

THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL

At a meeting of the Environmental Forum held virtually via zoom on Wednesday, 6 November 2024 from 7.30pm

Present: Councillors Jon Tankard (Chair), Kevin Raeburn, Reena Ranger OBE, Narinder Sian Cheryl Stungo, Louise Price and one representative from each of the following organisations:

Bedmond Residents' Association	-	Jan Smith
Chorleywood Residents' Association	-	Angela Killick
Maple Lodge Conservation Society	-	Keith Pursall
Spokes (South West Herts Cycling Group)	-	Roger Bangs
Watford & Three Rivers Friends of the Earth	-	Graham Everett
Grand Union Community Energy	-	Sarah Burgess

Guest Speakers:

Jess Hodges from Three Rivers District Council
Sarah Burgess from Grand Union Canal Energy (GUCE).

Officers in Attendance:

Elen Dolder, Joanna Hewitson, Jess Hodges

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from:
Michael Hyde (Friends of Chorleywood Common), Cllr Valarie Coltman (Warford Rural Parish Council), David Montague (Rickmansworth Waterways Trust), Tony Booker (Colne CAN), Cllr Flora Garvey (Sarratt Parish Council).

2 NOTES

Minutes agreed.

Matters arising:

None.

3 A TALK BY JESS HODGES ON NATURAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND BIODIVERSITY

Please find slides from Jess's presentation attached below.

Cllr Reena Ranger: Asks the presentation is shared with Ward Cllrs.

Is there a plan to improve the habitats?

Jess – the Aquadrome plan does plan for some habitat improvement. We need to balance recreation and wildlife needs. The river in particular is of interest as a globally rare habitat. Quick wins include increasing deadwood. Action has already started. Badgers have been spotted on site too.

Angela Killick:

Did you say there were otters there?

We have no evidence they are there, however local Anglers have said they have seen them.

Cllr Cheryl Stungo:

Are there any Doormice in the area?

The research wasn't looking for them as this is not a favourable habitat for them, however they are likely to be in other habitats locally.

Cllr Jon Tankard:

What is a wet Woodland?

The name is determined by the species present. It's a pretty rare habitat and one of the more accessible ones. It is great for flood mitigation and plenty of space for improvement.

A Pipistrelle Bat eats an average of 3000 mosquitos per night.

4 A TALK BY SARAH BURGESS FROM GUCE

Please find slides from Sarah's presentation attached below.

Guce.org.uk

Sarah encourages people to come along to upcoming events to hear more about solar canopy carparks:

- 8th November: 8pm – 9pm at St. Oswald's Church in Croxley Green
- 19th November: 7pm – 8pm at the William Penn Room, RiverTech, Rickmansworth
- 21st November: 7pm-8pm ONLINE – [reserve your spot here.](#)
- 26th November: 7pm – 8pm at The Henderson Hub in Abbots Langley

Emma Dickins:

What does decarbonising cover?

Decarbonising – how do you cut fossil fuels from your energy supply? Things like swapping gas pumps to heat pumps, switching to electric car, or putting solar panels on your roof.

5 MEMBERS' INFORMATION EXCHANGE

Roger Bangs: In 2023 the Green Space action plan was consulted on and indicated there would be feedback on this but hasn't seen any. What is the status and is it publicly available.

There are concerns about what happened at Rickmansworth end of Ebury Way, improvements need to be made.

Access to the Aquadrome: Very pleased to see access has been improved where the bridge has been replaced. There are other pedestrian access points which need improving including from Uxbridge Road and the Sustrans route onto the canal path.

Joanna Hewitson. We will get a written response for you following the meeting. Erosion has been a significant issue at the Aquadrome and there will be works on it included in the Aquadrome management plan.

What's the current status of the LCWIP (Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan)?

The draft LCWIP went to public consultation in summer 2023 and a significant number of responses were received and have been reviewed by our partner Hertfordshire County Council. An update report on the consultation response was taken to committee in October 24 and we are now in the process of revising the document.

The LCWIP was presented at a recent public meeting:

<https://moderngov.threerivers.gov.uk/documents/g1895/Public%20reports%20pack%2015th-Oct-2024%2019.30%20General%20Public%20Services%20Community%20Safety%20Infrastructu%20re.pdf?T=10> (Agenda item 10)

<https://www.threerivers.gov.uk/news/cycling-walking-proposals-changed>

Officers will review the comments on the Rickmansworth end of the Ebury Way as part of our cycling/walking programme.

Officers will review the comments on footpath 65 as part of our cycling/walking programme. Officers expect the Hertfordshire County Council Ebury Way Greenspace Action Plan to have a Public Consultation in early 2025.

The new pedestrian bridge is 3m wide. This is a great improvement on the existing 1.5m bridge. Sustrans/DfT have not been able to contribute to the huge expense of the bridge and it therefore does not need to comply with the LTN1/20 guidelines, however we are mindful of making significant improvements for all our visitors and we are hope that this new widened bridge will provide a far safer area than the former bridge.

Officers are not aware of plans to improve the path on Sustrans route 6 along the towpath up to Frogmoor Lane. Officers will review the comments as part of our cycling/walking programme.

ClIr Tankard: ColneCAN is looking for volunteers to help with River mapping of pollution outfalls. Please visit the web site at <https://www.colnecan.org.uk/> , but most of all please volunteer by contacting Elaine Brindley, who can provide training, probably best if its organised in Groups to relieve the workload on Elaine. elaine.brindley@groundwork.org.uk

Next Tuesday there is a FREE screening of 6 Inches of Soil followed by a panel discussion, we encourage you all to come along and share the event with your networks.

<https://www.watersmeet.co.uk/6-inches-of-soil>

There has been a recent update on the Climate Emergency and Sustainability Action Plan and the report can be viewed here:

<https://moderngov.threerivers.gov.uk/mgChooseDocPack.aspx?ID=1886>

6 ANY OTHER BUSINESS (TO ALERT THE CHAIRMAN IN ADVANCE OF THE MEETING PLEASE)

None.

7 SPEAKERS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

Air quality has been requested a number of times and will look to get a talk on this for March next year.

What pollutants are ending up in our rivers? In particular from car tyres.

8 NEXT MEETING

The Forum noted that the date of the next meeting is Wednesday 19th March 2025.

ClIr Tankard thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

Associated documents/links related to meeting and action points:



Nature in the
Aquadrome summar

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1ALTFLcEqp8O27z6K-1ZeTYKoDZM5rYe-aNUissW_6rg/edit?invite=CLS3p74N&pli=1#slide=id.g2be7980bc17_0_0

CHAIRMAN