

Minutes of Steering Committee No 65, Thursday 14th May 2026,

The Village Centre, 7.30pm to 9.00pm

Present: Mike Kelly (Chair), Alan Sloan, Melanie Frobisher, Albert Jamieson

- 1) **Apologies for Absence;** Debbie Garland , Terry Barnett, Fred West
- 2) **Approval of Minutes of Meeting No 64;** Approved
- 3) **Declaration of personal interest in topics to be discussed;** None.
- 4) **Removal of Committee Member;** It was decided unanimously that regretfully Debbie Garland be removed from the Committee as she had not attended for the past four meetings.
- 5) **Accounts:** A report on financial activities was presented to the Committee and approved. There were no administration expenses for running the Committee this month. An end cost prediction is being maintained on the Central Area Refurbishment Project. Payments are now up to date for all suppliers including the main contractor Kear (following interim account negotiations and agreement). We now know that there is sufficient funds left from the project grant to undertake much of the remaining wish list.
- 6) **Membership, Publicity, Website and Communications:** See attached report from Melanie. Membership of the various forms of communication are increasing significantly following the Village Square project, and our call for volunteers to look after the Village Square (watering, sweeping etc) continues to yield a very good response. The high viz gilets with 'Friends of the Village Square' on the back are now in the Village Shop for Volunteers to use.

We need to consider whether to have a stall at the Village Fair.

Articles for the next news letter need to be produced (Mike, Alan, Albert)

- 7) **Parish Council:** See attached report from Alan. Now that the Greek Orthodox Church has apparently moved out of the building next to St Judes Church, we are investigating whether this would be a suitable location for the Parish Council.
- 8) **Projects arising from the Neighbourhood Plan**

Parking,

- a) **Historic Core Residents Permit Area:** The public consultation for the scheme has slipped out from Spring to Autumn. Cllr Heath reports SCC Highways have completed the design but a backlog in the legal department is the cause of the delay. Once the details are received, the

PPP Group plan to do a pre-consultation promotion to residents. **RHUL Meetings:** Slow progress, broad SMART objectives for the ToR Parking component have been proposed by us; our undertakings for RHUL's CP-14 pilot are complete with an awareness notice due in the next newsletter. **RBC Planning & SCC Highways PBSA Systematic Failures:** Mike's request from last October to meet the RBC Head of Planning has been ignored and a further draft letter, now also including SCC Highways is with Cllr Heath to push for a joint meeting.

- b) **Speed limits, LCWIP:** See attached report from Alan
- c) **Transport Hub:** See attached report from Mike
- d) **Trees and Hedges Project:** See attached report from Mike

- 9) **Forest Estate gardening project: Not discussed again but-**The 'Estate Improvement Policy' authored by RBC should feature in our next meeting to see if anything useful for the Forest Estate could come from it. A copy of the policy is attached.

10) **Planning**

Nothing contentious

11) **AGM**

It was decided to hold the AGM as an in person meeting on the 18th June 2026 at 6.30pm directly before the next monthly meeting. Alan to investigate whether we can use the main hall at the Village Centre and whether invitees can use the main entrance.

12) **AOB.**

Next Meeting- Thursday 18th June 2026 at 7.30 p.m. at the Village Centre following the AGM.

MFK report on Central Area and Trees project for meeting no 65

Central Area

Substantially complete. Remaining items; Electrics, bollards, benches, planters and the addition of a Defib unit and possibly a Book Exchange.

We have settled Bill Kears account and paid in advance for the electric cable installation and two curved benches to fit round the silver birch at the Victoria Street end of the Central Area.

We have placed an order for the two benches (delivery in 2 weeks time) and have received the defib post. Bollards are being supplied and installed by Bill Kear.

We have proposed that these works are carried out during w/c 6th June, when everything will be available and the work carried out in one hit. Unfortunately and despite constant chasing, Bill Kear has yet to respond with a date to do the work and have demanded a remobilisation fee to come back. Negotiations are in progress.

We may now find that the overall expenditure for the work exceeds the grants we have currently received for this work. However, we have yet to commit reserved money against the installation of the electric meter, consumer box and sockets. Once Bill Kear have completed their work and been paid we will therefore still be within the grant amount- but it will mean that we have insufficient reserves to complete the electrics without either dipping into our administration fund or receiving grant YFCSCP2/1385. (We still have no news on this grant).

Volunteers are looking after watering, planting and weeding etc. under the group name 'Friends of the Central Area'. Six people have responded and are successfully watering the hedge and trees. Water is drawn from a tap at the back of the Holly Tree pub, which the landlord has generously allowed us to use. We applied to Affinity Water to use one of their hydrants near the site, but it was too expensive and not conveniently placed.

Trees Project

Our application for funds for this project has been approved (Approx £20,000). However it will only be transferred to us once we have agreed with RBC where we can plant and received their permission to do so.

We had a meeting with Justin Saunders and two tree officers on the 6th May and we walked the full length and breadth of Englefield Green noting down potential sites. Justin has promised to record all these positions on a map and provide sufficient documentation (utility routes etc) to allow a

decision to be made as to whether each location for an individual tree is feasible.

Once these positions are agreed we are cautiously optimistic that this will result in us being given permission to proceed. Mike Kelly 20/5/26

Update for EGVNF Steering Committee meeting on 21 May 2026

1. Speed limits:

Priest Hill - Proposed 40 mph Speed Limit - No change since last month

Statutory consultation remains outstanding.

Following earlier e-mails to Marisa Heath about the stretch of St Jude's Road between Bishopsgate Gate Road and Castle Hill Road, which is also currently National Speed limit and which forms part of the Priest Hill consultation, Marisa has now heard from Highways colleagues that whilst it is eminently sensible to reduce that section of road to 30mph she has been advised that 30mph signage of its own would be insufficient and that streetlights together with some form of speed reduction measures would be required which would require funding. I have suggested that as the road is quite wide at the Castle Hill Road end the introduction of a pinch point together with white gates displaying 30 mph signs could be a solution. Marisa has agreed to pursue including ascertaining the estimated cost.

Englefield Green – 20mph scheme - No change since last month

The formal consultation process closed on 18 March 2026. Initial indications are a 50/50 split. Detailed analysis will now take place.

2. Local Cycling, Walking and Infrastructure Plans (LCWIP) - No change since last month

The feasibility stage report for Runnymede LCWIP routes including the Egham to Virginia Water via A30 cycle corridor has been completed and was presented to elected members on 2 April. Apparently, members were asked not to share with local interested groups. Public consultation is now scheduled to take place in autumn 2026. I asked whether the Forum could see a copy of what was presented to elected members and Marisa agreed to investigate.

3. Progress towards establishing a Parish Council in Englefield Green

It is proposed that the new parish council will operate from the financial year 2027/28 which will commence on 1 April 2027. Elections for councillors on the new parish council will not take place until May 2027.

An Implementation Steering Group has now been formed consisting of the following RBC staff: Head of Legal, Head of Finance, Head of Allotments and Head of Electoral Services. The first full meeting of the Group is scheduled for 25 June. I will provide a further update as and when information becomes available.

4. Barbara Clark House - No change since last month

At the Councillors' Surgery meeting on 11 April it was reported that negotiations with a developer are still on-going. Unfortunately, the site is no longer reserved for social housing and therefore could be used for student accommodation! We are patiently awaiting further news.

5. Greenacre site - No change since last month

Despite the dilapidated hoarding it is understood that the developer is proceeding with the build. The condition and appearance of the hoarding appears to be contrary to the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Construction (Design & Management) Regulations 2015 (CDM Regulations). Poor quality hoarding on a building site poses significant safety, legal, and reputational risks. Concerns were also expressed by attendees at the Councillors' Surgery meeting about nearby roads being obstructed to allow cement lorries in, due to

there being a lack of space on site to mix cement, and with there being such a large hole in the ground and poor quality hoarding that children could easily access the site and cause themselves injury. Cllr Trevor Gates agreed to investigate and reported that an unknown resident had already raised the use with RBC who are monitoring the situation.

6. Former Birchlands Care Home - No change since last month

At the April Councillors' Surgery meeting Marisa confirmed that the project is moving forward and that a new planning application is due to be submitted within the next 3-4 months. Construction is anticipated to commence in 2027.

7. HMO's – 58 Victoria Street

The recent planning alert in respect of 58 Victoria Street, Englefield Green (RU.26/0349) is another example of a family home being turned into a six bedroom HMO which could, potentially, have been avoided had an Article 4 direction been in place.

I submitted a Letter of representation (LOR) and, as suggested at the Councillors' Surgery meeting, I also wrote to Jack Rankin MP requesting that he lobby RBC to properly resource the work necessary to achieve an Article 4 Direction in Englefield Green. I subsequently received a hard copy response enclosing a letter that Jack Rankin has sent to a number of residents recently which includes HMO's (**copy attached**). It is encouraging that our MP understands the important issues of Parking, Housing, Noise and Anti-Social Behaviour. Hopefully this will enable progress to be made on all these topics.

In respect of RU.26/0349 (58 Victoria Street), on 28 April RBC issued a decision notice which **REFUSED** to issue a Certificate of Lawfulness of proposed use or development for the following reason(s):

1. The proposal does not comply with all the parts of Schedule 2, Part 1, Class B and Part 3, Class L of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended). The proposed gable end side window fails to comply with Class B.1(c)(i) and (ii) as it is not obscurely glazed and non-opening below 1.7m, and includes independent cooking and living facilities in every room, which would result in the creation of self-contained residential units rather than a single House in Multiple Occupation (Use Class C4).

Although this will be a setback for the owner no doubt the necessary changes will be made to the drawings and a fresh application submitted in due course.

Alan Sloan

20 May 2026

Report on Membership & Marketing for Meeting On 21st May 2026

Membership: 13 x new registered members. We now have 413 registered members (Note: We lost 31 members whose emails bounced back (mostly from the Trees & Hedges survey). I managed to check about 6 others and correct them.

Facebook - 100 followers (increase of 7)

Nextdoor - 15 members (increase of 1) Social Media Posts: Since April Meeting None

Next Posts:

Thank you to Friends of the Square volunteers

Update Parish Council?

Permit Scheme/Parking review?

Article 4?

Speed Limit Consultation Results?

Tree Planting initiative?

Chamber of Commerce vacancy? (Need 'job description' for the website)

Updates: Minutes 64 - content added Parking Review/Permit Scheme - page needs building in the background Membership E-Newsletter - There was no content for the April/May Newsletter so see list above for possible content for May/June edition, to be discussed

Other - The Square is now on Google Maps - Hi-Viz for Square volunteers ordered and arrived

Melanie Frobisher 21 April 2026