

**Minutes from Rickmansworth Aquadrome
Steering Group meeting
Wednesday 15th October 2025, 10.30am-1pm**

Venue: Rickmansworth Golf Course, Moor Lane, Rickmansworth WD3 1QL

Minutes	Name / Action
The following organisations were represented at this Steering Group Meeting: Batchworth Community Council, Three Rivers Museum Trust, Colne Valley Regional Park, Herts Middlesex Wildlife Trust, Affinity Water, Colne Catchment Action Network, Environment Agency, Rickmansworth and District Resident's Association, Sustainable Three Rivers, Lead Councillors from Three Rivers District, Councillor for Penn and Mill End, Councillor for Rickmansworth Town, Countryside Management Services, RSK/CBEC, Stephenson-Halliday, Haley Sharpe, Link Thinks, Three Rivers District Council Officers. Welcome and Apologies: Cllr Lloyd Welcomes all in attendance. Apologies for absence from the following: Colne Catchment Action Network and Colne Valley Fisheries Consultative - Canal & Rivers Trust, Herts Middx Wildlife Trust, Sustrans, St Marys School, Affinity Water, and Colne Can. It was noted that photos/videos would be taken during the meeting. Please let us know if this is an issue. No one reported any issues with this at the meeting. Ebury Play Area and the Woodland path update The Associate Director for Environment addressed two of the public interest issues. - Ebury Play area is still closed due to the discovery of Japanese knotweed. TRDC are working closely with the contractors to agree a remediation plan. That is all the Council are able to say on the subject at this time. - The Woodland path remains closed on Health & Safety grounds – TRDC are committed to a resolution, and following receipt of the EA Flood Model consultants are now working towards feasible designs. The group were sign-posted to a paper to be considered by the Councils Climate Change and Leisure Committee that evening within which there were further details of the works at the Aquadrome. - The Associate Director for Environment offered to meet with anyone individually who wanted to discuss either of these points further as they did not form part of the agenda for this meeting.	Cllr Lloyd TRDC Associate Director for Environment

General overview of progress, including funding update

An overview of the project and progress to date was given. The presentation is included in these minutes.

The following points were emphasized:

- A thank you to CMS and Steering Group members who had helped in the submission of the National Lottery bid.
- We have officially entered the development phase for the National Lottery Heritage fund. A period of consultation and planning.
- TRDC will be reporting quarterly to the National Lottery on their Approved Purposes as detailed in the presentation.
- There is a tight time scale of 31st August 2026 to complete the Development Phase.

Progress to date includes:

- Appointment of new staff including the Aquadrome Project Support Officer, Aquadrome Community Engagement Officer and a continuation of roles for the Natural Infrastructure Projects Officer.
- Appointment of a consultancy to deliver the Landscape and Environmental Design Brief. RSK were successful in their bid and will begin to develop a masterplan for the site's enhancements.
- An Accessibility Audit has been commissioned, which will look at how the accessibility across the site can be improved.
- There are many areas that the masterplan will consider including the floodplain function of the site, Pinetum boardwalk, site heritage, poetry trail, dog enrichment area etc.

The indicative timetable was presented and detailed in the presentation. The timescales are dictated by the National Lottery Heritage Fund. If the Delivery fund bid is successful to the Lottery, work will begin from March 2027 and be completed by March 2030. During this current Development Phase period, all consultation, plans, permissions and tenders will be drawn up.

In closing notes, the Steering group were thanked for supporting this project and how appreciated this was.

Following the presentation, the following questions were asked:

Q Regarding Asbestos management, will there be a survey and if found they will remove?

R Appropriate surveys will be completed in line with the site Asbestos Management Plan (AMP) as part of the capital scoping work in specific locations. If it is found, it will be treated in line with the AMP which could include removal.

Q Could you tell us more about the dog enrichment area?

R If you are familiar with South Oxhey playing fields, TRDC recently opened a dog enrichment area there. It's a designated area where dogs can be off leads, safely socialised, and trained on an agility area. The area has had positive feedback from residents in South Oxhey and been successful in addressing antisocial issues relating to dogs.

TRDC are keen to explore this option at the Aquadrome and to ask the community if they would like this enhancement.

Q Can we expect to see any improvements before 2030, e.g. walkways?

R We are hoping to implement work at the start of a Lottery funded delivery phase from March 2027. This would be a three-year programme and would be complete in 2030. TRDC also however have a rolling programme of investment, maintenance and improvement at the Aquadrome using council budgets, and this spend will continue

**Head of
Leisure and
Natural
Infrastructure**

**Leisure
Programme
Officer**

where it needs to and where it's not tied to designs from the masterplan. It is not the case that no improvement works will take place until 2027.

Q Are there plans to change paths for cyclists as the shared paths are sometimes dangerous?

R TRDC can explore signage and the education aspect on how the public and community are using the site through the project. We would like to encourage taking ownership and responsibility for use of the site.

Q Is Asbestos removal planned so that the Rickmansworth festival can continue?

R There is no plan to do a large scale Asbestos removal. We will investigate where we intend to carry out capital work but a large scale removal for the entire site is not feasible. The festival organisers would need to determine whether or not they wanted to re-look at this through the hire of grounds process.

Q What is plan B if you don't get NLHF funding?

R We are quietly confident that we will receive the funding, whilst working really closely with the NLHF and ensuring we meet all requirements during this phase. If TRDC are unsuccessful with the Delivery bid we would look to have further discussions with the Lottery for guidance and would also look at other various funding options. The Council remains incredibly committed to delivering this project.

Project Focus The RSK group are delivering the Landscape & Environmental Design Brief for the project within the National Lottery Development phase. Their presentation is attached: RSK explained their role in the next stages of the project along with CBEC, Haley Sharpe and LinkyThinks. As the education consultancy, LinkyThinks led a linguistics warm up session. LinkyThinks connect verbal experiences and creative emotional literacy known as Linguistic Framing: We looked at words that describe and dictate what the experience is. Words can shape experience. Their work included: Meanings of words- Resonastia: Interplay of sound and space. Petrichor: Smell after rain Apricity: Warmth of the winter sun Susurrus: Whispering natural sounds Crepuscular: Twilight Activity Sonorous: Resonate Nature sounds Anemoia – Nostalgia for time/place you have never experienced Viridescent: Tinged with Green Flanerie: Walking with poetic observation The RSK group then led four breakout sessions to explore the steering groups attitude, approach and hopes for the site. These workshops were approximately 15 minutes and the following feedback was given. RSK Record Report <u>Feedback from RSK on the workshops:</u> This is just the start of the conversation and over the next 9 months there will be opportunities to work with RSK on the design process. People really value the opportunity to meet and give their views and ideas. Playfulness of the site The importance of an integrated organic approach The importance of letting people enjoy nature, not looking down at their phones (Baring this in mind when we look at potentially using QR codes to offer further information to visitors at the Aquadrome). The frog bins must go!	RSK GROUP
Partner Updates: TRDC Invited members to give any updates from their organisation. Batchworth Community Council, Sustainable Three Rivers and the Environment Agency gave their updates. In addition to these updates, verbal updates were received from the following organisations: Colne Valley Regional Park • The Colne Valley Regional Park will also be receiving Lottery funding, and as this is from a different Lottery regional area, their bid is not in competition to TRDCs. • They are looking for connections and how it comes together with the Aquadrome. All ideas welcome and CVRP are looking forward to working together and hope to align more with TRDC. • An invitation to attend the Colne Can Conference at Watersmeet on Tuesday 21 October was given.	Head of Leisure and Natural Infrastructure

In discussion it was noted from Rickmansworth Waterways Trust that they are hopeful to see improvements to the canal towpath and how that can support the wider connections of the project. Affinity Water Affinity is in early conversations with TRDC to contribute to and collaborate on the project in relation to River Restoration under their WINEP. Affinity own Stockers Lake, which is next to Bury Lake, and they are also doing a big piece of work to update interpretation on that site. Batchworth Community Council An invitation was given for any groups who would like to interact with the public, that they could attend the Sunday monthly market in Rickmansworth.	
Community Engagement Officer: Marcus Day explained his new role and the importance of community engagement, to listen and feedback the communities aspirations for the site. An Activity Plan will be developed over this period, in preparation for the Delivery bid. The presentation noted how engagement was proposed to happen and with whom.	Community Engagement Officer
Date of next meeting Next meeting date will be scheduled for Spring 2026. Once agreed, this date will be circulated in advance.	Head of Leisure and Natural Infrastructure
Thank you and close Cllr Lloyd thanked everyone for their feedback, noting that their involvement was a chance to leave a legacy.	Cllr Lloyd