

APPLICATION FORM FOR A NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

Name of Neighbourhood Forum

Elephant and Walworth Neighbourhood Forum.

Chair of Neighbourhood Forum

The position of Chair rotates as set out in our Constitution. The contact point is through the position of Secretary which is shared between Sofia Roupakia (sofia.roupakia@gmail.com) and Enrico Costanza (e.costanza@ieee.org).

Contact details for Neighbourhood Forum

The contact details for the public domain are as above, together with the neighbourhood forum's website <http://ewnf.herokuapp.com>
We have provided the Council with the telephone number and address of the Secretary.

1. How have you considered different routes to achieving your ambitions for your neighbourhood?

We have been involved in consultations on Council plans and ideas, with some successes, but we find Council plans lack the local distinctiveness and level of detail we are seeking. We make use of opportunities provided by Council structures for engagement, such as deputations, attending Community Council, policy consultations, public examinations and the planning applications process. We wish to explore a model that is community led and that allows us to engage directly with business, educational and transport interests.

2. What are the opportunities and benefits of producing a Neighbourhood Plan for your area?

The Neighbourhood Plan will deliver better planning in our area. It will have legal status and give us greater influence over planning decisions in our neighbourhood, the opportunity to specify development sites and work in partnership with service providers, developers and key stakeholders.

The opportunity of deciding and agreeing on a plan for the neighbourhood area will give motivation and enthusiasm to many people, who otherwise feel disempowered. The neighbourhood planning approach will allow people to learn new skills (like participatory mapping or planning policy knowledge) and to pass on and share experiences. Discussion and consensus making will provide stronger community cohesion throughout the neighbourhood and the Forum will provide a welcoming and informed community locus for new residents to the area.

3. How does your proposal relate and effect other existing Neighbourhood Forums in the surrounding area? Does it support or conflict with their policies? If so how?

As a result of our discussions with LBS's Lead Member for Regeneration we have agreed to align our boundary with the Old Kent Road Opportunity Area.

4. What is the neighbourhood area to which the Neighbourhood Plan will relate? Map and text please.

The Elephant and Walworth Neighbourhood Forum is proposing a Walworth Neighbourhood Plan. A map of the proposed neighbourhood area is attached. The area covers all of Newington ward (Newington, Draper, Pullens and Brandon estates), some of East Walworth ward and some of Faraday ward (surrounding the Aylesbury estate).

The boundary line is in the middle of the road throughout to reflect the preference of the local authority.

5. Have you consulted a range of local people, partners, businesses, community groups, residents, councillors and other stakeholders to assess levels of interest? What did they say? Where did they think the boundary should be? How did they relate to the proposed neighbourhood? How many did you consult? What were the demographics?

We undertook extensive outreach activity including stalls at various festivals, attending Area Housing Forums, surveying local businesses, one to one meetings with the councillors who represent the area, contact with all TRA's, and with faith groups, traders associations, and communities of interest such as the Latin American, Bengali and Somali communities.

We listened to what people told us, discussed, debated and then agreed the boundary at an open conference. We have tapped into the knowledge of local councillors and included on our consultees list their suggestions about groups and individuals we should work with in the preparation of the neighbourhood plan. Everyone who lives or works in our area is welcome to join with us.

The outcomes of these consultations are summarised in question 6 above. The outcome was support for neighbourhood planning from across a wider area than the neighbourhood area proposed in this application. Our solution is to propose a Memorandum of Understanding that will link the wider area forum with a smaller area neighbourhood plan.

We also append the three reports 'Elephant & Castle and Walworth Conference report' (Sept 2013), 'Is the Elephant your Neighbourhood?' (Jan 2012), and 'Imagine the Elephant' (May 2011). These detail the range of people, partners, businesses, community groups, residents, councillors and council officers consulted and the views and actions arising from each event.

Funding from Locality enabled us to run three workshops on each of our key themes Green Infrastructure, Community Assets and Small Local Businesses, each attracting wide participation and producing useful evidence for the neighbourhood plan.

UCL Masters Planning students were engaged by the neighbourhood Forum to conduct further research in each of our three core themes through in-depth case studies and surveys of local residents and businesses.

We have carried out extensive engagement with business throughout the neighbourhood area. The research undertaken by UCL students on ethnic minority businesses has been shared with Cllr Mark Williams and Juliet Seymour. Our engagement with the Latin Elephant business community including mapping and survey work has been raised at several meetings including an early meeting with Simon Bevan. East Street traders have attended our conferences.

6. How have you resolved conflict with other groups who have issues with your proposal?

Within the Forum there has been no conflict with other groups. We always try to resolve issues through consensus, allowing time and space for compromises to occur, and only vote as a last resort. This process is set out in our constitution.

We faced disagreement over whether to include the Aylesbury estate. This was brought up and debated each time we considered the boundary options. Though the option was not supported it continued to be pushed and ultimately was put to a vote at our conference in September 2013. It was agreed not to include the Aylesbury estate.

At the 2013 conference, there was also some disagreement about the possibility to extend the boundaries to the north and west of the roundabout including London South Bank University and London College of Communication. A discussion led us to agree that people wishing to extend the boundaries would engage in outreach work within the area proposed for extension and then report back to the forum. After further investigation and discussion, it was agreed not to include this area.

At our July 2015 Conference, support for a smaller area neighbourhood plan was secured through proposals to retain a wider area forum. A key tool for providing linkages between the smaller and wider areas is a Memorandum of Understanding (see question 6 where this is proposed).

As the neighbourhood plan develops, there will be disagreements of course. We hope to avoid these tuning into conflict by a bottom up and consensual approach so the pace of neighbourhood planning activity in different parts of the area will depend on the level of enthusiasm on the ground.

We have welcomed representatives of other proposed neighbourhood forums to our conferences. They have played an active role in discussions and we have benefitted from their experiences.

7. What are the resource implications (time and money) of producing a Neighbourhood Plan? How will you provide them?

We have our own website and links on other local websites. We will continue to access central government grants through Locality to provide paid professional support on planning policy and to help fund the community engagement programme (e.g. participatory mapping). We will also explore other sources of funding such as the Big Lottery fund and charitable trusts.

We have identified agencies and consultants who provide pro-bono services on neighbourhood planning and local organisations (such as Business Extra, Walworth society, Southwark Living Streets and East Walworth Green Links) who can help with community engagement, meeting venues and printing. We provide refreshments through voluntary donation. We can draw on many volunteers from the neighbourhood who will freely provide time and local expertise to produce the Plan, as they have done to date.

8. When and how did you involve Juliet Seymour Planning Policy Manager juliet.seymour@southwark.gov.uk to clarify the support it can offer under its duty to support?

We held regular meetings with Juliet Seymour, had numerous email conversations and we look forward to working closely with Juliet and her colleagues under the duty to support. For example, the Local Authority providing technical advice on planning issues, including access to the Local Authority evidence base. The types of support that are appropriate are outlined in the Locality route map.

9. Who are the 21 members of your neighbourhood forum? Do you have a resident, business and ward member on the forum? How is this group representative of the demographics of the proposed area?

Please list the names and addresses at the end. I will contact the members for them to agree that they are on the Neighbourhood Forum.

We have 92 members of the neighbourhood forum, including residents, businesses and local councillors. The membership reflects local diversity and character including minority ethnic groups, faith groups, tenants, owner-occupiers, small businesses to give some examples. For verification we attach a list of members, with postal addresses, all of whom live within the boundary area. The number of members within the neighbourhood planning area is 66.

10. How does your neighbourhood forum reflect the needs of the people in the local area ensuring equal opportunities for all

Please see our response to Question 5.

11. Section 61F(5) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 sets out the qualifying criteria for neighbourhood forums, namely a community group or organisation established with the express purpose of promoting the social, economic and environmental well-being of a particular neighbourhood area (a forum may also be constituted from trades, professions or other businesses in such an area).

The legal requirements are summarised below for ease of reference.

Please state how your proposed forum will meet the following criteria:

2a) Your forum is established for the expressed purpose of promoting or improving the social, economic and environmental well-being of an area that consists of or includes the neighbourhood area concerned (whether or not it is also established for the express purpose of promoting the carrying on of trades, professions or other businesses in such an area

The starting point for preparing our plan is a wealth of material from 4 community conferences at the Elephant and Castle organised by our member groups and detailed in Q 5. We also held three Locality funded workshops and engaged UCL students as described in Q5. These workshops identified issues and priorities on the local economy, the environment – open space, biodiversity, air quality and sustainable transport – and social infrastructure – housing, community facilities and community assets.

The approach we take to preparing a plan has been guided by Locality's route map.

2b)The membership of the forum includes a minimum of 21 people, consisting of people who live and/or work in the area, and elected members of the London Borough Council

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For verification we attach a list of members, with postal addresses, all of whom live within the boundary area. The number of members within the neighbourhood planning area is 66.

2c)The forum has a written constitution

Our constitution meets the standards set out in Locality's Neighbourhood Planning Worksheet 3 and we have received support from Locality in its preparation. The constitution is attached and includes amendments proposed at our conference in July 2015 which await ratification.

12. How will this Neighbourhood Forum prepare a plan that complies with the Development Plan?

We will seek professional guidance to ensure the neighbourhood plan is consistent with the strategic elements of the Development Plan.

13. Please enclose your constitution. We would recommend that this should meet the standards set out by the charity commission. This is required for us to make a decision on whether the group could operate as a Neighbourhood Forum.

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Checklist

1. Have you enclosed the name of your neighbourhood forum?
2. Have you enclosed the name of your neighbourhood area?
3. Have you enclosed a map of the (proposed) neighbourhood area?
4. Have you enclosed your constitution?
5. Have you enclosed the names and contact details of your chair and members?
6. Have you enclosed how you will meet the legal aspects of the Act, such as setting out how you will improve the social, economic and environmental characteristics of the area? Are you confident that you will comply with the Development Plan?

NB This application form is based on the DCLG Good practice guidance prepared by Locality <http://locality.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Roadmap-worksheets.pdf>