

Fw: October 2025 newsletter from StQW Forum and St Helens RA

From: St Helens Residents Association (sthelensassn@aol.com)

To: henrypeterson@aol.com

Date: Sunday 9 November 2025 at 17:07 GMT

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Henry Peterson <sthelensassn@137052101.mailchimpapp.com>

To: "sthelensassn@aol.com" <sthelensassn@aol.com>

Sent: Friday 17 October 2025 at 21:27:29 BST

Subject: October 2025 newsletter from StQW Forum and St Helens RA



Outcome of our AGM

Our AGM on September 19th at St Helens Church Hall was well attended, with 50 members including both St Helens ward councillors Portia Thaxter and Emma Dent Coad. Slides from the session are posted [here](#) on the StQW website (scroll to the foot of the page).

Elections to the StQW management committee have added two new members. Bella Huddart (Latimer Road) has joined the committee. Thasan Vallipuranathan has joined as a co-opted committee member, to help with the review and updating of the 2018 StQW Neighbourhood Plan.

Positive and negative changes in our neighbourhood 2015-2025

At our AGM we discussed what members see as positive and negative changes to the neighbourhood, in the decade since the initial household survey was carried out for the StQW Neighbourhood Plan. This part of the meeting is summarised at the foot of this newsletter and further thoughts are very welcome

Ballymore/Sainsburys proposals for Kensal Canalside.

The planning application for this development of 2,500 new homes and a replacement Sainsburys superstore at the Kensal Canalside Opportunity Area **is due to be decided at a RBKC Planning Committee on November 11th.**

This will be the biggest planning decision made by the Council for many years. After being reminded that 'Factual Briefings' used to be held on major applications shortly before the relevant Planning Committee meeting, RBKC organised such a session on October 15th.

The main aim of these briefings (which are not a formal committee, nor a decision-making event) is to ensure that the councillors on the committee are familiar with the details of the proposals on which they will be voting. In this instance, the decision looks set to create a new part of North Kensington by the mid 2030s.

Local organisations which have been raising queries and objections on Ballymore's plans were invited to the briefing, but only as 'observers' with no opportunity to speak or ask questions. This was a change from previous practice. At the session, the developers gave their presentation. Very few questions were asked by Planning Committee members (most of whom attended online). We 'observers' in the public seats learned little that was new.

Ballymore repeated their claim that their development will have a minimal 'net effect' on traffic congestion. A small delay (average 30 seconds) will result from changes to the mini-roundabouts at the sole entrance/exit to the Opportunity Area, off Ladbroke Grove. Non-replacement of the current Sainsburys petrol station, and the introduction of revised junctions with 'co-ordinated signalisation' will supposedly achieve this outcome of 'nothing to see here'. This scenario is based on new homes that will be 80% 'car-free', more buses as public transport, and a Sainsburys car park reduced from 450 to 240 spaces.

Local groups will be continuing to challenge this and other claims made by the developers. These include no risks to surrounding residents from further site decontamination. The low level of affordable housing on

offer (20% as compared with 35% proposed by St William at Kensal Canalside) will also be a contentious issue raised by objectors at the Planning Committee meeting.

A recent 'pen portrait' of this Opportunity Area, prepared by GLA planners, flags up the basic problem with building high-density car-free development at Kensal Canalside. The necessary new road access to an 'island' site is not in place. No extra Elizabeth Line station at 'Portobello North' is now on the cards. There are no firm or funded plans that change this position.

Traffic congestion at this end of Ladbroke Grove is dire. Neither Ballymore nor St William have included in their applications their earlier proposals for bridges to provide extra connectivity. It may well be the 2040s before Elizabeth Line platforms at Old Oak Common station (a longish walk along the canal path) becomes an option. This rail 'superhub' has been planned with no eastern road access from Scrubs Lane - only from Old Oak Common Lane on the other side of the Scrubs.

Meanwhile Ballymore's transport consultants WSP have said *Overall, the level of traffic generated by the residential units will be very low, as the majority of people who do own a car are unlikely to use it during the peak hours*. No mention of delivery vehicles (Amazon, Just Eat) or residents ordering an Uber to save a 16 minute walk to Ladbroke Grove Underground.

GLA planners have said recently that the ***Masterplan and development quantum is reliant on new connections increasing accessibility of the site***. We wait to see how RBKC planners will deal with this deficiency in their committee report, due to appear early next month.

Kensal Canalside Moving forward

- Kensal Canalside is **one of the last remaining major brownfield sites** to be developed in London and the largest in the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea (Potential for GLA support / OA prioritisation).
- **No significant development** has been approved/ started/ completed since OA designation.
- Currently the OA is an 'island', with **poor pedestrian and cycling connectivity**. Example of how poor connectivity (not necessarily a 'big ticket' infrastructure scheme) can impede growth.
- Masterplan and development quantum is **reliant on new connections that are needed to increase accessibility** of the site.
- **The delivery of the two pedestrian and cycle bridges** as identified within the Kensal Canalside SPD are fundamental to the successful creation of a new community at this site.
- **Ballymore and Sainsbury's submitted a planning application for a large part of the site allocation (2023)**. There is no decision yet.
- **Land remediation** is another key challenge for the site.
- **Phasing and meanwhile uses** could be crucial for delivering an inclusive and safe new part of West London.
- Opportunity for a landscape/ biodiversity - led plan.

Proposition

- OA to be retained as 'Nascent'.
- Potential for GLA support to resolve focus - opportunity for an inclusive and green new neighbourhood right next to OPDC.



Ballymore and Sainsbury's joint venture plans for major new canalside neighbourhood in Lad-broke Grove

21

Extract from GLA 'pen portrait' of the Kensal Canalside Opportunity Area June 2025.

Latimer Road update

Our bid to RBKC for **NCIL funding to install CCTV cameras** to overview the southern end of Latimer Road has been only partially successful. We had bid for three cameras to provide coverage of the Walmer Road cul-de-sac and the area between the entrance/exit to Imperial's planned ped/cycle underpass to their Wood Lane campus. Only £12,600 has been awarded to date, enough for a single camera.

Imperial College have said that 'preparatory' works for their **underpass project** will start before year end, but the timeline for the project has slipped (yet again) and construction will not begin until early 2026. So we can bid again for CCTV cameras in the next round of NCIL. RBKC say that signage and highway works related to the underpass will be funded by the Council.

Proposals by Rathplace to redevelop **Unit 9 Latimer Road** remain subject to the outcome of their appeal to the Planning Inspectorate, with no further news. The same applies to **Unit 10** which remains on the market with Savills (with its 2024 planning consent) at a reduced guide price of £3,950,000.

Owners/developers of 274 Latimer Road (Wentworth Andersen) were granted planning consent at the September 9th RBKC Planning Applications Committee for their latest two applications for cellar cooling and kitchen extract systems, along with external railings and a pavement grille. The railings (see below) were installed before planning permission was granted. We have questioned their appropriateness for a pub forecourt.



In the course of responding to objectors at the committee meeting (StQW's chair and a Latimer Road resident) the representative of Wentworth Andersen gave commitments that plans to re-open the pub as The Volunteer remain live. These involve negotiations with a pub operator over a lease for the whole building (including the first and second floors which have planning consent only as ancillary accommodation for pub use).

We have to hope for a successful conclusion of these negotiations, leading to final refurbishment works and a re-opening of the pub. It has been a long saga since the former Ariadne Nektar closed its doors in 2022. As agreed at our AGM, the StQW Forum has applied for renewal of registration of the whole building as an Asset of Community Value. This offers some protection of pub use. The previous registration expired after 5 years in 2024 and the new application will be consulted on shortly by RBKC.

The **current production** [Scenes from the Climate Era](#) at the **Playground Theatre** in Latimer Road is thought provoking, well directed and acted by a young cast, and runs until 28th October. More details, some mini-reviews and booking arrangements are at this web page of the [Gate Theatre](#) at Notting Hill. If you have not seen a performance at the Playground, our neighbourhood's sole cultural venue, this one is well worth considering. We hope that the eventual opening of Imperial's underpass will bring more theatregoers to Latimer Road.

AGM 18 September 2025

Notes from the positive and negative changes discussion

Agreement on these Positive changes/status quo maintained

- Our three Local Green Spaces have been retained and development proposals fended off.
- The introduction of CCTV on North Pole Road has reduced shoplifting and improved safety.
- The number of vacant shop units in St Helens Gardens and North Pole Road has decreased.
- More cafés in the area: Adriana's, Mug on Dalgarno Gardens, the Queens Café in the Playground Theatre and the café in Kensington Memorial Park.
- New lease of life for the West London Bowling Club (112A Highlever Road) with more activities and events.
- The annual St Helens Festival has been revived and well received.
- The final approval of the underpass in Latimer Road will increase public transport options with easier access to White City tube, the Overground, buses and Westfield.
- St Quintin Health Centre was not sold for redevelopment and remains a valuable community asset.
- The improvements on the Kensington Memorial Park are generally seen as positive, despite the difference of views on design of the café.
- Little Wormwood Scrubs is now well maintained under RBKC and the implementation of its ecology plan has been well received.

Added at the meeting:

- The number of charging points for electric cars has increased and most of them are now functioning properly.

- Waste collection services are good in RBKC generally and the garden waste and food waste services are particularly appreciated.

Difference of views on these issues

- While it was accepted that residents parking bays are not in as short supply here as in other parts of RBKC, the majority felt the situation is not as good as it used to be in our area.
- The views on the St Helens traffic calming and planting differed. Some said the traffic has not calmed at all. The general view is that the planting is a positive addition but needs careful maintenance to ensure it does not obscure drivers' and pedestrian's sightlines.

Agreement on these Negative changes

- E-bikes and scooters are now adversely affecting our community with vehicles dumped on pavements and illegal versions of vehicles being driven dangerously.
- Increased risk to pedestrians and car drivers from all forms of cyclists ignoring traffic lights and riding on pavements.
- Increased risk from car drivers ignoring the 20mph speed limits.
- Zebra crossings located dangerously close to bends and corners in a couple of cases (e.g. Barlby/Highlever).
- Traffic queues on North Pole Road have got worse. The problem is likely to escalate, increasing traffic problems on the smaller roads nearby.
- High rise development all around Wormwood Scrubs and Little Wormwood Scrubs is seen as negative development.
- Proposals for more towers and the contaminated sites at Kensal Canalside are seen as a threat.
- Confirmation by the NHS of closure of Pembridge Hospice
- Street trees are now causing concerns:
 - When trees are removed they are not always replaced;
 - Some inappropriate trees have been put in place (eg: limes and silver birch).
- Increase in the number of front gardens paved over, which increases the risk of flash floods. It is noted that some residents are following best practice and using materials and design to prevent runoff and flooding.
- A number of negative dog-related developments were identified:
 - The trend for professional dog walkers meeting up to walk their groups of dogs together is now causing problems for other park users.

- Escalation in problems with dog poo, due in large part to the lack of poo bins in the parks and the streets around the parks.
- Increase in the number of owners taking their dogs into the 'no-dogs quiet area by the tennis courts at memorial Park Scrubs and allowing them to poo there and not picking up.
- Perception that fly-tipping has increased; and that street cleaning is less efficient.

All further views welcome, as part of our updated 'evidence base' for a revised version of the 2018 StQW Neighbourhood Plan.

Copyright © sthelensassn All rights reserved.

Our mailing address is:

sthelensassn@aol.com

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).