



St Quintin and Woodlands Neighbourhood Forum

Newsletter August 2018

Feedback from July 18th open meeting

The meeting of the StQW Forum/St Helens Residents Association on July 18th was well attended. A PDF version of the slides used at the meeting will be circulated to all members along with this newsletter.

Our neighbourhood plan for this area, which had 92% support at its referendum in February 2016 has finally been formally adopted by the Council. To read a copy enter 'planning policy' in the search box on the Council's at www.rbkc.gov.uk. The Plan can then be downloaded from this web page.

The StQW planning policies sit alongside those in the Local Plan for the Borough, and are applied by the Council when planning applications are decided. If you are undertaking works on your house, it is worth you or your architect becoming familiar with these policies.

We are seeing a growing number of examples of breaches of RBKC and StQW planning policies when properties in this area are being refurbished. Planning permission is needed when front gardens and boundary walls are changed or rebuilt and many people do not seem to realise this.

Paving over of front gardens with impermeable surfaces is not normally permitted and the Council has taken enforcement action in a recent case. The RBKC policy on this issue is designed to reduce the risk of flash flooding. Paving an area up to 5m square is allowed under national 'permitted development' rights.

Solar energy initiatives

There are two of these ongoing at present:

As part of the RBKC Community Solar Energy Project The Council is identifying local schools and community buildings located in the north of the borough, for the installation of solar panels. For more details contact dave.fuller@repowering.org.uk

Local residents will have received a letter from Solar Together London about a group buying scheme for solar panel installation on household roofs.

We are checking with RBKC the detailed position on planning permission within a conservation area, which we think may prove more complex than the letter from Solar Together suggests

StQW response on OPDC Local Plan

The Forum's detailed response can be seen on our website. It argues that the extreme high housing densities proposed are unjustified and render the Draft Plan 'unsound'. The Plan will be examined in late 2018.

How could we improve North Pole Road and Latimer Road?

The StQW Forum has applied to the London Mayor's Good Growth Fund for a £20,000 budget to finance some consultancy input to develop detailed proposals for the future of these key streets in our neighbourhood.

In Latimer Road, levels of vacant office space are rising again. The StQW Plan allows for mixed use redevelopment of the 14 light industrial units in the street, with housing above employment uses. The Council is now keen to see this happen, and more work on design guidelines and the overall environment of the street would help encourage building owners to take this step.

North Pole Road is becoming increasingly unattractive as a result of worsening traffic congestion. As one of our three shopping parades, the proportion of vacant units is higher than in St Helens Gardens and Barlby Road. Estate agents report very little interest from new tenants. As is happening all across the country, shuttered shops lead to reduced footfall in a downward spiral.

The Forum is working with the Council to encourage landlords to market premises and to be more realistic on rent levels. We need more radical measures, in terms of traffic, parking, pavement layout and a wider range of activities to revive the street. We hope to secure Good Growth funding to help with this, and to bring together shop-keepers and residents to come up with new ideas.

The Council is using a new online tool to consult with residents on its next Transport Implementation Plan. This plan will include new pedestrian or cycling facilities, measures to reduce vehicle speeds, or more electric vehicle charging locations. The Commonplace Consultation can be viewed at:

<https://rbkctransport.commonplace.is>

There are already some comments submitted on this online system and we need to use this consultation (which closes on September 7th) make clear to RBKC that action is needed on North Pole Road.

Back in 2016 we suggested an alternative route to the Cycle Quietway that crosses North Pole Road. The general view of locals is that this new layout has not been a success for cyclists, and has increased the number of occasions when the traffic becomes grid-locked by buses and construction vehicles.

Discussions have been held in the past with LBHF and RBKC councillors about a scheme to repaint and renew lighting under the bridge. This too needs to be re-activated.