

Your Green Belt still NEEDS YOU!

We're fundraising and we need your support...

It's been over a year since Elmbridge Borough Council (EBC) consulted residents on its Strategic Options for a new Local Plan. In this consultation, the Council's suggested 'Option 2' proposed to declassify three areas of 'weakly performing' Green Belt to allow for large scale housing developments.

Our local Green Belt was one of these three areas ('Area 58'). Its classification as 'weakly performing' seems to be solely based on a questionable report, in which the area was misrepresented. The evidence used for this report included a photograph of the hockey club car park. There was no sign of the open green space used by our community (Stokes Field/One Tree Hill), with its beautiful views, the Buddhist retreat or the recreational facilities of the allotments, cricket and hockey clubs.

Whilst little has been publicised since the consultation, we are concerned that **the threat to our Green Belt has not gone away. We need to raise funds, urgently, protect it and we need your help.**

See overleaf to help fund the fight



Who we are

The 'Save HWLD Green Belt' team (formerly the HWLD Action Group) are a group of residents from Long Ditton and Hinchley Wood, who are passionate about maintaining and protecting our valuable Green Belt land and community spaces. We support the provision of more housing, in a responsible and sensitive way, for the wellbeing of current and future generations.

The story so far

FEB 2017 Consultation results showed that 91% of those who replied (across Elmbridge) oppose Option 2. A summary and Individual Responses can be viewed at: <http://consult.elmbridge.gov.uk/consult.ti/lpsoc/consultationHome>

MAR 2017 Taylor Wimpey became the Freehold owner of a parcel of land which includes the Rose Nursery and the area known locally as One Tree Hill/Stokes Field Hill as far down as the track bordering the nature reserve.

SEPT 2017 EBC leafleted residents asking for their preferences on its priorities going forward:

- On the environment, the top response from residents, is 'to preserve green spaces' (74%).
- In the next 5 years, residents want EBC to be known for 'protecting the Green Belt'.

DEC 17 The London Plan was published for consultation. In it, the Mayor, says he will build all the housing it needs within its boundaries, and will not need to build on Green Belt (redefined as Green Infrastructure) to do so.

FEB 2018 In their draft response to the Mayor's London Plan, EBC encouraged the Mayor to review Green Belt. Under pressure from bodies, including the Long Ditton Residents' Association, this was removed. It is a concern that EBC do not seem to be listening to the residents' Consultation feedback.

Throughout the last year or so, our team has met with key figures including Dominic Raab MP, senior executives at EBC, contacts at Surrey County Council and professional planning consultants to encourage a strategic approach to meeting the Government housing quota demands.

Why would it be irresponsible to offer up Green Belt in Elmbridge?

- The Green Belt within the M25 is already fragmented, and is performing its main purpose well.
- It sets a precedent.
- Green spaces are good for health and wellbeing, and counter the impact of pollution. This will become even more important given the potential impacts of the London Plan (development of Kingston/Tolworth), Heathrow expansion and Crossrail 2.

What can we do to protect our valuable piece of Green Belt?

Last August our team helped contact local residents to ask them to complete questionnaires supporting a 'Village Green' application for Stokes Field/One Tree Hill. A large number of evidence forms were lodged with Surrey County Council, we will need many more...

Please see overleaf for more details.

Help save our
community asset

Our Village Green

In Summer 2017, an application was made for Village Green status on the open space within our Green Belt used widely by our community – One Tree Hill/Stokes Field and Nature Reserve.

Village Green status would be a recognition of the community value of this land, and would protect it for future generations.

Note that a 'Village Green' is *not* an archetypal piece of lush grass used for village fetes. It is an area of land that has been used freely by a significant number of people for 20+ years for a variety of pastimes. Exactly what this area is.

Much research was done, with expert guidance, to establish that Stokes Field/One Tree Hill has a valid case to become a Village Green. The application was submitted, with supporting evidence from a large number of local residents in August.

What next?

Despite the research and expert guidance, a hurdle has been raised by EBC arguing that the Village Green application is not valid. However, legal advice has been obtained that argues against this, stating that this is an incorrect interpretation of the law.

How can you help?

If the Village Green application is successful, Stokes Field/One Tree Hill can be saved, allowing future generations to enjoy this open green space at the heart of our community.

You can help by:

1. Helping raise funds for further legal advice
2. Completing a simple evidence questionnaire to show how you use the land to further support the application – see link at www.savehwldgreenbelt.co.uk

PLEASE DONATE TO HELP FUND THE FIGHT...

There are several ways you can donate to the Fight Fund...

1. Online, by direct bank transfer or to set up a standing order:

Save HWLD Green Belt
Acc. No: 8220 3553
Sort Code: 40-26-12

2. Through JustGiving:

www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/hwld-greenbelt

3. By cheque:

Made payable to 'Save HWLD Green Belt'.

Please post to:

Save HWLD Green Belt,
7 Chalcott Gardens,
Long Ditton, KT6 5HJ.

OR to:

Save HWLD Green Belt,
15 Hill Rise,
Hinchley Wood, KT10 0AL.

FIGHT FUND FAQs

Q How will the money be used?

A For payment of legal fees and to pay for printing and fundraising activity. We have engaged a Barrister already, to represent us in our Village Green application.

Q Can I see a Fight Fund running total, and how the money is spent?

A Yes, we will give frequent updates as to the total and expenditure on the Save HWLD Green Belt website.

Q What will happen to unspent money, when funding is no longer required?

A Any unspent money will be distributed to benefit local community causes in Long Ditton and Hinchley Wood.

Q Will any members of the Save HWLD Green Belt team benefit financially?

A No. All members of the team give their time for free.

Q Will contributors' names be published?

A No, all donations will be treated as confidential and anonymous, unless Just Giving is used and you allow your name to be published.

Q Is the bank account officially recognised?

A The Save HWLD Green Belt team have established a community bank account with HSBC. A constitution was submitted and four team members were vetted and validated by HSBC bank. We are in the process of appointing an auditor.



For more information visit www.SaveHWLDGreenBelt.co.uk