

NORWOOD FORUM

CONNECTING THE COMMUNITY

Annual General Meeting Saturday 13 July 2024 (2pm) DRAFT Minutes

Committee Members (2023-24) present: Anne Crane, Jane East, Kim Hart, Gloria Orosungunleka, Sue Osborn, Noshir Patel, Jane Pickard, Laura Rigden and Philip Virgo

Also present:

Helen Hayes MP (part)

Councillors Ibtisam Adem, Jackie Meldrum and Emma Nye (Knight's Hill), Rebecca Spenser (Gipsy Hill), Saleha Jaffer (St. Martin's) and Judith Cavanagh (West Dulwich)

Incoming committee members: Odilon Couzin and Tom Parker

Thriving Norwood grant recipients:

Maths Confidence Booster: Anna-Kay Dennis

Nature Vibezzz: John Cannell and Douglas Saucedo-Anez

Effra Pottery: John Price

Approximately 25 other members of the public

Tim Stephens (outgoing Administrator)

Apologies for absence:

Councillors Christine Banton, Fred Cowell and Olga FitzRoy.

Incoming committee members: Viv Kind and Bryn Lockwood

Kim Hart in the Chair

1. Welcome from the Chair

Kim Hart welcomed everyone to the meeting, outlined the afternoon programme and listed the apologies received. She thanked John Price for providing The Portico as the venue at such late notice, the Old Library having suffered a water leak and complete loss of power just the day before.

2. Helen Hayes MP and local councillors

Jane Pickard, Committee member, introduced the local politicians in attendance to address the meeting:

Helen Hayes MP

She had served as the MP for the Dulwich & West Norwood constituency for some nine years and thanked those that had re-elected her as their MP for the fourth time. She undertook to represent all constituents whether they had voted for her or not, and welcomed the opportunities resulting from the Labour Party being returned to power with its large majority at the General Election on 4 July 2024.

It had been tough to have to explain to worried constituents that the calling of the General Election had meant the immediate dissolution of Parliament and that she was unable to pursue her casework. The highest priority issues raised with her, via direct contact at regular surgeries and correspondence, were:

- The housing crisis; this area of her caseload had risen considerably in recent years
- The trading environment for small businesses, like those in West Norwood town centre. She admired the variety of independent shops locally and highlighted the additional difficulties of crime and anti-social behaviour they increasingly had to face. Much work was being done behind the scenes to address these issues. Nationally, the new government had committed to reform the business rates system and that should help reduce costs for small businesses. Also additional resources were to be provided for more local Policing.
- Environmental issues: every part of public policy would now be expected to focus on addressing the climate emergency.

She thanked Norwood Forum as one of the brilliant community organisations in the borough and the work being undertaken by volunteers who cared about their local community. She looked forward to continuing to work with Norwood Forum and local councillors as we all sought to work together on all these issues.

In answer to questions on her existing and future role, she explained the factors behind serving in or outside Cabinet.

Local Ward Councillors

The Forum also heard from representatives of the four local wards in our area, who also answered questions:

West Dulwich Ward: Councillor Judith Cavanagh. She reported on improvements in infrastructure to support active travel such as cycle lanes, school streets, pedestrian crossings and traffic calming, and work with Transport for London (TfL). She also mentioned public realm improvements such as West Norwood Cemetery and especially the opening of the new entrances by the end of the year. Following the earlier consultation, finalised proposals for the West Dulwich Street Improvements scheme had been published and the promised further public consultation was imminent. Ward councillors were holding discussions with local businesses worried at the possible impact of that scheme on the Rosendale Road and West Norwood town centre shops. The benefits had come through at previous schemes such as Herne Hill, but possible problems were not being ignored.

Knight's Hill Ward: Councillor Emma Nye. She had been elected in the May 2024 by-election and was undertaking roles in child protection and licensing and planning committees. She had already successfully dealt with a number of environmental issues (flytipping/bins and noise). Ward Councillors were looking at traffic calming measures and welcomed the licensing pilot for Landlords being undertaken in the ward. The challenge of falling school rolls was being addressed across the borough, and concerns should be raised now with local councillors. In questioning, speeding on local roads was raised, and she highlighted the willingness to work with the police and pursue measures such as the redesign of roads.

Gipsy Hill Ward: Rebecca Spencer. She highlighted local active travel measures and the new walking routes through the provision of the two new entrances to the Cemetery. She had supported local residents and made successful representations at Licensing Sub-Committee as the application to hold a music festival in Norwood Park had been refused. The delayed Roman Rise development was now being completed and would provide welcome affordable housing. Improvements to Central Hill estate were being made, and work was in hand to improve the essential Vale street play facility.

St. Martin's Ward: Councillor Saleha Jaffer:

Local residents were concerned at the closure of St. Martin-in-the-Field School and planned closure of Fenstanton and Holy Trinity CE Primary Schools but rolls had reduced to unsustainable levels. Both would continue in educational use. She had met with the Oasis charity who were to run a therapeutic centre for vulnerable pupils at St. Martin-in-the-Field building and was satisfied their service would be truly inclusive. Ward casework has also included issues around Low Traffic Neighbourhoods and speeding traffic. She spoke also about her role as Deputy Cabinet Member for Stronger Communities. Questioners raised the need to provide working hearing loop at all public meetings. Looking forward, local residents should contact her with concerns as they arose.

3. Annual General Meeting

(a) Minutes of last meeting

No comments had been received, and the minutes of the last Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 15 July 2023 were approved.

(b) Chair's Annual Report 2023-24

Kim Hart presented the written report covering the year's activity, highlighting the activities using the [Wheel of Wellbeing](#):

- Planet: care. The Environment
- Place: take notice. Place making
- People: connect. People connecting
- Body: be active. Know your neighbourhood
- Mind: keep learning. Wellbeing
- Spirit: give. Volunteering

Norwood Forum worked as a member of the Lambeth Forum Network and was involved in three local projects:

- Thriving Norwood: She served as vice-chair of the Norwood Health Service Project which promotes community engagement to support emotional, physical and social health
- Norwood Community Safety Partnership: led by Committee Member Philip Vigo, the partnership works across the volunteering structures of Health, Welfare, Education, Skills and Policing at the community level.
- Wild Norwood: a free celebration of nature in an urban, inner London borough, focused on window displays around the neighbourhood

A number of projects in the field of history and culture were run:

- Blue Plaque trail
- Lambeth Local History Forum
- West Norwood Cemetery National Lottery Heritage Fund project

Regular activity included monitoring planning applications and making representations where necessary, working with Herne Hill Forum to organise the General Election Hustings, attending the Remembrance Sunday service, providing banking services for local community organisations, working on council initiatives and responding on formal consultations, and attending and contributing local community organisations and meetings such as the Friends of West Norwood Health & Leisure Centre.

The Forum therefore had relationships with all sorts of people and organisations such as local ward councillors, Lambeth officers, Station to Station (the West Norwood & Tulse Hill Business Improvement District (S2S)), Integrate CIC (the borough wide organisation commissioned by our council to deliver support to the voluntary sector) and the Lambeth Forum Network.

The Forum was also a campaigning body. In particular, the Forum had brought together the community to campaign against the Council's intention to facilitate the over-development of two local sites via the Lambeth Site Allocation Development Plan – Draft ([SADPD](#) for short):

- Site 18 which is the area bordered on the west side by Norwood Road stretching between Lansdowne Hill and York Hill and reaches back to the borders of York Hill Estate, and
- Site 19, the triangle between railway lines off Knollys Road.

The community campaign had achieved some success as site 19 had been withdrawn and the boundaries of site 18 had been redrawn to avoid the demolition of existing residential properties and to exclude the site of the tower blocks currently under construction. However, the campaign remained very concerned about the impact of such large-scale and high-rise development especially on Norwood Road where the existing shops between Lansdowne Hill and close to York Hill would be demolished. The Council was continuing to press ahead with its proposals and was currently engaged in consultation on the “soundness” of the proposals (Regulation 19), again stating it is using the minimal public consultation necessary. Members of the local community should [let the council have their views](#) by no later than 13 August 2024 (5pm).

The Forum had also held a public campaign drawing attention to the need to get registered and have photo ID to vote.

Work continued on various projects under the Greener Norwood banner.

Kim Hart finished by reporting she was stepping down as Chair but would remain on the Committee as Secretary. She thanked everyone who had supported her and the Forum in its work in recent years, and mentioned in particular Laura Rigden who was stepping down as a Committee member as she was to return to Australia. She had gained tremendous satisfaction from serving as Chair and the opportunities to bring together the community in a variety of ways. She very much aimed to continue to work as co-Chair of Thriving Norwood and to contribute to the work of the Forum under the leadership of the incoming co-chairs.

(c) Treasurer's Report

Noshir Patel (Treasurer) began by reviewing the volunteer hours for the past 12 months, which showed a notional value of £58.14K (3876 hours) for 2023-24. He then presented the accounts for 2023-24, highlighting:

- Norwood Forum accounts: cash at bank: £2344.65
- Thriving Norwood: cash at bank: £6699.76 (ring-fenced).
- #ScrapTheYard donations to pay for acoustic consultant: ringfenced for future campaign work or if not needed, used for a community project as yet not discussed: cash at bank: £464.00 (ring-fenced).
- Streetworks operating and overheads grant: cash at bank: £5642.00 (ring-fenced). Work underway to finally complete the Norwood Road phase and with TfL to relaunch the removal of the Tulse Hill gyratory was highlighted.
- Streatham Action Group: £29000 (ring-fenced).

There were no questions raised on the accounts, which were received.

(d) Election of Norwood Forum Officers and Committee

Position	Served 2023-24	Nominated 2024-25
Chair	Kim Hart	
Vice-Chair	Gloria Orosungunleka	
Co-Chairs		Jane East
		Sue Osborn
Secretary	Vacant	Kim Hart
Treasurer	Noshir Patel	Noshir Patel
Committee members (up to 11)		
	Anne Crane	Odilon Couzin
	Jane East	Anne Crane
	Sue Osborn*	Viv Kind
	Laura Rigden	Bryn Lockwood
	Philip Virgo	Gloria Orosungunleka
		Tom Palmer
		Jane Pickard
		Tim Stephens
		Philip Virgo

* Joined 08.01.24

Kim Hart announced the outcome of the nomination process for the committee for 2024-25. As no positions were contested, a formal election ballot was not required. She gave her thanks to those serving on the Committee in the last year and looked forward to serving on the committee in the coming year.

Further volunteers to serve on the Committee and develop and lead on projects would be most welcome. The website: www.norwoodforum.org gives a picture of the work currently being undertaken.

4. How Green Can We Go: Public transport/active travel

The community discussion was facilitated by Kim Hart. Those present were invited to join the table discussion of their choice:

BUS (2 tables) TRAIN (2 tables) CYCLE/WALK (1 table) ACCESS (1 table)

Participants were asked to share their concerns about public transport and active travel, consider solutions and make a list of top priorities, quick wins and long term campaigns.

10 minutes were allowed, and then all participants moved on to a second table. At the end, table facilitators gave verbal feedback on the issues raised and provided a summary note to enable points to be included in the existing long list of issues already garnered through the newsletter and a stall at West Norwood Feast. The Committee would determine the best way to take the matters forward, and keep the local community informed on progress.

5. Health and Wellbeing

Jane East (Co-chair) introduced two recipients of Thriving Norwood grants in 2023-24 funded by Lambeth Public Health. They spoke about their work and the particular services paid for from the grants:

Maths Confidence Booster: Anna-Kay Dennis

The aim of the project had been to boost confidence of students in time for their first GCSE Mock. The initial aim was for 20 students, and this number was registered but all did not attend at the same time due to different school activities. The Project ran from September to December 2023 for two hours every Saturday morning and occasional Fridays. The evaluation found that the aim of the project was met; students all felt confident for their first mock after the first school half term. There was also wonderful feedback from parents at the end.

Nature Vibezzz: John Cannell

The grant had funded the children's summer school which included four trips around London and training for the older children leading to a qualification in bushcraft skills (including the necessary registration fee).

Kim Hart thanked the presenting groups for attending to make their presentations and all grant recipients for running their schemes with such enthusiasm. She was also pleased to announce that Norwood Forum would run a small grants scheme in 2024-25; further detail would follow as soon as possible, via the website and newsletter.

6. Close of meeting

The meeting gave a vote of thanks to Kim Hart for all the work undertaken during her service as Chair, the creativity she had shown, and the delivery of the considerable achievements since 2021. Thanks were also given to the outgoing Administrator Tim Stephens.

The meeting closed at 4:37pm.