

RAYNES PARK COMMUNITY FORUM
16 OCTOBER 2024

(6.15 pm - 8.15 pm)

PRESENT Councillors Councillor Victoria Wilson (in the Chair),

1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS (Agenda Item 1)

The meeting was held in Raynes Park Library and chaired by Councillor Victoria Wilson with Chris Edge from the Raynes Park Association (RPA). Around 25 residents and two councillors attended. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2 FLOOD STRATEGY (Agenda Item 2)

Kris Witherington, Engagement and Consultation Manager for London Borough of Merton said the council was developing a new Flood Strategy. As part of this work there will be a public consultation later in the autumn. The consultation is likely to focus on the overall approach to flood prevention and the issue of surface water.

Kris will let the group know when the consultation is taking place and if residents would like to be kept informed, they can sign up to the council's weekly e-newsletter.

Cllr Wilson said in the recent flooding the town centre was not affected but there were issues at Abbott Avenue and at the end of Crescent Rd. A resident suggested installing a depth marker under bridge, Kris said he can raise this with the flood team.

A resident said that with the impact of new building perhaps developers should be required to mitigate with tanks and other measures. Cllr Wilson said that Planning applications already require developers to review flood risk.

A resident asked about Thames Water works on Bushey Road and was told these are repairs to a cracked water pipe.

A resident asked of Merton was prepared for future storms to get worse as a result of climate change and Kris said this is the sort of issue that should be contributed through the consultation.

A resident asked what the timetable for the new Strategy is and Kris is said this will be confirmed as part of the consultation.

3 WARM AND WELL PROJECT (Agenda Item 3)

Jonathan Green from [Wimbledon Guild](#) introduced the [Warm and Well](#) project. The Guild provides a wide range of activities and services for people aged 18+. They have an office in Wimbledon on Worple Road and a new office in Morden, on Crown Parade near to the Civic Centre. Many referrals to the services are by word of mouth so Jon hopes attendees will be encouraged to pass on the details to family, friends and neighbours. There are fitness and exercises classes, discussion and social groups, a wellbeing service for the over 50s, and a welfare grants programme.

The Guild is able to help residents aged over 65 or who have a long-term health condition access the Council's handyperson, but Chris, the handyman, is retiring at the end of this financial year. It is not known if the Council will appoint another person to continue this service.

The Warm and Well programme focuses on energy and helping with the impact of the cost-of-living crisis. They offer free home energy assessments, and support residents with debts and arrears. The project also helps residents identify scams and access the priority services register for vulnerable residents. Jon said he was confident that everybody in the room could make at least two changes to help with their energy costs.

If residents have any other questions or would like to request any of the services, they can [contact Jon](#).

A resident asked how the Guild is financed and Jon explained that the Guild is supported by London Borough of Merton, by donations and fundraising, through grants from trusts and foundations, and income from previous investment donations. The Guild also relies on the 200 or more volunteers who are vital to delivering services. Residents can also get in touch with Jon if they are interested in volunteering.

4 RAILWAY STATION (Agenda Item 4)

Elizabeth Lane from the Friends of Raynes Park Station gave an update on work on the embankment and platform 4.

Friends of Raynes Park Station has won South Western Railway Sustainable Community Initiative of the year and London in Bloom Level 5 Award. The community involvement and sustainable improvements to the station were the key to these awards.

On the embankment the terracing and stepping stones have been completed, protecting the roots of the chestnut trees. It is not possible to create a blooming flower bed but tomorrow we will be receiving drought resistant shrubs to green the area. Grant funding from London Borough of Merton has been used to purchase tools and the plants arriving this week. We also have got access to the small tool shed next to the station which has been painted, cleaned and refurbished.

On platform 4 the 128m flower bed were planted over the summer with sunflowers and wildflowers but for next year shade tolerant, drought resistant plants, along with spring and summer bulbs will be planted using funding from SWR Biodiversity team. There are also wooden planters to be installed on the other platforms and will need planting.

A resident said the planting on platform 4 is excellent, but the signage makes it look like SWR did the work and are taking the credit. Liz said the signs came from the SWR biodiversity team. The Friends group will be getting a noticeboard in the waiting room to display the certificates and links to the group.

A resident offered their thanks and praise for all the hard work by the team and asked if others could still volunteer. Liz said that there is money from SWR to invest in the station, despite the complications and there is always a need for new volunteers. The group meets on Tuesdays 9.30-12pm, and volunteers will require a Health and Safety induction. You can also follow the Friends group on [Instagram](#). Liz has found that the more interest there is the more likely they are to get more funding.

A resident asked about the South side embankment and Liz explained that National Rail would not give a license for volunteers, but they did clear away a lot of the fly-tipping. The embankment is too steep for terracing.

5 UPDATE FROM COUNCILLORS (Agenda Item 5)

Cllr Wilson

Step-free access at Raynes Park Station has received feasibility funding to draw up plans but it is unlikely there will be any works before 2028/29. The outline plan is for a lift from platform 1 up to a new bridge that would connect to another lift to platform 2.

A recent bus crash was witnessed by many local residents, but thankfully no one seriously injured. The Building Control team is checking the building that was struck by the bus.

The digital billboard on Coombe Lane is run by Global and is on NR land but the planning permission from 2022 had conditions, including the board being dimmed overnight. As a result of complaints Global say it has been dimmed, but this is being checked by environmental health.

There are still quite a few empty tree pits in the area. The council is increasing the rate of tree planting from 250 to 500 per year and there is also a [tree sponsorship scheme](#) to speed up the process. The sponsorship scheme can include existing tree pits or new pits can be constructed. A resident asked about tree maintenance and Cllr Wilson said that the [pollarding programme](#) is available online. A resident also asked about trees damaging pavements and Cllr Wilson said problem trees could also be [reported online](#).

The new Walking and Cycling Strategy is going to be considered by scrutiny in November.

Cllr Page

Work on the Motspur park station lifts have been delayed as a missing part needs to be imported. The works should be completed in late November. The station will also be moving the card readers next to the new bridge. Mary Jane Jeanes said that the 100th Anniversary of Motspur Park station will be on 12 July 2025 and celebrations will be organised.

6 OPEN FORUM (Agenda Item 6)

Helen Alexandra Allen raised the issue of traffic flow in Raynes Park with problems caused by the junction of Bushey Road and Grand Drive, with traffic turning right towards A3 blocking the junction. The queue of cars can sometimes go back to Walpole Road. Helen suggested that if traffic light sequencing could be changed to allow for greater flow turning right this should relief the pressure. Helen also said that roundabout would be a larger scale solution. A resident said the proposal to change the phasing was made 20 years ago. Cllr Wilson said that Transport for London control all traffic lights, and problems with sequencing can reported by residents [online](#). Helen also said that the outline plans to pedestrianise part of the one-way system would have a negative impact, but Chris Edge said that these plans were at a very early stage and would be dependent on Thames Water's long-term solution for flooding in the area.

Gary Hunt raised the issue of London Borough of Merton [proposals to install new double yellow lines on Blenheim Road](#). Some complaints about obstructive parking on Blenheim Road prompted Council to propose double yellow lines on one side of the road. Many residents are unhappy with these proposals and feel that the road already has parking restrictions, and only some junctions would benefit from yellow lines. Gary said the problem seems to be partly caused by new refuse vehicles being wider and additional parking from new developments. Cllr Page said that the consultation on the plans is open until 18 October.

Brian Cole wanted to let residents know about 'Froth', a new Jazz, coffee, bar has opened near the library on Station Approach. The owner is applying for evening license to host live music.

A resident asked about rubbish being left outside the car dealership on Wyke Road, including car parts but is not sure about the land ownership. Cllr Wilson said she was happy to check.

Chris Edge said that [Merton Chamber of Commerce](#) is hosting a business event 29 January 5.30-7pm.

A resident asked about the danger of the Burstow Road junction with Kingston Road with a painted roundabout causing confusion. Chris said he raised this junction with London Borough of Merton some years ago, and officers reviewed the junction and said there was not a sensible alternative solution. Cllr Wilson suggested raising the issue with the ward councillors.

7 DATE OF NEXT MEETING (Agenda Item 7)

Tuesday 18 March 2025 at Library Hall.

Any issues or questions can be emailed to getinvolved@merton.gov.uk

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