



NORWOOD FORUM

CONNECTING THE COMMUNITY

Annual Community Review and AGM **Saturday 6 September 2025 2pm – 4.30pm The Old Library** **Minutes**

Committee Members present: Jane East (Co-Chair), Tom Palmer (Co-Chair), Kim Hart (Secretary), Noshir Patel (Treasurer), Odilon Couzin, Anne Crane, Andrew Johns, Sue Osborn, Tim Stephens and Philip Virgo

Incoming committee members: Pete Elliott and Anita Hall

Also present:

Helen Hayes MP (attended part of the meeting)

Councillors (attended part of the meeting):

- Emma Nye (Knight's Hill)
- Christine Banton (Gipsy Hill)
- Fred Cowell (West Dulwich)
- Olga Fitzroy (St Martins)
- Jackie Meldrum (Knight's Hill) – arrived later

Willem Heskes – Carnac Street Community Garden

Helena Rivera – A Small Studio

Nayotia Miller – Lambeth Forum Network

20 other members of the Forum and approximately 20 other members of the public

Sophie Mason (Administrator)

Apologies for absence:

Councillors Claire Holland and Rezina Chowdhury, Amelia Willis, Head of Community Engagement and Participation, Lambeth Council

Committee members: Bryn Lockwood and Gloria Orosungunleka

1. Welcome

- Kim Hart (Secretary) welcomed everyone to the meeting, outlined the afternoon programme
- The agenda papers and slide deck for the meeting can be found on the Norwood Forum website here: www.norwoodforum.org/Norwood-Forum-AGM-2024

2. Helen Hayes MP and local councillors

Helen Hayes MP

- Helen Hayes expressed her thanks to Norwood Forum for its continued support of the local community. She spoke about the vital role of community in making Norwood a great place to live, work and raise families and the importance of shared conversations in driving local action and strengthening democracy.

- She also addressed environmental issues, reflecting on her 14 years of campaigning and the need for sustained progress. Helen reported that the new government is:
 - Advancing its environmental commitments
 - Introducing a national energy policy focused on investment in clean energy, including solar and renewables
 - Taking action to improve water quality and hold water companies accountable
 - Strengthening regulation of rivers and tackling pollution
 - Supporting the right to repair household appliances
 - Requiring all new homes to include solar panels from 2027

Audience Questions and Discussion

- A question was raised about whether there is an app for the Repair Café Lambeth and how the community can get more involved. In response, it was noted that Lambeth's Restart project is open for collaboration and that West Norwood had its own Repair Café which the Forum helped get started
- Planning concerns: Attendees raised concerns about developments being approved in floodplain areas. Helen Hayes MP confirmed that this issue is being reviewed at a strategic level within the national planning system.

Local Ward Councillors

- The local ward councillors Emma Nye, Fred Cowell, Christine Banton and Olga Fitzroy, then provided updates and responded to questions. They addressed key local concerns raised by residents, including traffic, planning, environmental issues and community engagement.
- During the discussion, concerns were raised about the Council's consultation processes, with one attendee criticising them as insufficient and lacking genuine engagement. In response, another member of the audience commented that we all have a responsibility to act with honesty and behave decently in public discussions, noting that councillors are sometimes faced with challenging and confrontational situations during consultation meetings.
- A roundup of some of the discussion points as follows:

Road Safety & Traffic

- Concerns about speeding, school traffic and road accidents were raised. Suggestions included decriminalising speed enforcement.

Planning & Gambling

- Issues with gambling premises and developments on floodplains were discussed. Lambeth is reviewing planning policies in these areas.

Transport & Public Realm

- Questions were raised about lost funding for the removal of the Tulse Hill gyratory and the need for pedestrian/cycle crossing

- Cllr Banton referenced Lambeth's social housing refurbishments in Gipsy Hill and also talked about the big issue of night time safety for women and girls.

Climate & Environment

- Residents asked how they can support climate action. Fly-tipping, bins and damp in homes were also discussed. Councillors supported exploring tech-based solutions to tackle fly-tipping. Reference made to the upcoming Forum's Green Norwood public meeting on 23 September

E-Bikes & Pavement Obstruction

- Concerns were raised about e-bikes blocking pavements. Calls for stronger regulation and enforcement were supported.

3. Annual General Meeting

Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the last Annual General Meeting held at 2pm, 13 July 2024 were approved.

This meeting was held with one days notice in a new venue due to major water leak at the original venue: The Old Library. The new venue was: The Portico (formerly Portico Gallery), 23B Knights Hill, West Norwood, London SE27 0HS

Co-Chair's Report 2024-2025

- Jane East and Tom Palmer (Co-Chairs) presented an overview of the Forum's work, reporting on a busy and impactful year, supported by the Forum's largest-ever committee.
- The Forum aims to be "productively noisy"- constructively raising community issues, operating with integrity and strengthening internal governance through an updated Constitution and policies.
- Summary of activity over the past year:

Partnerships & Community Engagement

- Collaborated with over 60 local organisations, providing:
 - Funding
 - Publicity
 - Network connections
- Partner organisations included:
 - Open Orchard (green spaces)
 - Singing Mamas (community wellbeing)
- Committed to ensuring inclusive representation and community connection in Norwood.
- Active member of the Lambeth Forum Network:
 - Contributed to revisions of the Network's Terms of Reference.
 - Advocated for transparency and accountability.

Small Grants Scheme

- Awarded 12 grants of £300 to individuals and community groups.
- Supported a diverse range of local projects with measurable community impact.
- The Forum expressed thanks to recipients for their creativity, dedication, and community commitment.

The Forum's Key Areas of Work

- The Forum has actively contributed to a broad range of local issues including:
 - Public transport and active travel
 - Health and wellbeing
 - Planning and development
 - Local heritage
 - Community safety
 - Green initiatives
 - Education

Transport & Active Travel

- Collected local feedback on transport priorities and submitted to Cllr Rezina Chowdhury, including:
 - Step-free access at Tulse Hill Station
 - Improved east–west bus routes
 - Safer cycling infrastructure
 - Better pedestrian facilities (e.g. crossings, pavement decluttering)
- Progress on many schemes is limited by funding constraints.
- Design work approved for improvements to Croxted Road.
- Ongoing engagement with:
 - Helen Hayes MP
 - Local campaign group Transform Tulse Hill
- Supported and promoted public engagement in local consultations, including:
 - Rosendale School Street
 - West Dulwich LTN
 - Proposed Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs)

Thriving Norwood

- Aims to:
 - Connect residents to local services and community activities.
 - Promote health and wellbeing across the neighbourhood.
 - Strengthen networks between local service providers.
- Delivered health awareness campaigns on:
 - Cancer screening
 - Vaccinations (including measles)
 - HIV support for Black heritage communities

Planning

- The Forum reviews all local planning applications, in partnership with:
 - Norwood Action Group
 - The Norwood Society
- Successfully influenced the operating hours of a proposed Adult Gaming Centre on Norwood Road.
- Forum members contributed to the public hearing on the Site Allocations Development Plan (SADPD).

Heritage

- £7.2 million restoration of West Norwood Cemetery has been completed.
- The Forum remains involved through the Strategic Partnership Board.
- Upcoming priorities include:
 - Improvements to the Robson Road entrance
 - Developing policy on acceptable uses of the site

Community Safety

- Forum representatives attended Safer Neighbourhood Panel meetings in all four local wards.
- The Community Safety Partnership now operates independently of the Forum.
- The Forum continues to collaborate and support the Partnership's aims and activities.

Green Norwood

- Promoted local sustainability initiatives, including:
 - Green space protection and enhancement
 - Renewable energy and green jobs
 - Air quality improvement
 - Waste reduction (reduce, reuse, recycle)
- Ongoing collaboration with Lambeth Council and local partners
- Planning session scheduled for 23rd September to shape next steps

Looking Ahead to 2025–26

- The Forum outlined its vision for the year ahead:
 - To remain a vibrant and active organisation that reflects and serves the whole community
 - To be a trusted source of reliable information on local events, celebrations, consultations, and campaigns
 - To champion meaningful consultation, ensuring that community voices are heard in local decision-making
 - To contribute to shaping Lambeth's Local Plan, the key planning policy that will guide development, land use, and infrastructure across the borough over the coming years

- The Forum will continue to work collaboratively with residents, local groups, and the Council to ensure Norwood remains a well-informed, inclusive, and engaged community.

Treasurer's Report

- Noshir Patel (Treasurer) thanked all volunteers, noting the past 12 months of volunteer hours totalled 2,120 hours, with a notional value of £31,800 for 2024/25.
- Expressed gratitude to the committee for their ongoing support and emphasised the Forum's focus is not on retaining funds.
- Presented the accounts for 2024/25, highlighting:
 - Norwood Forum accounts: cash at bank: £987.08
 - Thriving Norwood: cash at bank: £27,973.05 (ring-fenced)
 - Streetworks operating and overheads grant: cash at bank: £5,642.00 (ring-fenced)
 - #ScrapTheYard donations: cash at bank: £464.00 (ring-fenced)
 - Streatham Action Group: £0 (ring-fenced)
- Operating costs cover part time administrator salary, website, insurance, printing, room hire for events, printing and general out-of-pocket expenses
- No questions were raised on the accounts.

Election of Norwood Forum Officers & Committee

- Kim Hart announced that the 2024–25 committee nominations matched the number of available places, so no formal election was needed.
- She thanked all outgoing and continuing committee members for their contributions over the past year.
- Welcomed new committee members Pete Elliott and Anita Hall.
- Special thanks given to Jane Pickard and Viv Kind for their dedicated service as they stepped down.
- One committee vacancy remains open and residents encouraged to get involved either by joining the committee or volunteering informally.
- Kim Hart announced the 2025 Committee Members, inviting those present to stand up and identify themselves:
 - Jane East
 - Tom Palmer
 - Noshir Patel
 - Kim Hart
 - Odilon Couzin
 - Anne Crane
 - Pete Elliott
 - Andrew Johns
 - Anita Hall
 - Bryn Lockwood

- Gloria Orosungunleka
 - Sue Osborn
 - Tim Stephens
 - Philip Virgo
- Further volunteers to join the committee or get involved in projects are welcome.

Constitution

- The Forum's Constitution was last reviewed in 2018. Updates were presented to reflect new policies and improve clarity. Key changes included:
 - Clearer definition of the Forum's status as a not-for-profit community organisation and its membership in the Lambeth Forum Network.
 - Revised process for electing Officers, including a requirement that nominees have served at least one year on the committee.
 - Introduction of a Conflict of Interest policy and Declaration of Interests process.
 - Updated sub-committee structure, roles and reporting responsibilities.
 - Expanded Code of Conduct for committee members, including confidentiality requirements.

The recommended changes to the Constitution were agreed unanimously by the Committee and other Forum members present, voting being conducted by a show of hands with member voting slip.

4. Community Small Grants Scheme 2024/25

- Odilon Couzin (Committee Member) introduced this section on the community small grants scheme, noting it has supported local initiatives for many years by funding local grass roots projects.
- In 2024/25, the Forum received 34 applications and awarded grants to 15 projects.
- Odilon introduced two recipients:

Carnac Street Community Garden

- Willem Heskes designed the Carnac Street Community Garden. Willem described the transformation of the previously neglected space into a vibrant community garden.
- He also highlighted a collaborative project with Elm Wood Primary School to revitalise the school playground.
- Willem emphasised the importance of volunteering and the positive impact of community-led work.

A Small Studio

- Helena Rivera from A Small Studio used the funding to support work experience placements for young people interested in architecture.
- Edrisa Smith, a former participant, shared her experience, explaining how her 2022 placement had a life-changing impact on her career path.

5. 2020-2025 Lambeth Local Plan

- Attendees were informed that all local authorities are required to produce a Local Plan to guide development over a 15-year period.
- Lambeth Council will begin consulting on a review of its current Local Plan this autumn.
- The Local Plan is the key planning document that shapes where, what, and how building and regeneration takes place in the borough.
- The review will influence:
 - Future housing allocations, including affordable housing targets
 - Design and conservation policies, including heritage areas
 - Improvements to public realm, markets and civic spaces
 - Rules around business use, cultural venues, and nightlife licensing
- An outline of the Local Plan was shared with attendees, and the Forum invited the community to begin identifying local priorities.
- Attendees were invited to join themed discussion tables:
 - Transport
 - Green
 - Wellbeing
 - Community Engagement
 - Built Environment
- Participants could move between themes every 10 minutes to contribute ideas and discuss possible solutions.
- The session concluded with a group feedback session to gather key points raised across the discussions. These will be used to inform Norwood Forum's response to the Local Plan when the consultation process opens.

6. Close of meeting

The Co-Chairs gave thanks to those attending and committee members for their support. The meeting closed at 4:37pm.