
RIVERSIDE RESIDENTS NEWSLETTER

28 July 2025

MONEY OR INCREASED FLOOD RISK? ... Staines residents must not be the sacrifice ...

GLOVES ARE OFF FOR THE CONTEST between two sharply opposing realities now in the final rounds of resolution. Both are said to be backed by powerful forces within Spelthorne Council. At this point no-one is betting on an outright win for either. But if compromises have to be made to deal with the Council's past disastrous decisions, the safety and protection of existing property and residents must not be sacrificed.

In one corner of the ring is the Council's desperate need to generate income to reduce the eye-watering debts the current administration inherited. Property investments that cost £1.1billion when bought, mostly during 2017-19, have been revalued at not much more than £600million. The drop in value is not far off £5,000 for every resident in the borough. Dumping close to half the borough's housing target on Staines and selling almost every available Council-owned site in the town for developers to build tower-blocks of flats became part of the proposed solution.

In the opposing corner, now revealed to have a truly devastating punch, is flood risk. Independent research last year by Royal Holloway, University of London, has shown that the basements or even just foundations (however shallow or deep) of new developments in Staines can easily increase flood risk for others. The research highlights why Staines is particularly vulnerable because of variations in the thin gravel layer on which the town is built and the huge quantities of water that flow through it. ([Click here](#)) for 'a layperson's guide to flood risk in Staines').

More than once in recent months, the Riverside Residents (Staines) Coalition has asked the Council's administration and Councillors for Staines wards a simple question: ***Do you agree that the Council should do everything it can to get as close as possible to a guarantee that no new development in Staines will increase flood risk for existing properties/residents?*** The Council's administration hasn't said 'yes' or 'no'. But in announcing the collapse of its agreement for a massive hotel on the flood risk 'hot spot' Bridge Street car park site last week ([click here](#)), the Council leader said "we must reassess what is right for Staines-upon-Thames". To date, troublingly, of the nine Councillors for the three wards covering Staines only Councillors Malcolm Beecher, Tony Burrell and Daniel Geraci have answered – but all three with a resounding 'yes'.

"The procrastination has to stop. The decision, along with the promise to 'reassess what is right for Staines-upon-Thames', could and should have been taken ages ago," says the spokesperson for the Riverside Residents (Staines) Coalition. "The currently planned over-development of the town must be reconsidered. The Council must also recognise that if it decides the answer to the question we have put to it is anything other than an unambiguous 'yes', residents in Staines will face the prospect of potentially huge costs – the price or even availability of home insurance and the trauma of increased flooding. That must not be allowed to happen, and all Staines Councillors must now speak up for the residents who elected them."

Riverside Residents (Staines) Coalition – a working group of six residents' organisations serving the interests of residents on both sides of the river.
riverside.residents.staines@gmail.com FB Riverside Residents Staines