story of 16 Hillcrest Road, which has been gutted, excavated, and left virtually derelict while the developer puts in one planning application after another.

Thanks to the dedicated work of many neighbours, we've been able to resist some of the worst excesses of the developers by individually lodging objections with Ealing Council. But we think the time has come when we need to get more organised, so we can work together to protect our neighbourhood against:

Overdevelopment – seeing more family homes turned into anything from 3 to 7 flats

Parking overload – when it's already often difficult to find a parking space on our streets

Airbnb – we are vulnerable the blight of Airbnb, with all the noise, traffic and loss of community created by short rentals

Loss of character – our homes and streets have a quality of character which might easily be lost

With the advice and encouragement of Ealing Council, we would like to establish a Neighbourhood Forum. This would give us a genuine say in the planning process for our area, and the Council would be legally obliged to take our views into account in their decision-making. It would also establish us as a recognised neighbourhood.

Please be assured that we are not interested in turning our streets into a conservation area, and we're definitely not against all the good and normal ways our homes can be improved, such as building an extension or converting a loft.

A similar forum has recently been created north of the Uxbridge Road, in the Central Acton Neighbourhood Forum. Our proposal is to create a smaller forum, which we're provisionally calling the Acton Hill Forum, for our 'island' of local streets:

King Edward's Gardens
Whitehall Gardens
Hillcrest Road
Willcott Road
Denehurst Gardens
Uxbridge Road and Gunnersbury Lane properties, within this triangle.

These streets were built in the decade after 1900 on six old farm fields, and they have always had an attractive, friendly and homely character. We would like to help preserve that character as much as possible, and hand it on to the next generation. We are not against the reasonable development of homes in the area, but we do think that squeezing lots of small flats into these houses is too much.

The Council has encouraged us to form our own forum, as it is the most effective way for our voice to be heard.

If you like the sound of what we are proposing, or if you disagree with it, please email (at the above address) to let us know your thoughts.

Facebook: We will disseminate information via our closed user Facebook group. All residents of the area are welcome to join the group. Details below.

Email: contact us also at ActonHillNeighbourhood@gmail.com

We'd especially like to know whether you'd be happy to support the creation of a Neighbourhood Forum. And please let us know which

street you live on. We'll keep you in touch with what's happening, and let you know how you can be involved.

Please get in touch by Wednesday 20th June 2018 with your views, or simply to say 'Yes, please include me in the Forum'.

Thanks for reading this!

With best wishes

Neighbourhood Forum proposal - Steering Committee

Acton Hill Neighbourhood Forum

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/ActonHillNeighbourhood/>

ActonHillNeighbourhood@gmail.com

APPENDIX C

LOCAL SUPPORTERS OF THE FORUM

The following 85 people living in all the streets of our area have indicated their support for the creation of the Acton Hill Neighbourhood Forum. They fulfil our criteria for membership of the forum, and will become members once the forum has been designated. They indicated their support mostly by responding on email to our letter drop, but also on our Facebook group. Their house numbers, where they supplied them, are shown in brackets.

Denehurst Gardens

Charlie Ben-Nathan
Shao-Ying Ben-Nathan
Eileen Francis (8)
Michael Gaunt
John Higgins (1)
Marie Higgins (1)
Christina Monson (15)
Fred Monson (15)
Katie Taylor (4b)

Gunnersbury Lane

Caroline Cross Brown (18)
Henry Jaworski (8a)
Karim Ladak (8)
Michael Ollitervo-Murphy (24a)
Pavel Ollitervo-Murphy (24a)
Christopher Thompson (22b)
Masako Wollin (4)
Peter Wollin (4)

Hillcrest Road

David Aldrich (2)
Emma Aldrich (2)
Sandy Aldrich (2)
Beryl Bashford (7)
John Boles (10)
Luca Ceccolini (12)
Nicola Ceccolini (12)

Mark Delaney (13)
Aimee diMarco (1)
Sandra Dunne (10)
Joan Fitzgerald (6)
Mike Fitzgerald (6)
Anna Jablkowska (44)
Adrian Jenkala (25)
Marta Jenkala (19)
Roey Jenkins (14)
Simon Jenkins (14)
Jay Krastev (38)
Roman Krawec (19)
Richard M Kwasnicki (1)
Richard Lamping (15)
Sally Lamping (15)
James Mount (11)
Victoria Mount (11)
Jane Nicholson (23)
Tanya O'Rourke (46)
Ben Pateman (3a)

King Edward's Gardens

Mike Allen (25)
Peter Allen (25)
Viviana Benezeth (13)
Caroline Bogh-Henrikssen (42)
Jonathan Cousins (6)
Liz Cousins (6)
Lacy Curtis-Ward (35)
Sean Curtis-Ward (35)
Patricia Frances
Bryony Franklin (4)
David Franklin (4)
Victoria Harrison (23)
Alan Jones (22)
Larissa Pelham (43)
Rebecca Rahman (72)
Patricia Reid
Patricia Rianne (2)
Glenys Roberts (22)
Patricia Ryan-LLOYD (2)
Leila Sherratt (74)
Mathew Sherratt (74)
James Streeter (70)

Philip Webb (72)
Horace Williams (54)
Kate Williams (54)

Whitehall Gardens

Nicky Defries (3)
Tony Defries (3)
Dominic D’Vaz (20)
Emily Manson (38)
Caroline Murray (25)
Fraser Murray (25)
Ben Myers (6)
Laura Pasternack (17)
Fiona Stuart (39)

Willcott Road

Christine Duffield
Linda Duffield
Simon Elkinson (9)
Ashley Humphreys (8)
Deena Rooney

Uxbridge Road

Donald Paige
Yashvant Patel (355)