



Royal Holloway & Runnymede Consultative Group

MEETING MINUTES: Thursday, 18 April 2024 (meeting held online)

Attendees

Royal Holloway: Professor Tracy Bhamra, Provost and Pro-Vice Chancellor (Global) (Chair); Mike Berry, Director of Estates; Helen Groenendaal, Director of Student Life; Sarah Ixer-Pitfield, Deputy Director of Communications and Events; Nick Pearce, Head of External Communications

Royal Holloway Students' Union: Max Ross, Chief Operations Officer; Hannah Hockin, President

Councillors: Cllr Marisa Heath, Cllr Trevor Gates, Cllr Isabel Mullens

Environmental Health: Aileen Baker

Residents' Associations: Amanda Willis, Englefield Green Village Resident's Association; Willy Burgess, Egham Residents Association

Surrey Police: Inspector Ian Nash

Apologies:

Daniel Brading, Cllr Shannon Saise-Marshall, Cllr Abby King, Cllr Eliza Kettle, Cllr Nick Prescott, Cllr Andrea Berardi, Cllr Sam Jenkins, Cllr Siân Williams, Mark Adams, Jo Pinson, Minna Ruohonen, Tony Logan

Papers circulated ahead of the meeting:

- Royal Holloway & Runnymede Consultative Group agenda and minutes of meeting 17 November 2023
- Royal Holloway's Community Wellbeing Report

1. Welcome & introductions

2. Minutes and actions from the previous meeting

Nick Pearce and Mike Berry have successfully promoted the availability of University bus services to local residents through the Community Matters newsletter and University website.

Cllr Berardi was not present to update on his action regarding the invitation to a local greenhouse opening. The action will be carried over to the next meeting.

Helen Groenendaal will follow up internally on the sharing of volunteering services.

Max Ross highlighted that plans are in place to engage Councillors with consideration to Summer Ball, and Freshers Fair.

Cllr Gates confirmed that the pilot working group has taken place.

Willy Burgess has not contacted Helen Groenendaal to discuss reporting. The action will be carried over to the next meeting

3. Update on RH2030s strategy development (Professor Tracy Bhamra)

Tracy Bhamra updated that the University is currently developing a new strategy that will set out its ambitions for the future. Details for implementation will follow, with the strategy expected to launch in early Autumn. The University is exploring opportunities for the local community to engage with the strategy this Summer. The University will keep RHRCG members informed with updates when available.

Cllr Gates asked if the University will be engaging with the Overview and Scrutiny committee. Tracy Bhamra confirmed the University is already in contact with the committee and have provided written responses to questions received from the committee. Cllr Gates offered to clarify expectations with the committee.

4. Receive updates on areas of mutual interest

- **Surrey Police**

No incidents were reported during an end of term joint patrol conducted with environmental health officers. These patrols included monitor of all areas around the campus.

Police neighbourhood team will be providing patrols in the surrounding areas on 31 May 2024 ahead of the Summer Ball to provide neighbourhood reassurance ahead of the event.

Inspector Nash shared an antisocial behaviour map for the area from 1 January 2024. Data from Egham / Englefield Green showed 13 reports around nuisance behaviour: only two of which related to University students or student households.

Other reports included vehicle nuisance, rowdy behaviour, abandoned vehicles, littering and noise as primary complaint areas. Inspector Nash shared crime statistics for Runnymede. The total number of offences have fallen by 5.6%, compared with an increase of 1.7% for Surrey. Increases in child abuse and burglary offences have been noted.

Inspector Nash highlighted that one of his priorities as a Borough Commander is preventing anti-social behaviour and dealing with it robustly. In Runnymede, seven community protection warning notices were issued in 2023 within the whole community. Another priority for the Inspector is preventing violence against women and girls, and he is working with the council to help people feel safer in public areas , and to deal robustly with offences that may arise.

Cllr Mullens asked around Summer Ball patrols, and Inspector Nash confirmed a plan will be developed based on the projected level of demand.

Willy Burgess asked how many staff will be present. Inspector Nash said seven officers will be involved, as well as response team to supplement resource where needed. The inspector confirmed the event does not need to be policed, as it is well-managed.

- **RBC**

Cllr Mullens asked about leaflet drops ahead of the Summer Ball. Max Ross outlined that leaflets will be distributed in early May. across all residential areas around the University, in both Egham and Englefield Green. Historically, residents beyond this area have not been affected by similar events.

Cllr Mullens also expressed gratitude for the recent noise tests. Max Ross recognised the late notice, and outlined that clarification was needed to confirm who would attend to test, and whether appropriate weather conditions were in place.

The acoustic testing was performed in 10-minute bursts every 30 minutes. The tests were intended to set the maximum volume for the event, and the acoustics had to be taken to maximum level to set the threshold. Volume levels will not be broadcasted at the same level as the tests. Due to weather conditions, the tests were able to finish early by 10pm. Max Ross also highlighted that Summer Ball will now be finishing earlier at 4am, not 6am as in previous years.

Cllr Gates fed back on the positive pilot discussion group meeting, and notes have been circulated. Conversations focused on parking. Cllr Gates reflected that much of the parking stress, both in and out of the University, is due to the availability of sustainable travel arrangements. Cllr Gates is working with Cllr Marisa Heath on actions from the working group, including the walking/cycling A30 project, funding options for Egham Hill infrastructure improvement, and a parking study for Englefield Green.

Cllr Gates shared an update from Cllr Berardi around an e-bikes pilot. The project is currently paused, due to lack of funding. E-bikes were referenced in the context of parking discussions.

Mike Berry has had multiple meetings with Beryl Bikes, who are supportive. It has been identified that it's a significant challenge for councils to support ongoing running costs. Discussions with the council are ongoing.

Cllr Gates mentioned the Runnymede Business Boost. Cllr Berardi commented that it has been poorly promoted. Helen Groenendaal will investigate the University's role in the project and feedback.

ACTION: Helen Groenendaal to investigate Runnymede Business Boost and feedback.

- **Chamber of Commerce**

No updates.

- **EGVRA**

Amanda Willis expressed gratitude for the promotion of the bus service, and encouraged the University to share other relevant schemes.

Amanda Willis has not received strong uptake from student volunteers, and asked for support from the University in encouraging volunteering.

ACTION: Helen Groenendaal to share information of the EGVRA volunteering opportunities with Volunteering colleagues.

- **Egham Residents' Association**

Willy Burgess seconded Amanda Willis's positive feedback on the bus service.

Willy Burgess attended an event at the Students' Union with Tony Logan and others in February as an introduction. The meeting was successful, and Willy Burgess requested a follow up meeting with Max Ross. Max Ross clarified that his role focuses on service delivery.

Willy Burgess highlighted that the February AGM included music from two University pianists, and expressed positivity for the interaction with students.

ACTION: Max Ross to arrange an introductory meeting with Willy Burgess

- **RBC Environmental Health**

Aileen Baker updated that there have only been 18 noise complaints since June 2023, making it one of the best years on record. In addition, they have received four transient noise complaints.

Environmental Health have begun collating data around waste complaints, with only 42 received this year. One evening patrol was conducted in December, with no issues observed.

Tracy Bhamra reflected that the University Community Wellbeing team's work on communicating civic responsibilities to students may have had a positive impact.

- **Royal Holloway – Estates**

Mike Berry updated that the University has formalised the pause on the Rusham Park development due to challenging external circumstances around funding. Therefore, it is unlikely that we will proceed with the project on its current form, in its current timeline. The University will as normal practice, be engaging with the local community appropriately when plans are clearer.

The Chestnuts Building at the front of Chestnut Drive which is for the University's Department of Health Studies will be completed in June. The development will improve the look and feel of this area, as well as improving cycle and pedestrian accessibility through the campus adjacent to A30.

Piggery Gate building works have been completed inside the campus. The University is working towards completion with Surrey County Highways to make it usable by early Summer.

The University gardening team is undertaking work around the removal of overgrown and invasive rhododendron bushes to open up the understorey of Canada Copse, supporting a new approach to flora and fauna on the estate.

Cllr Gates asked if the cycle and pathway along the A30 is intended to be part of the LCWIP work scope on Egham Hill. Mike Berry confirmed that while the University is improving accessibility adjacent to the A30, this work is not part of the LCWIP scope.

- **Royal Holloway – Student Wellbeing and Volunteering (Report provided: Appendix A)**

Helen Groenendaal highlighted the new staff volunteering policy in the provided report. Lots of staff live locally and so there is a great opportunity to further expand volunteering in the local community. Community Sports Days have been established to enable local schools to use the University sports facilities.

A small number of local residents were present for the recent varsity game with the University of Surrey which showcased the importance of a holistic student experience.

The report now includes a summary of updates from the Students' Union, which gives an overview of positive impacts on and engagements with the local community. This follows a positive meeting between the Students' Union, the Egham Residents Association and Councillors to discuss transition support for students.

The University has received 78 noise complaints between 1 August 2023 – 10 March 2024. Of those 78, 33 were around noise nuisance, and we have seen increased reports around refuse and recycling. However, 78 is down from 191 complaints in the previous year, which is a positive trend.

Helen Groenendaal extended her thanks to the Police, Council and Students' Union for their continued support and engagement on community issues as the downward trend in data from all authorities demonstrates the importance of partnership working to tackle areas of concern

- **Royal Holloway Students' Union**

Max Ross observed many of his updates have already been discussed through other agenda items, though key updates included: contributions to the Community Wellbeing Report, Summer Ball (which will include a mailshot in the first week of May), the successful noise tests ahead of the event, community support for varsity, and the positivity of local residents and groups using Students' Union spaces.

Willy Burgess asked about the leaflet distribution, and asked to receive a copy.

Hannah Hockin confirmed she will provide further information on Summer Ball when available.

5. AOB

Tracy Bhamra acknowledged that the University has become aware of activities from the We Need To Talk About Royal Holloway group. The University has declined a recent invitation, as other mechanisms are in place for Royal Holloway's community engagement and liaison with local residents, including this Consultative Group.

Tracy Bhamra asked RHRCG attendees to share opportunities to engage with their stakeholders, including the [Community Call-in session](#). The next one is on 4 June and is an opportunity for individual residents to contact the University to discuss key matters. For further details on how to register, please visit <https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/about-us/more/local-community/events/community-call-in-session-tuesday-4-june/>

6. **Date of next meeting, in person at Royal Holloway:** 18th June, 5:30pm.

ACTION POINTS

	Action	Owner
1	Cllr Berardi to share information about an Englefield Green greenhouse sponsored by Royal Holloway for Helen Groenendaal to share the invitation with student gardening groups.	Cllr Berardi
2	Royal Holloway to explore ways of sharing regular updates from Royal Holloway volunteering services for EGVRA.	Amanda Willis, Helen Groenendaal
3	Willy Burgess to contact Helen Groenendaal outside of this meeting to confirm reporting.	Willy Burgess
4	Helen Groenendaal to investigate Runnymede Business Boost with University colleagues and feedback to RHRCG.	Helen Groenendaal
5	Helen Groenendaal to share information with Volunteering colleagues.	Helen Groenendaal
6	Willy Burgess and Max Ross to arrange an introductory meeting.	Willy Burgess & Max Ross
7	Max Ross to share an electronic Summer Ball leaflet to Willy Burgess and Amanda Willis to share within their networks.	Max Ross
8	Minna Ruohonen to share information about Community Call In sessions and Community Matters with Willy Burgess and Amanda Willis.	Minna Ruohonen