

Community Conversation North Richmond and South Richmond Wards

Date: Wednesday 23 June 2021

Time: 6:30pm – 8:00pm

Venue: Zoom

Agenda

- Agenda Item One: Update from Councillors
- Agenda Item Two: Presentation
- Agenda Item Three: Key theme breakout discussion groups
- Agenda Item Four: Open floor questions

Ward members in attendance

South Richmond

- Cllr Buckwell – Conservative. Chair of the Audit, Standards and Statutory Accounts Committee
- Cllr Fleming – Conservative. Joint Deputy Leader of the Conservative Party Group
- Cllr Newton Dunn - Liberal Democrat

North Richmond

- Cllr Baldwin - Liberal Democrat
- Cllr Pyne - Liberal Democrat
- Cllr Warren - Liberal Democrat. Vice-chair, Policy and Performance Review Board

Chair: Kathryn Williamson - Director of Richmond CVS

Agenda Item One: Update from Councillors

Headline Topic: Ward Achievements	
Councillor	Achievements
Cllr Fleming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tim Vickerson, condolences to his family following his sad and shocking death last month • Resident petition to re-open Richmond police station, Cllrs are continuing to press for more police presence. Meeting with Police Commissioner to discuss • Temp toilets at Richmond Riverside. Not ideal place but need to be there for electrics. No further news on a more permanent solution • Police liaison group set-up a working group to deal with ASB around the riverside last summer, have produced an action plan. The council and police have put in additional resources. ASB complaints are down

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Richmond is open for business again • Great community litter pick to place last month • 12 month EScooter trial in place, there will also be a trial for EBikes
Cllr Newton Dunn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agrees with points raised by Cllr Fleming, good working partnership between all Richmond Cllrs. • Richmond Museum is a wonderful place, we might need to find a better place for the museum as it is hidden away
Cllr Warren	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homebase site. London Major now agrees that there are transport issues around the development. 1,700 signatures will be presented to the Major next week around this development. • Working with residents and Habitats and Heritage to clear the haha at Old Deer Park to make way for a bee corridor • Looking to set-up a Friends of Group for Raleigh Road Rec

Agenda Item Three: Key themes arising from discussion groups

Theme Retail / Hospitality	Group's Key Comments
Empty Shops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using empty shops differently for different parts of the community - one stop shops for information • Online shops should be able to use vacant units temporarily to try out whether their businesses would be good face-to-face and to attract people back in • Subsidise small workshops for crafts - people making things and selling. Creative hubs / markets • Some unused spaces be used as wellness centres. Therapies like OTs. Don't have a hospital on our doorstep • Unused space- could be used by community police force • Dickens and Jones redevelopment - office space, one floor of retail • Community centre in empty units - house the local charities - always being moved on currently, no security / sustainability. Good for the beneficiaries to have all help available in one place. Accessible for users of charity via public transport. Council could buy /take lease of building to support this. A charity hub
Markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Mini Covent Garden' • Markets selling local produce • Old Market drew people in. Need a fishmonger and greengrocer

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daytime: farmers market - something larger. Would draw people in.
Business rates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good little shops at the bottom of Eton Street went because of high rents / council tax • Business rents need to be tackled to allow independents to thrive • Landlords are large pension funds - hold out to get rent they are asking •
Public toilets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public toilets - currently temporary, will they be made permanent? Similar location? Better Build • Public toilets by river closed/ car park. Reuse existing buildings • Public toilets needed for events and increased use of town centre
Need more independent shops and breadth of provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need a department store - lack of breadth of provision • Tailors missing that provision on the High St • Broaden the High St offer • Old PO site needs to be better utilised • Need more independent shops, can walk there but nothing attracting drawing people in • Pop up shops not selling what residents need or want • Want more clothes shops, especially for older generation • Would buy less online if the provision was more independent • Farmers market in Richmond not attractive - expensive, not local produce • Independents need to see if there is a market for them. Street markets are steppingstones to knowing if there is a market for them - stall to full time shop. Think systematically about markets to showcase Richmond / bring people in / give confidence to businesses • Pop up shops - persuade landlords to trial 3/6 months. Craft sector would welcome trialling these • Need to make centre more appealing, independents need to want to come. A market for them is needed structurally and strategically • Pop-up market stalls selling local produce such as allotment produce • No longer has the appeal for high-end shopping but people still happy to go in for leisure - having a coffee or having a drink by the river • The shopping appeal has gone • More venues to support a night-time economy / More venues needed with late night licenses • Everyone asked to leave venues at the same time causing more opportunity for trouble • House of Fraser roof - it would make an amazing bar!

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of shops has been reduced • Predominantly coffee shops • Basic need shops: clothing, small food shops • More interesting shops round the lanes • Lacking clothing shops / school shoes / uniforms - Teddington is a long journey • Richmond has a good mix of independent shops - retains identity
<p>Pre / Post lockdown High Street usage</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ham parade of shops - using more now compared with Richmond town centre - become more vibrant with market and new shops • Old Oak Park - new grocers and butchers opened during lock down, now use local centre rather than Richmond. Tesco express also - all essentials taken care of • Lower Mortlake Road - use Richmond a lot less than previously because many shops have closed down • Richmond centre still used as main shopping centre, but shopping less / going into town in general • Haven't returned to night-time economy yet • Use once a week for shopping and the bank • Theatre visits occasionally • Use once or twice a month in the evening • Use local click and collect • Go 3/4 times a week – get out the house and see people. I'm WFH • Grab lunch, little bit of shopping, coffee shops • Post office trips have increased due to online shopping • Using it more frequently than pre-pandemic. Previously used to use it for clothes shopping, now using it for food & drink visits • Use the library • High St becoming a working place for meetings etc • Tesco development and station development - improved and riverside development • Housing in town centres to bring people in to spend. Economy would improve if more people lived in centre. Traffic would need to be managed but could be a good use of empty stores. Could conflict with NTE however
<p>Office space</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need office spaces that can be hired ad hoc / coworking spaces / meeting rooms that can be hired • Mixed working patterns means people will return to the town centre / Richmond may be popular as out of town high class office offer - would improve economy

Publicity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need more publicising of what is happening in Richmond? Something current would be good - 'what's on guide'
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Theme Leisure / Arts / Cultural Events	Group's Key Comments
Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smaller events, more intimate • Need to connect far more with arts and culture centre • Community events that are tailored to existing and different sectors of the community to celebrate different customs • Riverside good for events / markets - potentially better than the Green / would be more palatable. Whittaker Avenue would also be a good place • May Fair event, Farmers market, music buskers, but not too large event, keep it local • Community events like Whitton's St George's Day - easy to do compared to other initiatives and could be very successful • Cinemas a great evening benefit - open air cinemas on the Green? • Old deer park an opportunity for events • More little events, meet more local people • Make more use of the museum, use it as a learning opportunity • Place for young people to show off talents. Not necessarily a formal event • Lots of intellectually curious residents
Theatres / Cinema	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theatres are good (in normal times) • Cinemas aren't good • Good use of independents, Curzon Cinema
Open spaces and Green areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use our Green areas more • Fantastic open spaces should be used for open air performances and markets - food fair once a year like in Barnes. This would attract visitors and community • Seating areas so people feel welcomed • Music events on the green • Better wayfinding to point out cultural point like the library & the green

Theme Transport and Traffic	Group's Key Comments
Cycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cycle lanes are needed, they still use pavements • Traffic heavy to South of Richmond Bridge. A316 has cycle lane, but not pleasant entry to the town

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cycling connectivity between High St and Green area • Cycling is not positive experience - less traffic needed • Need a cycle strategy across the borough to connect the town centres • Improve access and more open – cycling • More secure bike storage
Close town centre to traffic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close town centre on certain days - like Olympic period • Do not pedestrianise like Kingston High St • Need to remove the traffic in the centre at certain times. Too traffic heavy, would make a huge change, although still needs to be accessibility • Shift traffic away from centre - but where? Cannot go around the Green. Huge issue - many studies have previously been done • Pedestrianise George Street to support better air quality? Concerns over where the traffic would go • Pedestrianisation is a huge process. George street being pedestrianised would change the whole area
Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport stops going to Richmond. Only bus, no other way • Move bus station to railway station for a transport hub all in one place • Commuter boat up the Thames • No transport complaints • Nowhere for boats to dock and use the town. Missed opportunity of a visitor's jetty

Theme Sustainability / Environment	Group's Key Comments
Air quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air quality improvements needed • Not enough being done for climate emergency in town centres
Litter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Litter - volunteers cleaning up regularly
Bins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recycling bins by Richmond Stations - Biffa bins often overflowing
Repair and Reuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eco Saturday - care and repair shops in empty shops - part of climate change programme • Repair shop - recycling/repair - use like an apprenticeship to young people

Theme Community / Socialising	Group's Key Comments
Make Richmond Town Centre a destination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make Richmond Town Centre a destination

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit for evening nightlife, to meet people at coffee shops and restaurants, shopping, supermarkets • Old use of the Castle as an example of how people used to enjoy Richmond town centre • More street side seating / outside areas and tables for people to enjoy. Learning from boroughs like Camden who use parking spaces to allow for more of this. The river front should have tables all along it for people to enjoy • Richmond does not seem like a place to come for 'fun'. Nowhere to go post 11pm • Currently no incentive for people to come and shop for food and drink • Doesn't tend to go for dinner. Lack of choice • Choose to go to Barnes / Wimbledon instead • Walks along the river after dinner are nice • Pedestrianise road between library and theatre- give nice feel to area • Richmond has a good offer - pancake place, lovely buzz at night in normal times
Pre / Post pandemic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prior to pandemic it was for social and business meetings. Richmond riverside used for cycling now • Post-pandemic, mainly using the town centre for walking
Sports provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Club holiday sessions for young people is good - organised activities - notices on library noticeboard and flyers and website what's on in Summer • Pools in the Park well used
Young people provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people provision - library, green spaces, Old Deer Park and the Green • More provision for younger people such as afternoon clubs and fun activities for example escape rooms, go karting, trampoline park, games rooms. Young people have to travel outside of the borough • Empty shops turned into activity centres for children
More independent restaurants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less chains needed, more independent restaurants. Like Barnes. Need to support smaller businesses for a more personal feel

Theme Look and Feel	Group's Key Comments
Homelessness / Street begging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A lot of street begging/chuggers - need some support in place for street homeless /beggars • Rise in homelessness • Hesitant to take young children there due to lack of cleanliness

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve cleanliness
Police / ASB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of Police station - increase ASB • Need more of a police presence • Felt uncomfortable walking as a woman in borough - along the river, late afternoon / eve
Cleanliness / Rubbish	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noticed that it attracts lots of people from outside the borough and with this comes more rubbish
Aesthetics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Riverside paving stains easily – problematic • Better shop fronts to match the buildings • Not particularly an attractive shopping location • Greening in the high street to reduce the tarmac • Trees to provide solar shading • Spaces for people to rest- make it more accessible • Ham feels more community orientated
Graffiti	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noticed a significant increase in graffiti - don't want to encourage it

Theme Accessibility	Group's Key Comments
Street clutter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A lot street clutter, hire bikes, hire scooters - clutter on the street for access purposes • Pavements are mixed usage
Shop mobility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land bus for disabled people • Spaces for people to rest- make it more accessible

Agenda Item Four: Open floor questions

Headline Topic Public Toilets	
Question 1	There is a lack of adequate Public Toilets. This needs to be rectified in order to make Richmond more accessible to visitors. How much have the temp toilets cost?
Response	<p>Cllr Fleming: I do not know the actual cost right now. They are extremely expensive as the are good quality. There should be a permanent solution. A review of public toilets has been promised, but not yet happened.</p> <p>Cllr Neden-Watts: Toilet units are very easily vandalised. We are looking into toilet provision. Permanent toilet provision is being looked at by Richmond Bid and the finance committee</p>