

Ottershaw Neighbourhood Forum – Meeting Minutes

Date & Time: Thursday, 26 February 2026, 7:00–9:00 pm (GMT)

Location: Ottershaw Village Hall

Chair: Julie Last **Minute-taker:** MeetGeek

Those present

Gemma Pickett (GP); Bob Oliver (BO); Brian Williams (BW); Jane Tilley (JT); Julie Last (JL); Nigel Goodman (NG); Duncan Grieg (DG).

1) Previous Actions & Matters Arising

- RBC Motion (reference unknown): Action remains for Carl to locate and send Bob the correct RBC motion that was previously cited.
- Murray House / Palmer Crescent Play Area: Still awaiting update/clarification from RBC; Naomi leading the questionnaire/consultation; feedback to be provided urgently.

2) Neighbourhood Plan – Evidence Base, IDP & Process

2.1 Evidence Base Status

- Evidence base circulated and regarded as complete in draft form.
- Members requested to prioritise review of the Open Spaces Study (new evidence) which supports designation of Murray House/Palmer Crescent and Memorial Fields as Local Green Spaces.

Action: All members – confirm approval or raise issues on Open Spaces Study within 1 week

2.2 Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) – Why it matters

- The IDP sets out what Surrey CC and Runnymede BC must fund and deliver (schools, transport, health, utilities, open space), where deficiencies are, and directs developer contributions (\$106/CIL).
- Without a robust IDP, communities have little basis to challenge missing infrastructure when housing is built. IDPs for prior schemes (e.g., large sites near St Anne's Hill) should be publicly accessible; interest often peaks too late (when works begin).
- Agreed: document early; if it is not in the evidence, it will not be funded.

Action: BO – keep IDP linkage and evidence signposting clear in the evidence base pack and summary communications.

2.3 Reg.14 Consultation Planning (see also §5)

- Forum to run a 6-week consultation (last stage under Forum control) before submission (Reg.15).
- Printed copies must be available for non-digital access; leaflet drop required to every household in the Neighbourhood Area.
- Only those within the NP boundary can vote at referendum; comms must state this clearly (postcodes).

3) Community Projects & Planning Updates (consolidated)

3.1 SANG / Sprattsley Car Park (new subgroup)

- Subgroup formed after public meeting. Dependency: whether the RBC planning meeting will be open or in camera (public excluded).
- If open, encourage large but orderly public attendance (banners outside), and lodge formal objections within the statutory window.

Actions: Carl – confirm meeting openness/timeline. Subgroup – prepare focused objections and alternative suggestions; ready comms for residents.

5) Regulation 14 – Publicity, Leaflet & Stakeholders

5.1 Leaflet & Messaging

- One-page leaflet to announce Draft Plan availability, consultation dates, how to comment, and NP boundary/voting clarity.
- Use a site-wide banner on the website during the consultation.

Actions: JT – draft leaflet; incorporate standard Reg.14 wording. BO – resend standard notices. GP – to locate leaflet distribution details of private distributor if possible; fallback to volunteer routes.

5.2 Statutory & Stakeholder Contact List

- Merge existing lists (businesses, landowners, utilities, statutory consultees, orgs). Record who/when contacted and responses.

Actions: BO & BW – merge lists; BO to maintain register. All – send new/updated contacts to BO.

6) Website Redevelopment (demo & content plan)

- GP presented a refreshed site: cleaner home, “hot topic” tiles (A320, Brockhurst, etc.), improved blog, sections for Our Neighbourhood / Our Plan / Forum.
- Content sources: historic files/images in Freecamp (legacy) and Google Drive (current).
- GP to cull/streamline outdated content; reduce long text; keep key dates and clear links only. Replace generic images with local vistas (e.g., Great Grove Farm views, Homewood Park).
- “Village history” likely to be a link to Ottershaw Society once their new site is live.
- Planning applications: split by year groups; focus on major/ongoing items (Brockhurst, Great Grove Farm). Each major site to have its own page: latest update + history + Forum letters/links.

Actions: GP – content cleanup; supply photos; add banner for Draft Plan during Reg.14. GP to arrange once done for cutover at/near Reg.14 launch.

7) A320 Project – Trees, Compliance & Escalation

7.1 Responsibility & context

- This is a Surrey County Council project; RBC is not directing the A320 works.

7.2 Conditions & landscaping

- Two conditions remain pertinent, notably Condition 5 (Landscaping). Members observed tree loss behind the car park, contrary to expectations of retention.

7.3 Evidence & on-site practice (retention vs. harm)

- Aerial photos indicate a retained half-moon tree belt beyond the car park has been largely cleared.
- Barrier positions appear incorrect (~1m from trunks) allowing plant access to Root Protection Areas (RPAs).
- Trenching reportedly undertaken within RPAs, left open and water-filled, risking root rot. The three oaks have large/asymmetric RPAs and current practice risks long-term vitality.

7.4 Process & accountability

- Emails into shared SCC mailboxes often lack acknowledgements; escalation is difficult to track.

- MP Ben Spencer wrote to SCC on conditions; a critical point was omitted. BO emailed a correction; no reply yet.
- Ombudsman route only available after an SCC formal complaint is refused/not upheld.

7.5 Community engagement & press

- Woking News & Mail (reporter George) has engaged; Surrey Live has not responded. Proposal: press invite to site; community photo Saturday 11:00 ("Save Our Ottershaw Oaks"); Cllr Jonathan site visit 14:00 (pre-brief to avoid blindsiding).

8) Wider Development Landscape & Market Notes (context)

- Quality contrast discussed (e.g., Barclay in Fleet vs Vistry locally).
- Reported slow sales in some retirement schemes; Broxborough Phase 2 has started (foundations for c. 8–10 units).
- Ottershaw remains attractive for access/connectivity (Heathrow, Gatwick, M25) despite pollution concerns near the motorway.
- Proposed large SANG (scale ~Homewood Park) towards St Peter's Way / M25; car park suggested Guildford Road; two Murray Road access points implying a through-route long advocated by residents.
- Christmas Tree Farm rumoured sold; Ashill lists as candidate site; Ottershaw hosts two of the largest undeveloped parcels in the borough → long-term pressure expected.
- Demographic drivers: longer life expectancy, net immigration, smaller households → persistent housing demand.

9) Communications & Media

- Use Forum channels, Grapevine, and local Facebook groups for factual updates and resident submission templates.
- Keep messages short, consistent, and evidence-led.

10) Decisions

- Proceed with Reg.14 leaflet, website banner, and household distribution plan.
- Focus plan review on Open Spaces Study; sign-off via email within 1 week.
- Proceed with press outreach and documented evidence on A320 tree protection concerns.
- Cutover to the new website aligned with Reg.14 launch, if feasible.

11) Actions Summary (Owner • Due)

- JT – Draft Reg.14 leaflet • ASAP / within 1 week
- JL arrange leaflet distribution • ASAP / within 1 week
- BO – Circulate Reg.14 wording; maintain consultee register; compile A320 evidence pack; brief Cllr Jonathan Hulley; maintain IDP linkages in evidence. • ASAP
- BW – Support business/consultee list updates. • ASAP
- JL – Contact Woking News & Mail (George) with invite/pack. • Fri a.m.
- All – Review Open Spaces Study & evidence; provide comments/approval by 5 March 2026. • Due 5 March 2026
- All – Provide stakeholder/biz contact updates to BO. • Rolling

12) Next Meeting

- Date/Time: 12th March 7pm
- Focus: Evidence sign-off; Reg.14 materials; website readiness; A320 update; Sprattsley/SANG subgroup update.