

Application form for a Neighbourhood Forum_Sydenham Hill Ridge_May 2019

Please complete this form with the information that Southwark Council requires for an application for a neighbourhood forum.

Name of Neighbourhood Forum: Sydenham Hill Ridge Neighbourhood Forum

Chair of Neighbourhood Forum: Monica Fletcher (Convenor)

Contact details for Neighbourhood Forum: news@sydenhamhillridge.london

Question	Neighbourhood Forum Response	Council officer comment
<p>1. How have you considered different routes to achieving your ambitions for your neighbourhood?</p>	<p>There seems a good fit between our aspirations and the neighbourhood planning process. Making effective use of the neighbourhood planning process is core to our purposes. We talk more about what these ambitions are in the answer to Question 2 below.</p> <p>We are not aware of any realistic alternative process. Possible alternatives might include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. using the two local planning processes. However there are no existing bodies that support engaging the whole local community across the ridge in these processes; and the twin local plan processes do not have the unified approach or local perspective that a neighbourhood plan will bring. <p>Working informally to articulate a vision outside the formal planning process. But this does not give local people the voice that a neighbourhood plan can.</p>	

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

Sydenham Hill Ridge is a natural entity defined and unified by geography and character but marginalised and divided by administrative boundaries. It is also a changing area.

Awareness and Responsiveness

What do people in the area want? What do they value? What do they need? How do they want to shape the area they live in over the next decade? Currently there is no body that brings together people across the administrative boundaries in the ridge to articulate a common vision for the area.

Shared character

Early discussions suggest that many local people share a sense that the wider area has a shared character that is valued. This sense of a wider area is supported by the evidence contained in the Commonplace site established by the City of London, in connection with pre-app consultation for CoL's proposed changes to Sydenham Hill Estate on the Lewisham side. We refer in particular to over 90, often lengthy, individual responses to CoL's Proposal 3 within <https://sydenhamhill.commonplace.is/schemes/proposals/consultation-and-feedback/details>.

A neighbourhood plan could help to articulate this sense, and to help ensure that the characteristics people value are enhanced rather than damaged as development goes through. This includes aspects of the built environment, the streetscape and the natural environment in our high, wooded ridge. The area holds its character on both sides of the administrative border. A neighbourhood plan can help make sure that decisions on both side of the ridge are made synergistically.

Shared needs and services/ An end to marginalisation

A neighbourhood plan could help to focus on the needs of the area. We hope that that will mean that development works for the people who live and work here; and that facilities are more likely to be developed efficiently to serve in ways that take account of the needs of people in the area regardless of which side of the border they lie.

Again, our preliminary meetings have highlighted a sense that because we are on the fringes of administrative areas, we can be removed from services and facilities. For example, people have raised questions about how well we are connected to the public transport network, and especially public transport links from Sydenham Hill station to homes on the ridge; as well as bus services to Forest Hill.

We have also seen within the last 12 months a change to traffic management in the south west section of Sydenham Hill road imposed by Southwark on the Lewisham side of Sydenham Hill, without correct consultation, resulting in Lewisham not enforcing the changes on their side.

A voice for affordable housing

The demand for affordable housing is an important theme for all Londoners and we hope that the forum can play a part in focusing attention on how this need can be addressed in our Area, while respecting the amenity enjoyed by existing Residents, and providing all Londoners with accessible and welcoming space for “green lungs”

Should the Area be a business area?

We do not think so. There are very few service businesses in the Area (other than home offices), and no manufacturing businesses. The major businesses are 1 pub (on the Southwark side); retirement homes, nursery and 1 small shop on the Hillcrest Estate (on the Lewisham side).

	<p><i>A stronger community</i></p> <p>The neighbourhood planning process also has the potential to bring people together towards a consensus view of their aspirations for the area. This has the possibility of generating a stronger, more networked, better connected community.</p> <p>The emerging forum is a young body and we hope that the neighbourhood planning process will help to clarify and articulate the different visions that are held in the community for our area.</p>	
<p>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?</p>	<p>Since July 2018, we have been widely publicising our activities both within the Neighbourhood Area, with established amenity societies which cover part of the Area (such as The Dulwich Society, the Forest Hill Society and the Sydenham Society); with the two Boroughs between whom the Area is divided (both with Elected Representatives and with Planning Officers); and with The Dulwich Estate which has significant planning rights over much of the Area within Southwark, and we have heard of nobody else having proposed or intending to propose a Neighbourhood Forum for the Area or parts of the Area.</p>	
<p>4.What is the neighbourhood area to which the Neighbourhood Plan will relate? Map and text please.</p>	<p>The proposed Neighbourhood Planning Area runs broadly in a north east/south westerly direction from opposite Horniman Museum in the north east, to the meeting point of Sydenham Hill road with Crystal Palace roundabout in the south west, following the ridge line of Sydenham Hill.</p> <p>The proposed borders are essentially defined by contour lines, and characterised by protected woods and green spaces.</p> <p>The area is predominantly residential, with the majority of the housing stock concentrated on larger post-war social and private housing estates, which were intended to be affordable at the time of construction.</p> <p>From a geographical and environmental aspect, the area is clearly</p>	

	<p>identifiable and unitary due to its physical and ecological characteristics, steep upper slopes, mile-long but narrow plateau (“the Ridge”), expansive woods and green spaces on the Ridge and upper slopes.</p> <p>However for administrative reasons, the area has been divided between different councils and parishes, and as a result is often relegated to the edge or margin of other, bigger groups’ planning policies and priorities.</p>	
<p>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?</p>	<p>Since July 2018 we have had a number of public meetings and community walkabouts. We have also met with representatives of other organisations in the area, including officers and Councillors of Southwark and Lewisham Council, the Sydenham Society and Forest Hill Society and emerging neighbourhood planning groups in Crystal Palace, and elsewhere, members of TRAs of estates in the area, as well as The Dulwich Estate.</p> <p>Minutes of our meetings are available on our website.</p> <p>There has been a surprising level of interest and widespread support across all demographics over the age of 35 for the idea of a neighbourhood plan within the proposed neighbourhood area, further strengthened by the consultation by the City of London for its proposed changes to Sydenham Hill Estate; Southwark’s recent TMO consultation in respect of the south western section of Sydenham Hill; and controversies around proposals and applications for large scale redevelopment of #9 and #11 Fountain Drive (Southwark) and #27 Longton Park Avenue (Lewisham)</p> <p>There has been no controversy about the suggested boundary of the proposed Neighbourhood Area</p>	
<p>6. How have you resolved conflict with other groups who have issues with your proposal?</p>	<p>There has been no conflict about this proposal.</p>	

<p>7.What are the resource implications (time and money) of producing a Neighbourhood Plan? How will you provide them?</p>	<p>We are aware that the demands of producing a neighbourhood plan will be significant. Our meeting with Lewisham's planning officers was helpful here.</p> <p>At this stage ahead of designation, we do not have a formal project plan.</p> <p>The emerging forum has a Committee and an informal Steering Group to coordinate local volunteer input. We have benefited so far from the professional experience of supporters with expertise in law (for our constitution) and in project management and will continue to seek participation from those with relevant skills in the local community.</p> <p>We have preliminary expert advice from Angela Koch at Imagine Places and will continue to seek guidance and support as the process evolves where necessary.</p> <p>We have been accepted for a small Neighbourhood Planning Grant by Groundwork UK under the Neighbourhood Planning Programme for initial costs.</p> <p>We do not wish to charge membership fees as we think that can be a barrier to participation but may need to explore crowd funding as the process continues.</p> <p>We are looking to learn from other community organisations about efficient ways of managing the information gathering and engagement processes we will need. We have for example participated in meetings with Kingswood Community Group to learn from their experience of mapping local community resources.</p>	
<p>8.When and how did you involve Juliet Seymour (Planning Policy Manager) juliet.seymour@southwark.gov.uk to clarify</p>	<p>We have not met Juliet Seymour but on 22nd November 2018, representatives of SHRF met Luke Taylor, Urban Planner with Southwark Planning Division. We walked/ drove around the area and</p>	

<p>the support it can offer under its duty to support?</p>	<p>discussed the boundary with him. .We also met with Chris Frazer and David Symes of Lewisham on 1st November 2018.</p> <p>At both meetings we were told something about the support (and limits to the support) that might be available from the lead borough.</p>	
<p>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.</p>	<p>Please see list and map at Appendix 2.</p> <p>Our members are drawn from across the proposed area, from both local authority areas and from different kinds of housing.</p>	
<p>10.How does your neighbourhood forum reflect the needs of the people in the local area ensuring equal opportunities for all</p>	<p>The purpose of the forum is to promote and improve the social economic and environmental well-being of residents, businesses and voluntary and not for profit groups in the area.</p> <p>Membership is open to all those living, working or volunteering in the area.</p> <p>The objectives of the organisation include the encouragement of participation and the provision of a forum of discussion.</p>	
<p>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</p>	<p>Our constitution (copy enclosed) states that the purpose of the forum is to promote and improve the social economic and environmental well-being of the residents of, and businesses and voluntary groups located in the area, and that it shall address itself to issues of local concern including but not limited to the appearance and conservation of the area, its heritage, the safety and security of those living and working the area and standards of town planning, urban design, architecture and transport planning.</p> <p>We attach at Appendix 2 a list of our supporters. They come from across the area and meet the statutory minimum requirements.</p>	

<p>meet the following criteria:</p> <p>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</p> <p>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</p> <p>2c)The forum has a written constitution</p>	<p>We also enclose a copy of our constitution.</p>	
<p>12.How will this Neighbourhood Forum prepare a plan that complies with the Development Plan?</p>	<p>We will develop a full project plan to enable us to proceed with the planning process if designated, involving the community; seeking professional advice and support as necessary, particularly for: community engagement (from Angela Koch of Imagine Places); affordable access to, and use of, up to date mapping tools; and use of tested information sharing tools, such as Commonplace, suitable for a Neighbourhood Forum.</p>	
<p>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.</p>	<p>See Appendix 3. Based on the legal advice of one of our Supporters, we believe this constitution meet the standards set out by the charity commission.</p>	

Appendices

1. Map of area
2. List of members
3. Constitution

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/wpcontent/uploads/Roadmap-worksheets.pdf>