

Somers Town Neighbourhood Forum
Wednesday, 8 August 2018
Living Centre, 6.30–8pm

Minutes

1. **Present:** Michael Parkes, Mary Wood, Lita Smith, Sarah Smith, Slaney Devlin, John Mason, Cllr Paul Tomlinson, Michelle Rispin, Helia Evans (part of meeting), Saima Downes (Camden)
2. **Apologies:** Richard Harrison, Diana Foster, Penny Jones, Cllr Roger Robinson, Donna Turnbull, Fran Heron, Fr Paschal Worton, Cllr Samata Khatoon

3. **St Pancras Gardens consultation** – Saima Downes

Camden ran a consultation on improvements to the gardens in June 2018 and are now tendering for the works. The budget is really tight, so they will need a staged approach to works, prioritizing the northern gardens. They have dug trial holes in the area nearest to Camley Street where the wall is falling down. They did not find any human remains so are able to repair the wall here and add disabled access (a slope). They will keep access to the church throughout the works. They will be resurfacing some of the paths with a rubberized material that will be less easily broken by tree roots. Some of the paths will not be replaced but will be grassed over. Edging stones will remain. The hedge behind the Soane monument will be removed as it is a focus for antisocial behaviour, but trees will be planted in its place to screen the railway bridge and frame the monument. HE said these works were originally included in the King's Cross Development works and asked why they hadn't already been done.

Action Saima Downes to find out why St Pancras Gardens works were dropped from the King's Cross Development.

4. **Minutes of last meeting and matters arising:**

Action: SD to correct minutes to include MPs comments on the importance of protecting views from Regent's Park including the views of Chester Terrace and the other Nash houses. Also, the quantum figures in the Euston Area Plan were based on building on the airspace above the existing station.

Air Quality: UCL has commissioned Claire Holman, an independent air quality consultant and chair of the Institute of Air Quality Management, to review recent air quality assessments in Somers Town and to suggest actions for the Neighbourhood Plan. Claire will be writing a report over the summer.

JM commented that the collapse of rubbish collection and street combined, when combined with construction works, has meant air quality in the St Pancras area has been really bad this summer, as has his asthma. SD reported construction workers on Drummond Crescent have been cutting slabs on the highway with no protection or water, meaning dust and noise has been unbearable.

5. **Charrington Street/Ossulston Street cyclists**

Over 2,000 cycles and motorbikes a day have been travelling down Charrington Street/Ossulston Street, displaced by the closure of the Purchase Street cycle path. SS and LS are meeting Cllr Adam Harrison on 9 August to discuss their concerns. A petition with over 1050 signatures from local residents has been lodged with the Council.

6. **HS2 Eversholt Street taxi rank**

HS2 are planning a temporary taxi rank on Eversholt Street from 2022 to 2026. While we welcome the removal of a temporary taxi rank on Drummond Crescent/Doric Way, which would have impacted on the new school and existing residents, a taxi rank on Eversholt Street will worsen the already illegal air quality, making it dangerous for residents. It would also impact on local businesses.

Action: SD to meet HS2 to discuss residents' concerns.

Action: JM recommended we write a statement, pulling on our experience with air quality and the St Pancras rank, demanding residents are protected from poor air quality on Eversholt Street.

7. **Other developments.** Demolition work is to start on the existing Maria Fidelis buildings on Phoenix Road over the summer. A construction site will be on the road.

41-43 Chalton Street has received planning permission for a building that links through to Churchway.

8. **Somers Town greening – Levita courtyard and British Library lands.** Global Generation are planning to move to the British Library lands from the Argent development, where they will be providing growing space and workshops. Camden are consulting on plans to green the southern Levita courtyard. HE said the TRA were against any proposal that didn't improve all the courtyard gardens in the area. MR said we needed access to water in the gardens as plants were dying.

Action: SD to write to Camden officers requesting free access to water in the courtyards.

9. **Admin and structure**

SD and DT met with Camden officers for a walkabout of Somers Town and to discuss redesignating the Plan area. It is possible we could reapply for funding. MP commented that this and revising the Plan should be a priority.

10. **AOB**

PT said the Town Hall services were moving to the Crowndale Centre and would be closed 17–20 August.

11. **Dates of future meeting:** 12 September 2018