

**Minutes from Rickmansworth Aquadrome
Steering Group meeting
Wednesday 11th March 2026, 10.30am-1pm**

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

Minutes	Name
<p>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, Rickmansworth and District Resident’s Association, Sustainable Three Rivers, Walk, Wheel, Cycle, Trust (Formerly Sustrans), Councillor for Rickmansworth Town, Countryside Management Services, RSK/CBEC, Stephenson-Halliday, Haley Sharpe, Three Rivers District Council Officers.</p> <p>Welcome and Apologies: Cllr Sarah Nelmes welcomes all in attendance Apologies for absence from the Environment Agency, Lead Member for Leisure.</p> <p>It was noted that photos/videos would be taken during the meeting. No one reported any issues with this at the meeting.</p> <p>An overview of the project progress to date was given. The presentation is included in these minutes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As the project moves into this exciting phase TRDC and RSK look forward to receiving feedback from today’s steering group on RIBA Stage 2 designs. • Following the industry standard TRDC refer to the design plans as RIBA stages. (Refer to slide containing timeline details). We are currently at RIBA Stage 2 and will continue up to RIBA Stage 4, which is beyond the normal requirement from the National Lottery for this phase of their funding programme. <p>The following points were emphasized during the presentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hydrology surveys have now taken place, TRDC have been able to obtain accurate imagery and information of the surface of the Aquadrome, under the water, and the full landscape of the lakes. • TRDC are grateful to the Environment Agency for supporting these studies and permitting work to take place. • Results of the hydrology surveys allow us to further consider the Aquadromes purpose as a flood plain and the complexities as a nature reserve. • Following an Accessibility Audit of the Aquadrome, TRDC have launched a survey on ‘Have your say’ platform, aimed towards disabled user groups. The survey will run until May. Audit results highlighted best practice opportunities and suggested a Changing Places, which has been considered in the design plans. • Initial public feedback for early stage conceptual designs has shown the majority either positive or very positive around the visitor hub, Meadow area and suggested one way carpark. There are mixed views on the dog enrichment area and pinetum at the time of the meeting. A full report will be produced 	<p>Councillor Sarah Nelmes TRDC</p> <p>Head of Leisure and Natural Infrastructure</p> <p>Natural Infrastructure Programme Manager</p> <p>Leisure Programme Officer</p>

once the engagement period has ended.

- During early March in- person public engagement with TRDC officers along with RSK and CMS was overall very successful with approximately 160 people in attendance and 40 engaged in conversations regarding conceptual design plans. There were, however, a number who demonstrated rude and disrespectful behaviour towards Officers and the Consultants.
- Results of TRDC recent public engagement and focus groups will contribute towards an Activity plan. The overall aim of which is to inform current visitors of the wider heritage and biodiversity of the site. Our approach is not to increase the overall number of visitors to the Aquadrome but to appeal to and better involve underrepresented groups.

TRDC invites an open discussion regarding the groups listed on the Aquadrome Activity plan. (Reference to slide on presentation).

Q - Some visitors hold family gathering and events and use gazebos, they leave litter and we should not encourage this.

A – Final Designs will address bin size placement and signage. We are also working towards changing the behaviours of the visitors who leave litter behind.

Q – There should be a specific group for ‘TRDC Residents’ - The council tax payers who use the Aquadrome.

A - The lottery funding requires consideration of specific target groups, for example, if we used special educational needs as the target group, the activity plan would focus on schools within Rickmansworth and Mill End first, followed by the wider Three Rivers District – so whilst TRDC residents aren’t highlighted as a main group, they would be a focus through the outlined target groups.

Q – Introduce parking charges but offer free parking to TRDC residents.

A – Currently there are no plans to change car parking charging arrangements - this is outside the scope of the project.

Q – For education groups, schools have a target for children to not end up in ‘Not in Education, Employment or Training’ programmes – suggestion is to talk to schools and look at education groups for more detail and how that could link in with the green skills proposal.

A – Confirmed this was already being considered within the plans

TRDC thanked steering group members for Activity Plan suggestions.

TRDC ends presentation, invites steering group members to ask questions regarding the progress of the design plans.

Q – Regarding a Conservation plan would a contribution to this be considered – or will there be an audit of the site?

A – An audit took place in 2024 and we will be looking to line up the landscape – we hope to have recommendations on this.

Q - If we make the Aquadrome too accessible it will become more popular and will be harder to protect.

A – An important point to reiterate, this lottery funded project is not about increasing footfall and the lottery have supported this aim from the start. Through the project we look to offer the right balance for ‘people’ whilst protecting the ‘place’. For example, potential new pathways and routes for visitors to walk through nature will not be at the compromise of rare habitats and the creatures that live in them.

TRDC offered an update on the closure of the Woodland path:

Hydrology work by RSK and CBEC has analysed the areas that will see an increase in flooding over the coming years. There is a 50% chance of flooding in each given year

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