

---

# RESIDENTS NEWSLETTER

10 March 2026

---

## NEW COUNCIL STRATEGY FOR STAINES MASTERPLAN

... creating opportunities to include residents both sides of the river in the advisory Citizen Panel ...

THE DECISION TAKEN LAST DECEMBER to fast-track development and approval of the Staines Masterplan by June this year has been abandoned by Spelthorne Borough Council. This would have enabled the Masterplan to become a Supplementary Planning Document to support its soon-to-be approved and adopted Local Plan. Instead, the ambition is now to produce a 'draft Masterplan' by June and then consider options for its future. One would be to develop it further as a stand-alone Supplementary Plan which would have the same status and authority as a Local Plan. Another would be to feed the draft Masterplan in some way into the immediate review (called for by the Planning Inspector) of the borough's soon-to-be adopted new Local Plan. In considering its options the Council will review emerging regulations from the Ministry of Communities, Housing and Local Government. It also has to consider whether any of the options can be adopted by the time Spelthorne Council transitions with several other Councils into the new West Surrey Unitary Authority.

The process of assimilation into West Surrey begins after elections in May this year and must be completed by April 2027. The purpose of the Staines Masterplan is to set out the detail of how Staines will develop long into the future, including tower blocks of flats to accommodate a substantial increase in the town's population, and significant change to its appearance and amenities. The latest government guidelines expect existing Councils to collaborate closely to ensure the transition to the new Unitary Authority achieves the merging of policies and processes needed to smooth the path to a fully functioning single authority.

"Spelthorne Council is creating a Citizen Panel to advise on various aspects of the Masterplan. The Panel will comprise residents in and near the town whose principal retail and service centre is Staines. The Council currently intends to limit the Panel to Spelthorne residents only, excluding residents from across the river in neighbouring Runnymede," says a spokesperson for the Riverside Residents (Staines) Coalition. "Most towns along the Thames straddle the river. Given the government expects neighbouring authorities to collaborate in the run up to the new Unitary Authority, and given also the significance and long-term impact of the Masterplan on residents on both sides of the river, we have asked Spelthorne Council to reconsider the decision. We hope they will see the logic and advantage of including Runnymede residents in the Citizen Panel in the run up to the creation of West Surrey which will have the option to accept or reject the Masterplan."

**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](mailto:riverside.residents.staines@gmail.com)    FB Riverside Residents Staines