



## Royal Holloway & Runnymede Consultative Group

### MINUTES

Tuesday 14 June 2022  
Meeting held at Royal Holloway

**Royal Holloway:** Dr David Ashton (CHAIR/ Deputy Principal (Operations), Mike Berry (Director of Estates), Marie Ennis (Chief Marketing Officer), Helen Groenendaal (Head of Wellbeing, Academic Services), Sarah Ixer-Pitfield (Head of Public Relations and Media).

**Royal Holloway Students' Union:** Max Ross (Chief Executive Officer)

**Councillors:** Cllr Abby King, Cllr Andrea Berardi

**Mayor of Runnymede:** Cllr Margaret Harnden

**Environmental Health:** Aileen Baker

**Residents' Associations:** Chris Fisher (ERA), Trevor Gates (EGVRA)

**Surrey Police:** Inspector James Wyatt

#### **APOLOGIES:**

Chamber of Commerce: Mark Adams

Cllr Isabel Mullens

Cllr Sian Williams

Cllr Sam Jenkins

Cllr Nick Prescott

Cllr Marisa Heath

Cllr Nigel King

Christine Welsh, EGVRA

Stephen Hodgkinson, Runnymede Neighbourhood Watch

#### **1. Welcome & introductions**

Introductions were made and the group welcomed Cllr Abby King, Cllr Andrea Berardi, Cllr Margaret Harnden and Trevor Gates of EGVRA to the meeting.

#### **2. Minutes and actions from the previous meeting**

It was AGREED that the minutes of the last meeting on 1 March 2022, were a true and accurate record.

The actions for Cllr Heath to send further details of the Surrey climate change strategy and the RBC climate change strategy will be carried over to the next meeting. Royal Holloway will be publishing its environmental sustainability strategy this summer. The university is

also working to develop local cycling and walking groups and working with Surrey County Council on a lift share scheme. More information will follow at future meetings.

Chris Fisher raised that he was unable to carry out his action as he could not take the steps required without identifying the complainant. Helen Groenendaal confirmed that where complaints to the university were received or managed as a Freedom of Information (FOI) request, the complainant will now receive closure emails – as is already the case with complaints received by the community team. Questions raised by this complainant will continue to be managed and responded to by the FOI team.

All other actions were completed.

It was confirmed by Insp Wyatt that partnership meetings with Environmental Health and the university will not be minuted beyond Surrey Police internal recoding of key actions to be taken.

In relation to the action on garden maintenance, it was confirmed that the responsibility for maintaining gardens in privately rented accommodation lies with the landlord. Max Ross will reflect on whether guidance for students on maintaining gardens would be helpful. If so, this will be taken forward.

### 3. Updates on areas of mutual interest

- **RBC:**

Cllr Berardi raised concerns that residents are confused about how to report anti-social behaviour and asked about the timeliness of response to any reports that potentially relate to students. Helen Groenendaal outlined the process for reporting and response times. The university aims to respond within approximately one week but noting this can take longer if an investigation is required and the outcomes require further conduct procedures. Students will always be contacted immediately after a complaint is raised and there will be prompt engagement from the university with its community partners to collate information. If a conduct investigation is required this can take a further week; and within the student conduct processes there are requirements about notice to convene a hearing (3 days in term time; 7 days outside of term time) and a subsequent appeal opportunity (15 working days) before an outcome is formally confirmed. These processes will therefore extend the period before a completion update can be shared with the complainant.

A Microsoft reporting form will be introduced to make reporting easier for residents at the start of the new term in September.

**ACTION:** David Ashton agreed to investigate the viability of the ReportAble app and will update the group at the next meeting.

Cllr Berardi asked for further information about the nature of the MOU between Royal Holloway and Runnymede Borough Council. The Cllr will request a copy of the MOU from RBC.

Cllr Berardi asked if the Royal Holloway student bus service is available for the general public to use. It is confirmed that it is a service that the university provides for its students and while it cannot be promoted to the general public, members of the public would not be refused access to the bus where capacity allows.

Cllr Berardi raised concerns about the Rusham Park development, including traffic, flooding and location close to an area of biodiversity. He also raised concerns that he believed that there did not appear to be either a green and blue infrastructure statement included in the application. Mike Berry confirmed that all required documentation was included in the planning application which is available via Runnymede Borough Council.

Cllr Berardi wished to discuss details of a local student in his ward. It was agreed that he and HG would discuss this individual case outside of the meeting.

Cllr King raised the issue of drink spiking. Max Ross outlined the Student Union's campaigns and communications around this, outlining the criminality of this act. The SU works with the PCC, Police and university's wellbeing team and provides anti spiking caps/tops and drink spiking test kits. Students are encouraged to report the crime and can also do this on Police social media.

Cllr King asked if support is provided to students regarding unscrupulous private landlords. Max Ross confirmed that there is a trained advisor in housing within the Student Support Centre. Aileen Baker advised that Environmental Health at the local council can also advise on housing matters.

Chris Fisher responded to the report provided by the Egham Town councillors (Appendix A). In referring to an incident in Nightingale Shott in March 2022, Chris Fisher asked if the incident has been formally closed. Insp Wyatt confirmed the incident in question was responded to by two officers and there has not been a reoccurrence at the property. Helen Groenendaal confirmed the whole of the household involved in the incident were subject to a conduct process and sanctions have been put in place. **ACTION:** Aileen Baker to provide information on the number of HMOs in Nightingale Shott to Cllr Harnden.

In connection to the Egham Town Team's survey around how students feel about Egham, Chris Fisher raised concerns that some residents believe there is a feeling that people are expected to put up with noise in a student town. David Ashton confirmed that the university does not support this. Aileen Baker stated that year on year noise complaints have seen a significant decrease from 326 in 2008/09 to 45 in 2022/23. Helen Groenendaal confirmed that the university is supportive of the Egham Town Team, want to work with them and have offered to meet with the team along with SU representation. Cllr King reinforced the need to be mindful that not all anti-social behaviour is the fault of students. Cllr Berardi said that student volunteers have been very helpful in demonstrating the positive impact students can have locally. Max Ross, in referring to a meeting with Ben Spencer MP in 2021, said that the vast majority of students understand they have a part to play as part of the community.

- **Chamber of Commerce:**

A report is provided in Appendix B.

- **EGVRA:**

Trevor Gates welcomed the Egham Town Team's survey of students and asked if there had historically been a full survey of the local community. It was confirmed there had not been a full survey. He also said some residents don't feel comfortable reporting incidents and so some take longer than others to come forward. Helen Groenendaal confirmed that the university records all incidents separately and does record past incidents reported to them.

Trevor Gates drew attention to the Englefield Green Village Fair on 18 June 2022. Royal Holloway is a regular sponsor of the fair.

The Englefield Green Neighbourhood Plan has been submitted to RBC for consideration.

**ACTION:** Trevor Gates to consider the timing of the next stage of the consultation on the neighbourhood plan in order that students and staff who live in the area can participate. If the survey is held during term time the university will be able to promote it to students and staff. The new academic year starts from 19 September 2022.

- **Egham Residents' Association:**

No further updates from ERA.

- **RBC Environmental Health:**

Aileen Baker outlined that there had only been 45 complaints in the last academic year with only one resulting in further action of noise abatement. Environmental Health had also been involved in community work with the university, including litter picking.

- **Surrey Police:**

Insp Wyatt read through Surrey Police crime statistics for the local area, he said that anti-social behaviour statistics were promising in reporting year to date.

In terms of the MOU and partnership working with Royal Holloway and Environmental Health, the data captured 23 verbal warnings, 4 ASB letters to residents, one occasion of a repeated/second ASB letter served by Surrey Police. The partnership is working towards the new term and looking at how to work with residents in local roads to help neighbourhood relationships. Aileen Baker confirmed that there had not been the need for night-time patrols in the last academic year as incidents of ASB had remained low.

Insp Wyatt highlighted the anonymous StreetSafe reporting tool to report locations where people feel unsafe. There has been work with a variety of partners to improve these areas.

With regards to drinks spiking, Insp Wyatt said the Police have strict procedures around the reporting of these incidents and encouraged people to report, stating this can also be captured in the days afterwards. There are a number of ways to report including 999, 101 and social media.

- **Royal Holloway – Estates:**

Mike Berry updated that demolition works at Rusham Park conclude in September 2022. Redevelopment activity will provisionally commence in late Spring 2023. There is a proposal for the Chestnuts Building to be refurbished. Anti-motorcycle barriers will be installed at the bottom of the pedestrian access to Spring Rise Gate. Mike Berry reinforced the importance of the planning process in relation to Rusham Park and the need for people to engage with the process.

- **Royal Holloway – Student Wellbeing and Volunteering:**

A report is provided in Appendix C. Helen Groenendaal referenced the new mobile friendly Microsoft reporting form which will make reporting more accessible from September. She noted that the report outlines that repeat offending of students is low – 88% have only had one or two complaints and also that 72% of complainants have made only one report this year. She pointed to the Student Volunteering report which includes activity to help support Ukrainian refugees.

- **Royal Holloway Students’ Union:**

Max Ross thanked the community for the tolerance of the Summer Celebrations, including the Jubilee celebration event where there were over 1,000 free tickets for the local community.

Acoustic consultants monitored sound from the campus, this will be used to inform future events. There were only three complaints with regards to the Summer Ball.

There are works taking place to the rear of The Packhorse to help reduce noise and there are also works taking place at Medicine.

#### 4. **A.O.B.**

Cllr Harnden raised her attendance recently on campus to award students for volunteering and she was impressed with their achievements.

Trevor Gates said he welcomed the good behaviour of students on the morning after the Summer Ball.

Sarah Ixer-Pitfield outlined the following:

- 1-4 September 2022, Royal Holloway is hosting the UK Corporate Games and further information will be provided to residents by the organisers
- 7 September 2022, Surrey Fire and Rescue will be running an exercise on campus which will take place around Founder’s Building. There will be appliances on campus but this nothing for residents to be concerned about.

**The next local community call-in session will take place on 18 October 2022.**

Virtual meetings have proved to be better attended and all future forum meetings will take place via MS Teams. **The next Royal Holloway and Runnymede Consultative forum meeting will take place on 15 November 2022 via MS Teams.**

#### **ACTIONS LIST**

	<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>
1	Cllr Heath to send further details of the Surrey climate change strategy to the group.	Cllr Marisa Heath (action carried over)
2	Cllr Heath to share the RBC climate change strategy.	Cllr Marisa Heath (action carried over)

3	David Ashton to investigate the viability of the ReportAble app and update the group at the next meeting.	David Ashton
4	Aileen Baker to provide information on the number of HMOs in Nightingale Shott to Cllr Harnden.	Aileen Baker
5	Trevor Gates to pass on details of the Englefield Green Neighbourhood Plan to the university to enable students and staff to comment once term starts from 19 September 2022.	Trevor Gates (EGVRA)

## Appendix A

### Egham Town Councillors Report

#### Royal Holloway and Runnymede Consultative Group Meeting – 14 June 2022

Unfortunately none of the Egham Town Councillors are able to attend the Royal Holloway and Runnymede Consultative Group meeting on 14 June due to holiday and Council Meetings.

Our main feedback to the meeting is

**Transient noise** continues to be an issue, and residents are encouraged to report it as laid out in the November ASB leaflet produced by ERA.

**Refuse** is also an issue. Particularly when student residents place bags of excess rubbish on the ground beside their bins because these will not be collected and inevitably the bags split and the contents get spread out. We are looking at possible solutions to this – from encouraging more recycling to providing additional bins. As well as reminding students not to leave the bins on the pavements.

These refuse problems are not unique to the student population, and we are aware that there is not a “one size fits all” solution eg for some students living in flats lockable bins would prevent other people from “fly tipping” in their bins.

The police briefed Councillors and residents on the action taken by them following the **ASB** incident in March in Nightingale Shot. This sharing of information was very welcome and helped to close the matter as well as build confidence in the Police response to ASB.

Egham Town Councillors, and the Egham Town Team, are keen to build **better relationships** between Residents and students. A member of the Egham Town Team has started an initiative for this purpose. Feedback so far has proposed increased volunteering in Egham eg Egham Library – where the Royal Holloway Chess club really inspired local children by joining in with their chess club. Other ideas include sharing of local information, and Councillors introducing themselves to students living in Egham streets – since we represent them too.

## Appendix B

### Royal Holloway and Runnymede Consultative Group meeting - Tuesday 14 June 2022

#### Notes from Egham Chamber of Commerce

We are working on a number of activities that we hope will encourage footfall in the town and create a vibrant and viable town centre. There are a number of events coming up including:

Saturday 25 June - Magna Carta Day

Saturday 9 July - Vegan market

Saturday 30 July - Classic vehicle event

Details of these events will be circulated via the usual channels including social media.

If you would like a stall at the Magna Carta Day event please email [eghamchamber@hotmail.com](mailto:eghamchamber@hotmail.com)

This Saturday (18 June) sees the return of the Englefield Green Village Fair, we are proud to be sponsoring the best stall awards.

Discussions continue with other potential market operators including Farmers Market, an antiques/retro fair and a French market. Hopefully, event dates to be announced in due course. It is worth mentioning that all operators appreciate the benefit of holding events in Egham and that Royal Holloway is a key factor in their decision making.

We are also....

- Empty shops - encourage businesses to set up in town and look at initiatives to make use of empty shop windows in the meantime.
- Egham Lit - working with Egham Lit to host events including a comedy evening on 23 July.
- Supporting local businesses via social media platforms.
- Holding regular business forums for local businesses, these are open to businesses across Egham, Englefield Green, Thorpe and Virginia Water.
- Working with stakeholders to develop a series of "festivals". The Egham Literary Festival was launched successfully in March, the Egham Festival of Music is on now and we are looking at an arts & crafts festival in late Summer/early Autumn and a film festival in late Autumn/early Winter. We have contacted groups and societies at Royal Holloway to invite them to participate.
- Looking forward to the completion of the Magna Square development in Egham. We look forward to welcoming new businesses, including the new cinema, to town soon.
- Working with Business Runnymede to promote local businesses, plans are being developed for the introduction of annual business awards.

## **Appendix C**

**Royal Holloway & Runnymede Consultative Group, 14 June 2022**

Wellbeing Department: Community update

## NEWS FOR THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

The summer Community Matters newsletter is [available online here](#) and local residents can sign up to receive this directly by [emailing the team](#) to give their consent to be added to the mailing list. The university continues to provide news updates of interest to the local community throughout the year and we would encourage residents to keep updated on [these news items here](#). Latest news articles include:

- Celebration of National Volunteers Week with the annual Volunteering Awards
- The Principal's CBE award in the Queen's Jubilee Birthday Honours list.
- Santander Universities financial support for students.
- The Big Read project for September 2022.
- Appointment of a new Principal, Professor Julie Sanders.
- Planting of trees on campus as part of the Queen's Green Canopy project.

The summer term local resident call-in session was held on Tuesday 17 May, and we received two requests from residents for calls; one in relation to Rusham Park (call made by the Director of Estates) and one from a newly elected Borough Councillor to receive an overview of the university's processes in relation to resounding to community concerns (call made by the Head of Wellbeing).

The Students' Union held a successful community event (family fun day) within Founder's building on Friday 3 June to celebrate the Queens' Platinum Jubilee. This featured children's entertainers, face painting, fairground rides, food & drink stalls and a Queen tribute act (Queen Will Rock You) performing in Founder's Quad. Eight hundred free tickets were allocated to the local community to say thank you for your support throughout the years.

## COMMUNITY UPDATES

As we move towards the end of the 2021 / 2022 academic year the data on complaints is not expected to change significantly before the end of the reporting year. Compared to the same reporting period in 2020 / 2021 complaints in total are 34% down this year, with a 40% reduction in Egham complaints and a 28% reduction in Englefield Green complaints. The full breakdown by category is included later in this report. Noise nuisance remains the areas of most concern with a total of 109 incidents reported to the university since 1 August 2021 (250 in the same reporting period last year). In response to discussion at the last meeting we have shared some anonymised feedback from residents this academic year that has been received following closure emails and calls. We have continued to be able to respond with more in-person engagement with student households as Covid restrictions have been broadly removed our team of four Community Wellbeing Advisers have been able to make more visits to student households as part of the follow up to any concerns raised with us. Planning is underway to identify the houses that will be targeted as part of the round of welcome visits in September 2022. As always priority will be made to houses where there have been reported issues in this academic year or where there are sensitivities.

At this point in the year the team also commence work on the refresh of our print and digital collateral for students living in the local area to ensure it is current and relevant and for us to reflect on any new trends or issues that need to be picked up in the 2022 / 2023 Be a Good Neighbour campaign. We still hope to be able to produce short videos for use on social media with input from community partners to support on consistent joint messaging. We have listed to feedback about the BAGN leaflet and aim to produce a shorter flyer with key information and links into more electronic content with the hope that the most important messages will be reflected even more clearly.

Partnership working with teams from the Council and Police continues to be a priority for the university and Students' Union and informal partnership review meetings on Teams are held at least once a month; the most recent being held on 9 June. These are an important contact point for all teams to discuss issues raised with them, to share information and data, identify trends and any proactive or reactive engagement needed. Ahead of the new year we hope to have completed the

jointly signed letter for students which demonstrates our expectations, our joint working and the possible sanctions that are available for those who don't conduct themselves in an appropriate way whilst living locally.

In the last report we referenced the planned visit to an area of Egham where there had been an unusually high number of reports related to refuse and recycling and anti-social behaviour. On 22 March representatives from RBC Environmental Health, Runnymede Safer Neighbourhood team, Community Wellbeing and Cllr Sian Williams attended the area and spent some time engaging with residents, answering questions, and collecting litter from the area. Our thanks to Aileen Baker for organising this in response to a query from Cllr Williams and for everyone who supported this.



### **REPORTED INCIDENTS & STUDENT CONDUCT**

During the reporting period 1 August 2021 to 6 June 2022 Royal Holloway have received 174 complaints (+ 59 from the March report) about 165 alleged incidents (+ 58 from the March report). Of these 165 incidents 68 were reported in Egham and 97 were reported in Englefield Green. *In the same period in 2021 / 22 there had been 250 complaints made; 114 in Egham and 136 in Englefield Green.* The categories of the reported incidents are:

Category	Egham	Englefield Green	21/ 22 TOTAL
Noise nuisance	38	71	109
Refuse & recycling	12	10	22
Transient noise	7	3	10
Parking or vehicle use	5	6	11
Anti-social behaviour	2	5	6
Trolleys	1	0	1
Notification of an event	1	1	2
Substance use	2	0	3
Safety related	0	1	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>165</b>
<i>For comparison – 2020 / 2021 data (August 2020 – June 2021)</i>			
<i>01-Aug-20 to 06-Jun-21</i>	<i>114</i>	<i>136</i>	<i>250</i>
<i>Year on year change</i>	<i>- 46</i>	<i>- 39</i>	<i>- 85</i>
<i>Percentage change</i>	<i>- 40%</i>	<i>- 28%</i>	<i>- 34 %</i>

The number of properties involved in these incidents is 97 individual houses or locations (for example a road where there has been a parking issue or transient noise). Of these:

- 69 have been reported once. 71 %
- 17 have been reported twice. 17.5 %
- 2 have been reported three times. 2 %
- 4 have been reported four times. 4 %
- 2 have been reported five times. 2 %
- 1 has been reported seven times. 1 %
- 2 have been reported eight times. 2 %

The number of complainants is for the incidents reported is 93. Of these:

- 67 complainants have contacted us once. 72 %
- 12 complainants have contacted us twice. 13 %
- 6 complainants have contacted us three times. 6.5 %
- 3 complainants have contacted us four times. 3.25%
- 2 complainants have contacted us five times 2%
- 1 complainant has contacted us seven times 1 %
- 1 complainant has contacted us twelve times. 1 %
- 1 complainant has contacted us fourteen times 1 %
- *In addition 8 issues have been reported to us by Police / Council with no complainant contact with us.*

In following up these reports the university has resolved issues in a variety of ways\* including:

- Content in five all-student emails.
- Dealt with ten households through our student conduct process.
- Made twenty-three visits to households in response (not including the welcome visits)
- Made direct contact with household members by email, letter, or phone on 105 occasions
- Held eighteen meetings with households in person or on Teams.
- Recorded nine incidents where no person or house could be identified.
- Referred eight incidents to Police or the Council for follow up.

\* Some issues may be followed up in more than one way (e.g., a visit & a letter)

From our regular partnership meetings and information sharing discussions we are aware that since the start of term Environmental Health have recorded the following:

Category	Number of reports
Noise – People (Rowdy Behaviour)	16
Noise – Party	15
Noise - Music	11
Noise - Music & Drums	1

Noise - Transient	1
Noise – In the Street	1
<b>TOTAL REPORTS</b>	<b>45</b>