

## Hampstead Neighbourhood Forum

### Application to London Borough of Camden for redesignation as a Neighbourhood Area and Neighbourhood Forum under the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 and Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017

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We believe the Forum meets the conditions contained in section 61F(5) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and is a 'relevant body' capable of being designated as a neighbourhood forum. It has been established with more than 21 people to promote the social, economic and environmental well-being of Hampstead and South End Green and in a manner that reflects the diversity of the area and of the people who live and work there and whose purpose reflects the character of the area.

**Name** - The name of our forum is the Hampstead Neighbourhood Forum.

**Membership** - Membership continues to be open to all "residents living in the area, individuals who work or carry on a business in the area and London Borough of Camden Councillors representing all or part of the area."

Affiliate membership (non-voting) is open to organisations within the Area; a list of these organisations will be updated from time to time and will be available on the Forum's website.

There are 927 registered members. The Forum has supplied Camden Council with the names and addresses of 21 Forum members. This includes at least one resident, one person working in the neighbourhood area and an elected councillor.

**Constitution** - a copy of our current Constitution, adopted at our inaugural AGM on 6 March 2014 at the Hampstead Community Centre, is attached.

**Area in which Forum is intended to operate** – the designated neighbourhood area is attached in Appendix 1

**Statement of purpose** - As stated in our Constitution, the purpose of the Forum is to promote and improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of the Area, described above.

Hampstead is facing unprecedented pressure from market forces that threaten the economic vitality of our village centres, the social fabric of our communities and the health of our local environment. A recent ONS report <sup>1</sup>shows that in September 2018, Hampstead Town ward, which comprises over 90% of the designated Forum area, was the 17<sup>th</sup> most expensive local authority area in the United Kingdom to buy a home, out of a total of 8269 local authority areas, with an average sale price of £1,290,000.

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<sup>1</sup> Median house prices by ward: HPSSA dataset 37. Published by Office for National Statistics, 28<sup>th</sup> March 2019.

At the time of original designation in 2014, many people (see our attached report from our first consultation exercise) felt that diversity in Hampstead and South End Green was under threat. Local amenities, businesses and jobs risked being lost to the lucrative housing market. Recent examples included:

- the conversion of The Old White Bear pub to provide overflow accommodation for a private school, despite its designation by Camden Council as a "community asset" in response to an application by local residents.
- the redevelopment of a nurses home at New End, which previously offered affordable accommodation for key workers in the Northern part of our area, into luxury flats.

While Hampstead and South End Green are popular gateways to Hampstead Heath, heavy traffic, loss of trees and green space and unsustainable development continue to pose risks to the environment and to health.

Yet Hampstead and South End Green continue to be desirable places not only to live in but also to work in. Many local residents work from home either as consultants or in other industries (In 2001, 844 people were listed as working from home in Hampstead ward, according to ONS data for Methods of Travelling to Work for the Resident Population.) The percentage of self-employed in Hampstead Town ward is much higher than the rest of Camden, 21.2% v. 13.4% according to 2011 census data<sup>2</sup>.

Since 2014 the Forum has conducted an extensive programme of community engagement to define community priorities for our area<sup>3</sup>. The Forum has used the outcome of this exercise to shape the Hampstead Neighbourhood Plan and ensure that it met the wishes of the local community. This was in turn reflected in the approval of the Plan by 91.5% of those voting at its referendum in June 2018, a turn-out of 20.5%.

In preparing our neighbourhood plan, we also worked closely with Camden officers on revisions to the Hampstead Conservation Area statement, in conducting an authoritative study of air pollution in our area, and in documenting local green spaces, important trees and important local views.

The Hampstead Neighbourhood Plan provides policies which reflect the specific character of our area (particularly on Design & Heritage matters) and is closely aligned with the revised Conservation Area Statement and our other research. It also deals with ways in which important challenges to our neighbourhood environment can be managed, particularly those associated with basement development, air pollution, traffic dominance, over-development of green space and loss of vital commercial office space in Hampstead village.

We hope that the Plan that we have created will address the issues that local people care about and ensure that Hampstead develops in a way that is sustainable and promotes a thriving, accessible and diverse community.

Since adoption of the Hampstead Neighbourhood Plan in October 2018, the Forum has focused its activity on a number of tasks to ensure that the Plan realises its objective to contribute to sustainable development and support strong communities. These tasks have involved:

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<sup>2</sup> Nomis Area Reports for Camden LAA and Hampstead Town ward based on 2011 Census Data, ONS 2019,

<sup>3</sup> Hampstead Neighbourhood Plan Consultation Statement and Evidence Base, published Camden Council 2018

- Support for Camden Officers to in connection with their use and interpretation of the Plan
- Review of key development applications to indicate their level of alignment to Plan policies
- Advice to local councillors, residents and developers on development projects both at pre-proposal and application stages.

The Forum has also engaged with Locality, through its Neighbourhood Planning Forum<sup>4</sup>, to offer advice to groups in other parts of the country and to stay informed of best practice.

In addition to this work, the Forum has developed a structured and open nomination process for ward-based CIL funding to assess the degree of community support for each proposed initiative in support of councillors' decision-making.

The Forum will periodically review the effectiveness of the Hampstead Neighbourhood Plan to ensure its policies address emerging challenges, new regulation and changing conditions in our area. Where improvements can offer significant benefit for the Community or are required by law, the Forum will develop and consult on enhancements to the Plan for approval at referendum and subsequent adoption.

**Committee** - Members of the Forum's Committee come from a variety of backgrounds and from geographically diverse parts of the area, including:

- The Chief Executive of the Hampstead Business Improvement District
- The chair of the Heath & Hampstead Society's Planning Committee
- Residents from various residents associations, including the Downshire Hill Residents Association, Pilgrim's to Willoughby Residents Association, Flask Walk Association, and the Hillsideers from South Hill Park

The Committee also includes all borough Councillors for Hampstead Town, Gospel Oak and Frogna & Fitzjohns wards, who are ex-officio members.

**Engagement** - The Forum is committed to being as inclusive as possible and continues to make efforts to publicise the efforts of the Forum and to solicit membership. Every one of the nine faith groups in the area has been contacted; every one of the ten schools; every business organisation that we know of both in the Hampstead village centre and the South End Green centre; and each of the three sheltered housing centres:

- We have publicised our work on our website, through the Hampstead & Highgate newspaper, Village Voice magazine, Hampstead Matters, the Heath & Hampstead Society Magazine, through social media, at community centres and railway stations; and through door-to-door leafleting. As a result, we have been able to build a supporter-base of nearly 1000 subscribers who live or work in Hampstead, with whom we communicate regularly on planning matters.

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<sup>4</sup> Locality is the national network working with MHLCG to support local community organisations. For details of the Neighbourhood Planning Forum please refer to <https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/network/forum/>

- We have consulted with the Hampstead Business Improvement District, the Hampstead Heath Community Group (South End Green businesses), and the Hampstead Business Hub,
- A representative from the Hampstead Business Improvement District sits on our committee and a representative from the South End Green business community is an advisor to our committee.

The Forum continues to be as inclusive as possible and we will continue to work to identify diverse members of our community who may be “hard-to-reach”, and develop opportunities to make the Forum approachable and inclusive for them.

Statistics from Hampstead Town Ward show that Hampstead has a relatively older population with no sizeable one ethnic minority group. In 2011<sup>5</sup>:

- 38.6% residents were 45 years or older, compared with a Camden average of 30.3%.
- 20% residents came from non-White ethnic groups compared with a Camden average of 33.7%.

We have consulted with Voluntary Action Camden, the Camden Community Centre and the Armoury and have visited most sheltered housing centres in the Forum area to ensure that we remain representative of those with mobility impairment and other special access needs.

Our strategy for involving older people has involved contacts with Henderson Court, Burgh House and the Hampstead Community Centre.

An advisor to the committee has helped us address issues concerning those who are visually impaired. We are working with Jonathan Bergman and others on addressing the needs of those with disabilities. Jonathan successfully spear-headed a campaign to provide lifts at Hampstead Station.

30<sup>th</sup> June, 2019

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<sup>5</sup> Nomis Area Reports for Camden LAA and Hampstead Town ward based on 2011 Census Data, ONS 2019,

**Appendix 1 – map of designated neighbourhood area**



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