

# **Proposed merger of Emsworth Forum with the Emsworth Residents Association**

## **The big picture**

Emsworth is an active community comprising c10,000 residents; numerous employing businesses; schools; churches; clubs and other associations; special interest groups and membership organisations plus other stakeholders including a significant number of visitors. It is a vibrant environment that provides an excellent standard of life for much of the community. There are nonetheless interests which are comparatively neglected and environmental, social, and economic changes are underway where some planning and coordination is required to ensure that the community continues to flourish.

Using the powers granted by the Localism Act 2011, with the active encouragement of the ERA, the community came together to create a Neighbourhood Forum to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan which was approved by referendum in 2021. With the adoption of the plan the Forum has a continuing role in ensuring it remains current and in encouraging its application. It also has a role in managing the interface with Havant Borough Council as a statutory consultee over planning matters and advocating for the allocation of Community Infrastructure Funding (CIL) funding.

The Emsworth Residents Association (ERA) is an established subscription-charging organisation with eight hundred household memberships. It has a broad remit, aiming to represent the interests of the whole community 'to help make Emsworth a pleasant, safe and caring place to live and work'. Amongst its assets it hosts a programme of public meetings and publishes the EMS, a quarterly journal and the principal means of print communication provided free to all addresses in Emsworth and Hermitage.

The ERA and Forum, have similar objects, overlapping memberships and complementary strengths:

ERA – a mature organisation with good recognition, sustainably funded, effective communications infrastructure

Forum – formal status in the planning process, authority to represent the community

It is in the interests of the community that the two organisations are closely aligned. There are moreover advantages in efficiency and clarity of messaging in merging them into a single body. It would also present an opportunity to relaunch a merged organisation with fresh momentum and recruit new members. Accordingly a full merger is proposed.

## **Aims and objectives**

The aims of the proposed merged body reflect those of the two merging organisations. They are:

1. To promote and improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of Emsworth for the benefit of its residents.
2. To support sustainable development, environmental improvement, conservation, and a high-quality built environment and design

The merged organisation intends to achieve these aims by:

Effective communication within the community by:

- Maintaining a visible presence in the community with high recognition
- Communicating with, consulting and involving Emsworth residents in all aspects of our work
- Being open and accessible with transparent governance
- Working in partnership with other groups focussing on improving the Emsworth community

Building on the Neighbourhood Plan by

- Fostering the character and unique qualities of Emsworth as a distinct place
- Identifying, prioritising and implementing projects set out in the Neighbourhood Plan
- Generating other project of real community benefit and supporting interest groups to deliver them
- Discharging the formal rôles of a Neighbourhood Forum including acting as a statutory consultee on planning issues, maintaining an up-to-date Neighbourhood Plan, monitoring its implementation and carrying out reviews when necessary

Involving the entire inclusive community by:

- Cultivating a tolerant and creative community where all members can exercise their agency, individually and collectively, and flourish
- Encouraging and supporting other groups to act together for the public benefit, such as the Emsworth Health Care Alliance, bringing together groups and individuals with shared interests

Maintaining effective links to our local authority and beyond by:

- Extending local democracy—representing the entire community with continuous outreach and consultation over priority issues
- Maintaining a productive partnership with our local authorities, both officers and Councillors, and responding to any consultations on planning matters
- Being a principal voice for the community in dealing with Local and Central Government, other institutions and public bodies

Making the best use of our resources by:

- Being efficient—optimising impact in raising funds and deploying them alongside the human resources available
- Acting professionally and commercially when necessary and appropriate

20/12/2022

...