

NEWS FROM ST HELENS RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION JUNE 2013

- **St Helens Festival**
- **Neighbourhood Forum about to be launched**
- **Network Rail advertising tower appeal**
- **Changes to council ward boundaries**

1. St Helens Festival

A reminder that the St Helens Festival will be held on **Saturday 6 July 2013 from 1 pm to 5 pm, in St Helens Gardens**. As in previous years there will be a variety of stalls and competitions, and a chance to meet your neighbours at what has become a successful annual event. SHRA will have a stall there with information about the launch of the neighbourhood forum for the area (see below).

2. Neighbourhood Forum about to be launched

Over a year ago, the association applied to RB Kensington & Chelsea and to LB Hammersmith and Fulham, for designation of a new St Quintin and Woodland Neighbourhood Forum for the area shown in the map below:



Over 400 neighbourhoods across England are now in the process of drawing up neighbourhood plans. These allow local residents and businesses a greater say in the future of their neighbourhood. Once drawn up, these plans are put to the vote in a referendum in the area, and if supported by a majority become part of the local authority statutory planning framework.

After a 6 week public consultation last summer, our application became stuck at the town hall end in Hammersmith & Fulham. Responses from RBKC residents were

unanimously supportive. But in the Hammersmith and Fulham part of the proposed area, views were evenly decided. As a result, Hammersmith & Fulham Council declined to make a decision on the application.

Only in recent weeks has it been accepted that one part of the proposed area can be designated in advance of the other. Kensington and Chelsea council is now at the final stages of approving the designation of the forum, and of that part of the plan area within its borough

An inaugural meeting to set up the new neighbourhood forum will be held in St Helens Church hall (St Helens Gardens W10) on Thursday 27th June at 19.30. Anyone living or working in the proposed plan area is very welcome to attend. The purpose of the meeting will be to adopt a constitution and to agree on the formation of a management committee to co-ordinate work on preparation of the neighbourhood plan.

We are also holding a couple of drop-in sessions for anyone who wants to know more about neighbourhood planning. Details are:
Wednesday 19 June 16.00-20.00 at the West London Bowling Club at 112a Highlever Road W10 (a chance to visit the bowling club for those who have never been there)
Thursday 20 June 16.00-20.00 at Brickfields Hall, Eynham Road, W12

We will be distributing leaflets about these meetings over the next week. You can also find out more about the Forum and neighbourhood planning at a new website www.stqw.org, which has just gone live.

Membership of the forum is open to anyone living and working in the plan area. The 280 existing members of St Helens Residents Association (i.e. everyone on our mailing list) will be considered to be a member of the forum and will receive invitations to workshops and sessions to discuss ideas and proposals to be included in the neighbourhood plan. (If you do not want to be included as a member of the forum, as well as the association, please let us know).

So if you are already receiving this newsletter, there is no need to send us your details via the online form included on www.stqw.org. If you know of neighbours who might be interested in joining the forum, please encourage them to log onto the site and to use the online form for membership.

The management committee for the forum will be elected at the inaugural meeting on the 27th June, and if you are interested in standing for election please reply to this email.

Preparing the plan, and going through the process of a referendum and subsequent adoption (if agreed by a majority of local people) will take at least a year. The first few neighbourhoods in England (including the Norland area in K&C) are now reaching the end of this process.

The association has applied for and been awarded one of the new £7,000 grants being made available by the Government for neighbourhood plans. So the Forum

will have the funds needed for the basic costs of hiring meeting rooms, organising workshops, and printing consultation material. There will be no charge for membership of the Forum.

We hope that the end result of this process will be a plan which gives this neighbourhood more say over its future. National changes to the planning system, new flexibilities on rear extensions and permitted change of use, coupled with global demand for upmarket residential floor space in this borough, are all beginning to impact locally. Conservation area policies also need updating.

The aim is for a plan that builds consensus on the way ahead for this area – a consensus which both local authorities will have to take account of in their future planning policies and in their decisions on individual planning applications.

3. Network Rail advertising tower – planning appeal

Network Rail are appealing a decision by Hammersmith & Fulham Council to refuse an application for a 35m high advertising tower on the railway embankment at the southern end of Latimer Road. We do not need or want a second tower, so close to the existing horror at the Westway Sports Centre.

There have been many objections to the proposal, and the association will be attending the appeal hearing on June 12th to make representations on the impact of the proposed tower on our conservation area. Please email to sthelensasn@aol.com if you want to come along to the appeal (we are getting hold of details of the time and location at Hammersmith Town Hall).

4. Changes to council ward boundaries

The Electoral Commission has been carrying out a review of the local government ward boundaries in Kensington and Chelsea. These reviews take place at intervals to balance out the numbers of electors in each ward.

The map of proposed new boundaries can be found at this [link](#). Under the proposals the existing Notting Barns ward disappears. Most of the streets involved become part of a new ward provisionally titled ‘ St Charles’ (with much of the existing St Charles ward retitled as ‘ Dalgarno’).

There is cross-party agreement within the council to most of the boundary changes proposed by the Commission, but the council is asking for the proposed new St Charles ward to be re-titled St Helens ward. The church and St Helens Gardens will be in the centre of the new ward.

Not surprisingly, we think that the St Helens title is the preferable way forward and will be writing to the Commission to support the council on this proposal.

More news next month,

Best wishes,

Henry Peterson

Chair SHRA

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