
RIVERSIDE RESIDENTS NEWSLETTER

10 November 2025

HOW TO PREVENT INCREASED FLOOD RISK IN STAINES

... and meet Council commitment to residents ...

A PROPOSED POLICY DIRECTIVE to meet Spelthorne Borough Council's commitment to prevent any increase in flood risk for current residents in Staines from new developments now sits with the Council for its consideration. The proposal was submitted earlier today to the Council's administration and its advisors.

Council leader Cllr Joanne Sexton issued a very welcome statement two months ago to confirm that *"Our residents can be assured that the Group Administration will do everything it can to ensure that no new development will increase flood risk for other properties and public spaces"*. This left the challenge of how the commitment would be achieved, an outcome the Environment Agency has said is *"necessary"*. The proposed policy directive and context for it ([click here for a copy](#)) was developed by the Riverside Residents (Staines) Coalition with expert advice following a review of how other boroughs along the Thames have dealt with a similar challenge.

Staines is built on a thin layer of gravel, beneath which is impenetrable London clay. Huge quantities of water flow through the gravel. Barriers in the gravel, particularly the foundations and basements of high-rise developments, can interfere with these flows and increase flood risk for other properties in the area. The problem is arguably worse in Staines than anywhere else along the Thames, and it will only get worse because of climate change.

"An effective policy is needed to protect residents in Staines ... and to be effective it must be clear, unambiguous, robust, and enforceable. For example, it must use words like 'must' not 'should' in identifying what evidence needs to form part of a planning application." says a spokesperson for the Riverside Residents (Staines) Coalition. *"There is also some urgency for this. Several sites across Staines, owned by the Council, are earmarked for new tower blocks of flats. Clearly, the policy must be in place before the Council invites or considers proposals for any new developments. Even if the Council doesn't like what we propose, we trust it will produce a policy directive that serves the same purpose with clarity, and do so soon."*

Riverside Residents (Staines) Coalition – a working group of six residents' organisations serving the interests of residents on both sides of the river.
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