



Sudbury Town Neighbourhood Forum

Inaugural Meeting on 27th January 2025

At Sudbury Baptist Church Hall, 2 District Road, Wembley HA0 2LD

Time: 7.30pm

Present: 22 members and general public

Apologies: John Carroll, Cllr Teo Benea

1	Welcome: Christine Harvey (CH) welcome everyone and thanked them for coming out on such a cold and wet evening.
2	<p>Introduction: CH talked in general term about the role of the Forum, highlighting that it had been set up under the Localism Act to enable local communities to have a say in how their area developed. A key feature is that the Council is obliged to consult with the Forum over any proposed developments in the area.</p> <p>She went on to say that we needed to engage with all parts of our diverse neighbourhood and that the Forum would only be effective if residents came forward to support the work. But it was a great opportunity to influence developments for the benefit of current residents and future generations</p>
3	Presentation: Satvinder Riyat (SR) then giving more details referring to the presentation which was screened on the wall. SR advised that the presentation will be circulated with the next Newsletter).
3.1	SR referred to the Localism Act of 2011 that had provided the legal framework for local communities to have a bigger say in developments in their area, by setting up Neighbourhood Forums and Neighbourhood Plans.
3.2	The original Sudbury Neighbourhood Forum was one of the first in London and oversaw the development of a Neighbourhood Plan that was approved by a local referendum in 2015 and was incorporated into the Brent Local Plan. The document included a map of the area covered by the Plan.
3.3	The Forum has the power to define the policies and strategies embodied in its Plan, and the Council is required to pay attention to these issues when agreeing planning applications.
3.4	It is important for the Forum to represent all parts of the local community and to involve residents and employees of local business in the discussions and activities. It was noted that the Forum was not expected to have any paid roles, so it depended on residents and employees volunteering their skills and time. A key area would be communications, including through the website.
3.5	The Forum will use a variety of approaches including public meetings, workshops and surveys

3.6	Challenges:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - is no public funding allocated directly to the Forum. Will need to apply for any grants available. - Our community is very diverse, and it would help our engagement if volunteers could translate key documents - The best engagement is face to face, so we need to find members who will engage their neighbours and friends.
3.7	Next Steps: AGM 24th Feb 2025 at Sudbury Baptist Church <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Election of 4 Officers – Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer. Details of these roles can be found on the website - Agreement of Constitution accessible via the website and key policies. Noted that the Constitution has already been approved by the Council. - Policies are Privacy (Data Protection) and Volunteer.
3.8	The role of Officers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To participate in constructive debates - To make decisions that reflect the needs and views of the community - To be a champion for the Forum and to engage with other local groups, ward councillors, MPs and the Council.
3.9	Application Process for Committee Posts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SR described the Application Process and emphasised that papers to be submitted by the 12th Feb to info@thestn.forum or by post or in person to TTLG 8A Watford Road, Wembley HA0 2LD. The details will also be circulated in the next newsletter - Only those who have indicated they would like to be Voting Members are eligible to stand for a Committee role or to vote in the election.
3.10	Timeline: The timeline for actions was shared with the meeting.
3.11	Conclusion: The Forum will be instrumental in building a stronger community and the support and involvement of residents and workers will be essential for its success.
3.12	Discussion about the existing Neighbourhood Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Current plan approved in 2015 and remains valid until 2026, when a new/revised Plan needs to be approved - GLA will be reviewing its own Plan this year and this will affect the contents of the Brent Plan - The Forum's review on new plans will include new polices as new polices since 2015 are not reflected in the existing Plan. The Forum can also look at design codes which we may want to include.

Q & A

1	Will the Forum be a registered charity? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As Forums are set up under legislation, they do not need to be charities, but they can apply for charity status if the Committee so decide. • The Forum will need expert help and this will take time. • In discussion it was noted that this should make fund-raising easier but also noted that it may be a difficult to identify 'benefit' in a way that satisfies the Commission.
---	--

2	<p>Can you explain more about membership?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Voting Membership is only open to residents or workers in the Area covered by the Plan. - Businesses or other groups can be associates - Local councillors, the MP and the Assembly Member who cover the area should also have a say in discussions but will not have a vote.
3	<p>How will activities be funded?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Forum will be able to apply for grants, for instance Brent Council CIL grant and to ask for donations
4	<p>Will there be a grant scheme for reviewing the Neighbourhood Plan?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is a current grant scheme to support preparation of new plans, but this runs out at the end of March 2025. The Forum will have to wait for confirmation whether the Government will renew the grant scheme for the coming year April 2025 to March 2026.
5	<p>Is there a requirement for a minimum number of Members?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Yes, the quorum is set at 11 voting members.
6	<p>Will the existing plan be obsolete?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Consultants who will be employed to develop the new plan will review the current plan, the planning permission that have been applied for and changes to the Brent Plan, the GLA Plan and national policies - The Neighbourhood Plan runs to 2026 and will have to be replaced by then - Noted that the current plan includes 4 public open spaces that that we want to keep in our plan area so we can protect them
7	<p>Have you looked at what is happening with Forums in other wards or boroughs?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Locally there are Forums in Harlesden and Kilburn and in Highgate in L B Camden - We have also participated in zoom workshops with other Forums
8	<p>What do you mean by the new Plan being 'better' than the old one?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We will be identifying new policies included in the Brent Plan that we may want to add to our local plan - We know that the current Plan lacks policies on climate change, eco systems for example
9	<p>Do you have aspiration for more Members?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We certainly do which is why we are so glad to see a good number here. But we recognise that many residents, especially in short term tenancies, will be difficult to engage - We plan to produce leaflets and work through existing local groups - We also plan to run workshops to inform residents about planning policies, issues and to gather their views - Key thing will be to identify issues that matter to residents
10	<p>Everyone was again thanked for coming and for a positive discussion. SR confirmed that a newsletter is going to be sent attaching a copy of the presentation, details of the application process, confirmation of the AGM meeting</p>
11	<p>Date of next meeting – 24th February 2025 at Sudbury Baptist Church Hall. Time 7.30pm</p>
	<p>Meeting closed at 8.35pm</p>