

Twickenham Riverside and St Margarets and North Twickenham Ward's Community Conversation

Date: 13th Oct 2021

Time: 6.30pm - 8.00pm

Venue: Zoom

AGENDA:

- 6.30-6.45pm Police update/short Q and A
- 6.45 - 7.00pm Ward Councillors update
- 7.00 - 7.10pm Introduction to the 'Future of the High Streets'
- 7.10 - 7.45pm Discussion around the 'Future of the High Streets'
- 7.45 - 8.00pm Community Conversation Discussion – ask your questions to local councillors on any issue
- 8.00pm Conclusion

Ward members in attendance

Cllr. Geoff Acton (St Margarets and North Twickenham) - Mayor

Cllr. Ben Khosa – (St Margarets and North Twickenham)

Cllr. James Chard – (Twickenham Riverside)

Cllr. Roger Crouch – (Twickenham Riverside) *Vice-chair of the Planning Committee and Dementia Champion*

Cllr Julia Neden-Watts – (Twickenham Riverside) Chair of the Environment, Sustainability, Culture and Sports Services Committee

Cllr. Alexander Ehmann – (St Margarets and North Twickenham) Deputy Leader and Chair of the Transport and Air Quality Services Committee

Chair: Paul Clements, independent Chair

Agenda Item One: Police update/short Q and A

Headline Topic: Fatal Stabbing in Craneford Way 12th Oct 2021	
Councillor Ehmann	Recent fatal stabbing on Craneford Way needed to be addressed in this meeting as it impacts directly on St Margarets and North Twickenham/Twickenham Riverside Ward residents. The Neighbourhood Inspector Jon McGloulin has joined us tonight and is engaged closely with the Council. Firstly

	<p>condolences to the family of the victim of the stabbing. To emphasise though at this time there is limited amount that both the Council and Police can say as it is an ongoing investigation.</p> <p>Inspector Jon McGloulin: give the condolences of the Police. It is a tragic circumstance, but also a rare occurrence. Police wish to offer reassurance to residents and there will be an increased presence of Police Officer in Craneford Way and the crime scene will remain cordoned off for the next 24-48 hours. I cannot comment on the investigation at this stage. MP Munira Wilson and the Council are working closely with Richmond Upon Thames College and as a member of the public do feel free to speak to the Officers on the beat with any concerns or information you may have. The Police Schools Liaison Team are also working with local schools, especially those who witnessed the events from the Craneford Playing Fields.</p>
Cllr Ehmann	The Police has committed a visible presence in Twickenham beyond the investigation area.
Steve O'Shea	<p>There has been some discussion around the victim being an Afghan national. How can we offer support and integration and safety for foreign nationals</p> <p>Insp. McGloulin: We cannot say at this point as we must follow the Press lines to limit the release of information whilst the crime is under investigation. I can comment that the Police are offering reassurance and safeguarding measures for local people.</p>
Hamish	<p>Will there be a face to face meeting to reassure the public and discuss how to reduce risk in the College area.</p> <p>Cllr Ehmann and Insp. Mc Gloughlin: Happy to cooperate to make this happen.</p>
Karen Trueman	<p>Noticed a drop in Police presence during Covid 19 lockdown and an increase in crime. Will there be an increased presence of Police now?</p> <p>Insp. McGloulin: Insulate Britain/Vaccine protests and other central London demands have often taken Police out of the local area. In the short term there will be a greater presence and my aim is to make the ward teams work closer together to cover the area more effectively.</p>
Michael Jay	<p>Not helpful to have reassurance after the event. The lack of Police has led to an increase in Kinfe culture.</p> <p>Insp. McGloulin: There is a need for more Police, but there is also the need to recognise this is a rare occurrence. But there is a need for the Police to be seen as a deterrent to crime.</p>

Agenda Item two: Ward Councillors update

Ward	Achievements
Cllr Neden Watts (Twickenham Riverside)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Twickenham Riverside development –Hopkins –considered by planning officers at present, removal of car from waterfront and riverside activities, more publicly accessible space and link to town from riverside, with tress and planting. Realistic prospect

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marble Hill Playcentres project coming to planning in next couple of weeks, charity hub accessible for inclusivity and outdoor play still key, sensitive site as English Heritage land • East Twickenham – unlocked investment for pavements and roads, shopping area and greening with pedestrian, engaged with community and local traders. • Pedestrianisation of Church St – life and community to Twickenham • High Tide Festival key highlight • Listen to ideas for Local Area Fund – small sums of money based on local ideas for biodiversity, cultural, local history – ideas to Councillors and then look at funding
<p>Cllr Ehmman</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The eminent impact of fatal stabbing, Cllr Khosa and Cllr Acton out door knocking to reassure residents in North Twickenham • Campaign on reduction of train services to St Margarets Station from 4 services to 2 services per hour, negative impact on Twickenham Station in terms of overcrowding. Responded to consultation as Chair of Transport Air pollution Committee and ward councillors. Want to overturn decision with SWR • Changes to St Margaret’s Station improvements, prior to Covid step free access via Amyand Park Road finally and pedestrian footbridge fully refurbished to high standard and graffiti removed. • Investment in Moormead and Grimwood playgrounds – overhauled and new equipment especially Grimwood. Positive improvement • Launch consultation on Railshead Rd in North St Margaret’s joins Twickenham Riverside pathway, hostile space for walkers and pedestrians due to narrow pavements, often parked on .. Shared space environment in future in consultation. Financial uplift to road • Ward councillors pressed for improvements on A316 corridor for cycling and pedestrians, under TFL control but had no firm commitments from TFL, although Council has had a consultant design improvement for segregated cycling/pedestrian ways and written to TFL with an offer of partial Council funding to support a TFL run ‘A’ road. • The Moormead Pavilion dilapidated, currently fenced off. An application is with planning department from Moor mead FC grouping, construction of new pavilion supported by ward councillors, but objection from Sport England which has now been withdrawn due to Council Officers and Moormead FC intervention. Support of ward councillors at planning committee. Keen to see progress on this site.

High Street Rejuvenation

Paul Clement:

- The development of High Streets has had its ups and downs, but current changes are unique due to the Covid 19 pandemic.
- The pandemic has had a devastating impact on business and sped up the evolution of the High St.
- In the last 18 months there has been an opening up of the local neighbourhood and reconnection with the values of local community.
- People have been travelling less and appreciating their local services.
- People's lifestyles have changed with hybrid working and thereby spending more time in the local area moving away for out-of-town retail options.
- The Homogeneous High Street is breaking down.
- Points of difference have become more important appreciating independents and living/working closer to their local offer.
- The Council's part is to provide leadership and a plan of action for business, but they cannot solve all the problems.

The Council Partnership Conference in May 2021 came away with 5 key themes for the development of the High St:

1. People wanted town centres to be a destination point
2. People wanted walkable/pedestrianised, green spaces in their High Streets.
3. People wanted a more balanced usage in town centres – including civic uses
4. The local authority needs to have a creative approach to town planning and repurposing spaces
5. Need for digital offer on the High St – embracing mobile revolution

Agenda item four: Key themes arising from discussion groups

Theme Retail / Hospitality	Group's Key Comments
<p>Suggestions/issues</p>	<p>East Twickenham/Twickenham Riverside</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town centre managers help business and look strategically at an area, need for this in East Twickenham although growth officers are being employed • Need to keep banks and post offices open, loss of RSB one less reason to go tot Twickenham High St. • Should be able to demonstrate unmet need for a particular shop and fill empty shops accordingly • Need for markets like Heron Square markets over the weekend in Twickenham • Council should have more influence over licenses and planning of new retail outlets • East Twickenham Lidl and school increased footfall, but impacting on local small shops • Council needs to develop more community initiatives to support retailers – easier to run events with less red tape • Would love a flagship store in Twickenham like Zara to bring you to the High St. • Go to High Street for small items, tend to use supermarkets for better prices • Have a reasonably price office hotspot for people working from home to meet/HR etc • Better restaurants in Twickenham in the evening for eating out • Good restaurants in Twickenham, but need for more diverse cuisine • Need to focus on high end and mid-range shops, including clothes shops to make Twickenham more of a destination • Lidl has been a good addition to East Twickenham, bump into people and created more of a community feel. Need for more benches and meeting space to sit and chat in East Twickenham. • Space at the base of Richmond Bridge in east Twickenham could be used for market stalls rather than parking, make that area more attractive by the cafes on Richmond Rd. Also improve cycling path there. <p>St Margarets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empty shops in Crown St, St Margarets – proving difficult to do business there, independents closing down – potentially pedestrianize like Church Street in Twickenham • Lots of hairdressers and coffee shops in St Margarets, need to go to Richmond for banks

<p>Current positives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love the pedestrianisation of Church St. • Like the introduction of Gail's in Church Street • Twickenham is good for restaurants and pubs, prefer it to Richmond now. Church Street offer is fantastic. • Café and independent shops are a good mixture in Twickenham – good to meet up with people especially Church Street • Should focus on what Twickenham does best: food, drink and independents. DIY stores available in Twickenham that aren't found in other High Streets • Twickenham farmers market a great asset

<p>Theme Leisure / Arts / Cultural Events</p>	<p>Group's Key Comments</p>
<p>Suggestions/issues</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of options for young people, need multi-games site for young people in Twickenham • During the pandemic people were brought together online to share poetry, music and prose would be nice is this could continue without bureaucracy • A dance hall to bring people together • A Twickenham hub for wellbeing of all age groups, including mental health support • A lido • A cinema • Build community feel in the town where people can come together and share ideas, repair shop, recycle goods. A younger, cross generational feel to attract under 40's to the town. • Create more of a buzz with festivals, performing arts, literary arts, musical heritage of Eel Pie Island – give people a reason to visit Twickenham beyond shopping • Marble Hill do cinema screenings outside • Space for artist and graffiti artists in the public realm

Current positives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small theatre lovely – Mary Wallace Theatre • Twickenham Music festival was great – need more festivals like this
-------------------	--

Theme Transport and Traffic	Group's Key Comments
Suggestions/issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Radically need to reduce the traffic flow over Richmond Bridge from Richmond Rd (East Twickenham) • Need for bigger debate over what form of transport we want in our towns – cycles of cars. In East Twickenham cars can not even pass easily on Richmond Rd. • Cyclists and e-scooters dangerous on pavements for pedestrians, but at the same time roads dangerous to use for active travellers. • More parking needed for residents at reduced cost (extend Richmond Card offer) • More consideration needed to separate car/cycle and pedestrian areas • Richmond bridge needs to be 'greened' and only used for public transport • Reduction of train service in St Margarets Station will be problematic for business/residents • Richmond Rd is under heavy traffic pressure and very risky for cyclist. Current consultation on East Twickenham part of Richmond did not sufficiently involve residents in the consultation • Location of bus stops in east Twickenham are not currently ideal for those with disabilities • Need for sustainable transportation strategy for Twickenham by carrying our survey of how people use Twickenham in terms of purpose and length of time • Need for traffic calming in Twickenham • Cargo bike delivery service • Traffic using St Margarets as a cut through has increased, off putting for using local businesses in terms of sitting out at cafes etc. • Traffic light settings favour pedestrians • Twickenham High St is too noisy and busy – puts people off using the High St.

Current positives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public transport links excellent
-------------------	--

Theme Look and Feel	Group's Key Comments
Suggestions/issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More outdoor dining options on the Riverside A complete recycling system of all items for the town Need to encourage circular economy in local retails to improve green credentials Twickenham Riverside between the Barmy Ars and th where the tow path ends is wasted. There shouldn't be cars parked there – should be kept for disabled and cyclists Twickenham too busy on rugby events – leaves lots of litter and mess Make use of digital marketing to promote the current offer more Halo effect of pedestrianisation, pushing more people to use the area eg Church St. Need to rethink retail being the main driver to the new Riverside development – make it a cultural destination Need for events on Rugby days to offset for local families
Current positives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Twickenham Riverside is a great resource, but could do with less traffic serving the businesses Orleans Park and Marble Hill park offer great open green spaces Twickenham and St Margarets are good to visit in the evening, good offer of restaurants, especially in Church St. Twickenham Riverside has continental feel along the tow path

Agenda item five: Open floor questions

Headline Topic	Why can you not organise the Lido being reopened again?
Response	Cllr Chard: when looked at redeveloping in 2018, the current administration gave an open brief with different views to be considered. The key points to be achieved were that pedestrians were to be given priority and a bigger open space than currently was to be provided. Design competition by RIBA – 5 designs came through; one included a pool but was not the most popular design in the consultation. The Hopkins design gained most support offering flexible community space for varied use eg markets/arts/festivals. The lido idea is very popular, but people preferred a more flexible use of the space.
Headline Topic	Timescale for Twickenham Riverside (Rebecca H)
Response	Cllr Neden-Watts: Process for Planning and overcoming land ownership issues dictate the timescales. Cllr Chard: current timeline: planning application Dec 2021, if successful procure constructor towards Summer 2022, work would start later in 2022 – depends on ownership negotiations. Early 2024 for completion.

Headline Topic	Side walk next to Wags and Tales – hazardous sidewalk
Response	Cllr Ehmann: Kerb line adjustments are possible and building out the pavement, but there is a cost issue and the need to allow sufficient space for the carriage way. Needs to be part of wider consideration for the corridor of Richmond Road.
Headline Topic	Church Street is a huge asset- why was there the removal of cobbled street area?
Response	Cllr Ehmann: predates Lib Dem 2018 administration but has detracted from the overall environment. The flattening material used was not the best, but additional expense to change at this point a relatively new paving structure.
Headline	E-scooters – negative impact?
	Cllr Ehmann: illegal e-scooters are a Police matter. The TFL trial is legal and the rental e-scooters are compliant to ride on the road as a lawful activity. Police enforcement required for infringements
Headline	Once trial is complete, will you support permanent introduction of e-scooters?
Response	Cllr Ehmann: We need the details of trial to make a decision, but if certain parts of the community are served by e-scooters and safety statistics remain good for rental e-scooters, then could be introduced permanently.
Response	Cllr Crouch: Supports e-scooter permanent implementation, but also to make users more responsible and required to wear helmets. Cllr Khosa: Tried e-scooter, good as a vehicle, good way to get around town. This is a TFL trial, TFL's decision in relation to their permanent introduction, not the Local Authority.
Headline	After recent events should the College in the Borough just be a school, not a college?
Response	Cllr Khosa: shocking news of fatal stabbing, but generally a safe borough. Sixth forms have not made the College redundant and there are good results from the College. We need to work with the Police and college to bring in measures to make surrounding area safer.
Headline	Eel Pie Island residents: where are you expecting residents to park on the Riverside?
Response	Cllr Chard: There has been work on parking provision in relation to Riverside and the redesignation of pay and display spaces to resident spaces. Parking pressures have been analysed, as the pressure will increase on parking, but still manageable for local residents. There will be a reduction in the volume of traffic in terms of people looking for parking on the Embankment, as there will be none.