

Fw: January 2026 newsletter from the StQW Forum and St Helens RA

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St Helens Residents Association



St Quintin and Woodlands Neighbourhood Forum

Re-opening of a pub/restaurant at 274 Latimer Road as ‘The Latimer’

2026 has started with some positive news. One of the long-running sagas featured in these newsletters has been the future of the former Ariadne Nektar pub in Latimer Road, which closed its doors three years ago.

New building owners Wentworth Andersen refurbished parts of the building and obtained a new licence in 2024 to re-open as 'The Volunteer'. Delays over planning permissions for conversion of the cellar to a basement kitchen coupled with enforcement issues over use of the upper floors as 'flats' then followed. StQW joined with Latimer Road residents in objecting to this series of applications, for reasons as set out at the time. We felt that the applicants should have explained all their plans for the building, in a single application at the start of their conversion works. We hope that this period in the life of the building is now past history.

The good news is that a 15 year lease on the building has recently been signed between the building owners and the Spiteri family. The family have been involved in London restaurants for 40 years. Over the past year, brothers Fin and Lorcan Spiteri have been discussing plans with Wentworth Andersen to re-open 274 Latimer Road as 'The Latimer' (rather than 'The Volunteer'). This [one page website](#) will soon be expanded with more details.

StQW and St Helens RA have long argued for a pub with a serious food offer in Latimer Road, given the limited alternatives of places to eat in the neighbourhood. The Spiteris describe their plans as below:

The Latimer public house in West London is a new project by Fin and Lorcan Spiteri, due to open in March 2026, in association with other members of the family, including Jon Spiteri who has been responsible for some of London's most iconic dining rooms.



Fin and Lorcan between them have many years' experience in bars, restaurants and pubs, and it's long been an ambition to have a local of their own. Their aim for The Latimer is to make it just that, a local, rooted in its community, warm, friendly, family-run with skilled staff, hosting tasting nights, neighbourhood events and guest chefs.

Fin's long-standing relationships with independent brewers, winemakers and distillers will support the drinks list, while the kitchen, headed by Lorcan, will provide a menu for the dining area and for the bar celebrating seasonal British produce with traditional and not-so traditional dishes.

They look forward to welcoming you there, and updates on the opening plans will follow.

There are several aspects of this outcome which are positive, in terms of all of our past discussions at open meetings on what we would like to see happen with this pub:

- The emphasis will be as much on food as on drink with a serious menu as well as bar snacks.
- No changes are planned to the opening hours and licensing conditions set by RBKC in August 2024. These conditions are detailed and designed to prevent risks of noise and disturbance.
- The operation will be managed by family members with at least one living on the premises, in the second floor flat. Onsite presence of landlord staff has always been our preference, to deal with early morning deliveries or any problems of customers leaving at closing time.
- StQW concerns over breaches of planning controls on the upper floors (which have permission for 'ancillary use' only) should no longer be an issue.
- Use of the former 'dining room' on the first floor (currently fitted out as a '2 bed flat') will be reviewed and might be taken back into the licensed part of the premises. North Ken pubs with such upstairs space (The Cow and The Pelican) are doing well these days.

All in all, this sounds a promising result for Latimer Road. It should help the survival of the Playground Theatre, improve life for those who work in the street, and offer all of us a long awaited option for eating out in the immediate area. Meanwhile the Council has approved our application to renew the registration of 274 Latimer Road as an Asset of Community Value, for a further five years. So after many months of uncertainty, all looks set for a good final outcome.

Imperial underpass from Wood Lane to Latimer Road

Less good news is that Imperial College failed to start construction work on this project in late 2025 (as was promised last June). We are told that *Imperial is working with all relevant parties to finalise the necessary property and legal agreements required* and that *Our programme currently assumes construction will start in mid-2026*.

We have asked for more specific information on what exactly needs to be resolved and with which of the agencies involved. It is now 12 years since Imperial first advised that it was proving problematic to agree plans with Network Rail. We are in touch with Westway Trust about proposals for signage (for cycles and e-bikes) in the area between the underpass entrance/exit in Latimer Road, along with CCTV coverage.

A new round of bids for NCIL funding from RBKC will be starting shortly (see below). We will re-apply for some of the balance needed to cover the project proposal for the southern end of Latimer Road which we submitted last May.

2026 round of NCIL funding announced

Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy is a 15% slice of the CIL receipts which planning authorities charge on specified categories of floorpace in new developments. The Council then allocates these funds each year to local organisations for 'infrastructure' projects.

Details of the 2026 funding round have just been published on the RBKC website at <https://planningconsult.rbkc.gov.uk/NCILR7/>. The allocation across the Borough is £3.18m. The amount for Dalgarno ward is roughly similar to that for previous years at £52,418, but that for St Helens ward is a small figure at £7,963. This reflects the fact the little development has progressed in the ward over the past year.

Fortunately there a separate further allocation of £9,890 for the StQW neighbourhood (part of national arrangement for adding 10% of CIL to 'reward' areas which have put in place a neighbourhood plan). We can apply to add this sum towards the project for lighting and CCTV at the Latimer Road entrance/exit to Latimer Road, as referred to above. But this will still leave a shortfall to fill in future years. **The deadline for applications is midnight on 11th March** and details of how to apply are on the RBKC web page.

The cyber attack on the Council's IT systems

The impact of this malicious attack on November 24th has affected many residents in many ways. Problems have been acute for those receiving social care. Others have not been able to make payments to RBKC, building up potential debts, or to receive benefits.

The IT systems for planning and Land Charges remain out of action, holding up planning applications - whether from homeowners wanting to replace a window or from developers with bigger projects. The applications for redevelopments at Ivey Court (Latimer Road) and Alan Morkill House (St Marks Road) are stuck in what will be a queue for committee decisions once the RBKC online planning register goes live again.

It is known that there is a fresh application from Rathplace (developers/owners of Unit 9 Latimer Road). But no details are available and no comments can be submitted to the Council. The Land Charges system also remains unavailable, holding up searches on property transactions. .

StQW is now in regular contact with the RBKC planning department on this subject. The latest news is that it should be '*weeks rather than months*' until planning IT systems are back in action. Public consultation will start again afresh on any applications submitted after November 19th. We will circulate more information as soon as we hear definite news.

Consultation on installing road humps in Bassett Road and Oxford Gardens.

One part of the Council's website which is still functioning gives details of proposals to install seven road humps in each of Bassett Road and Oxford Gardens. Two of these humps would be in the stretch of road between St Helen's Gardens and St Mark's Road, and the other five between St Mark's Road and Ladbroke Grove.

The proposals are in response to NCIL funding applications from residents in these streets, and have now reached the stage of formal consultation as traffic measures. See at these two links (they are separate consultations and separate responses are needed).

<https://consult.rbkc.gov.uk/communities/bassett-road/>

<https://consult.rbkc.gov.uk/communities/oxford-gardens/>

Responses of support or objection can be made via the short survey forms available on each link. StQW/SHRA have not taken a view, given that traffic calming measures have different impacts for individuals – and there can be strong views for and against. **The consultation closes on March 8th.**

Update on developments at Kensal Canalside

Although the Council's Planning Committee granted planning consent on November 12th to the application at this Opportunity Area, this decision remains subject to referral to the Mayor at 'Stage 2'.

As explained in our December newsletter, this referral has yet to happen. It cannot happen until the RBKC planning register, with all the application documents and several thousand representations, can be made available to the GLA Planning Unit.

Meanwhile the StQW representation to the Mayor, asking him to 'direct refusal' of the application, given the single road access and lack of transport infrastructure to support high density housing, is available on the [StQW website](#) as their latest post in the right hand column. We will circulate more news once the referral is made.

The Evening Standard [has reported](#) that *at year end, construction work at 61 house-building sites where at least 20 homes are due to be completed had been halted with the gates padlocked. Together they accounted for just over 6,000 half-built homes at a time of severe housing shortages across London.*

A slowdown in housing construction of this speed and scale has not happened before in London. It remains to be seen whether recent 'emergency action' by the Mayor and Government (such as reducing CIL charges and requirements for affordable housing) will lead to a pick up in activity.

Judith Blakeman, a much admired former councillor

There has been sad news this month of the death of former councillor Judith Blakeman at her care home in Kent. She was a councillor at RBKC from 1978-90 and 1994-2022 -- a period covering 40 years of public service in all.

As a ward councillor in St Helens and later Notting Dale, and as Labour Group Leader for a period, she will be remembered by many StQW/SHRA members for all the work she put in to helping local residents over these decades. She also started the annual St Helens Festival in St Helens Gardens and organised this for many years - an event successfully revived by Cllr Portia Thaxter in recent years..

Tributes were paid to Judith at the Council meeting on Wednesday 28th January, by present and former councillors from all parties. It is understood that a memorial service is being arranged locally and we will bring more news next month. .

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