



St John's Society

Quarterly Meeting Minutes

Date	18 August 2026	Time	20:00 – 22:00
Location	Brookmill Pub, SE8		

1. Attendance

Present	Apologies
1. Paul Middleton (PM) 2. Alma Tischler Wood (AT) 3. Nick Blomstrand (NB) 4. Rosie Garthwaite (RG) 5. John Wood (JW) 6. Sabine Pusch (SP) 7. Anastasia Seward (AS) 8. Claire Hallam (CH) 9. Jo Hemmings (JH) 10. Freddy Tennyson (FT) 11. Sean Coughlan (SC)	1. Kim Thundercliffe (KT) 2. Christine Cronin (CC) 3. Sebastian Bowden (SB) 4. Karun Vinayagam (KV)

2. Approval of Previous AGM Minutes

The minutes of the previous AGM were reviewed and approved by those present.

3. Agenda

3.1 Constitution Amendment

PM has asked that everyone look at the draft constitution and get back to him with any suggestions or changes before the end of August, so it can be approved and rolled out.

3.2 Finance

The current balance of the St John's Society is £16,323.43, which the majority is earmarked for the Brookmill Rain Garden. Friendly Gardens has transferred £550 into our kitty as part of the merger and Green Roots are to transfer additional funds during September as part of the Brookmill Rain Garden.

3.3 Achievements & Activities

- **Friendly Gardens work:** Improvement works shall commence during September which shall include; water fountains, new path, rain garden, nature pond, more tree planting etc and full scope can be found on the website.
- **St John's garden:** Shall be overhauled by Glendale, who will share the plan. The intention is to replant from the end of October, including new soil and new climate-resilient planting. Consideration of a mural to be looked at and to be further discussed with the Community and Glendale.
- **Rail Woodland:** (FT) St John's Society funded a survey to improve the woodland beside the station, including new planting, a path and better community access, with potential benefits for local flood management.
 - Network Rail has currently blocked the proposal, citing plans for an electrical supply route to its rail maintenance area. The Society believes the two schemes should be able to coexist and wants further justification from Network Rail.
 - Concerns were also raised about Network Rail's expanding use of the site, including tree removal and the gradual development of a roadway/working area despite previous assurances.
- **Brookmill Rain Garden:** Construction work will begin during October. There was a discussion about putting together a stock of small tools to help maintain the rain garden – CH to organise so that these can be purchased. (SP has some she's happy to donate). We will also need a large water butt for when it gets too dry and is a subject to discuss with the Brookmill Pub.
 - **Mural:** The competition is gaining good traction on social media. The judging panel will comprise Alma, Sabine, Freddy, Robbie and Sean. The current budget remains appropriate for a small community project.
 - **Comms:** The Council will coordinate project communications with RG.
 - **Memorial Trees:** the memorial trees will be relocated to Friendly Gardens and unveiled on Remembrance Sunday. The full article is available on the website.
- **Trees:** 36 trees planted in St John's in the last 3 years. They need to be watered; a team of waterers is doing sterling work in Friendly Gardens. If residents would like to join this group, please contact info@st-johns-soc.org. Additional volunteers are also needed to monitor trees outside of Friendly Gardens. We also need to ask the community whether they would like to sponsor new trees that can be planted within St John's.
- **St John's station:** Stephen Penfold will chair the group and restart efforts to secure step-free access at St John's Station, including arranging a meeting. PM will support and engage Vicky Foxcroft MP, while concerns over reduced peak-time Southeastern services will also be raised.
- **St John's railway crash memorial plaque** is going up on 19th September, midday – Vicky Foxcroft MP will be unveiling it.
- **Rail disaster:** book / film launch, following a talk about the rail crash on its 69th anniversary. We'll be selling tickets at the Arthouse. Tony says that the proceeds can come to St John's Society. Action: invite Claire Chambers to the launch.
- **Local Planning:** NB and SP will meet local councillors on 10 September to progress the new Character Appraisal. The aim is to make local planning guidance more supportive of mansard extensions and climate-resilient improvements to existing homes.
 - Recent changes to national planning policy are considered supportive of making better use of existing housing to create additional living space.
 - The Let Bow Grow campaign provides a useful precedent, having successfully secured changes to planning rules for mansards in a comparable conservation area.
 - NB and SP also plan to produce a short, informative and satirical film to build awareness and support for the proposed changes.

- **New Green Councillors:** successful meetings with our new councillors, with a very good response to our concerns. We now need to follow up and ensure our needs are met.
- **St John's front garden sale (Sat 12th & Sun 13th September, 11am–4pm):** Agree plan for the day and publish event on social media.
- **St John's Tote Bags:** ATW has 50 done. There was a suggestion to sell them at the front garden sale. RG suggested making it its own event upstairs at the pub, linking it to the launch of the rain garden. This needs to be agreed.
- **Brookmill Road Local Nature Reserve:** is putting in a nature pond, and there's going to be another one in Friendly Gardens, funded by Pond Life.
- **Community Collective:** A new network bringing together community groups across SE4, SE8, SE13 and SE14 to share ideas, resources and coordinate local initiatives. Around 50 stakeholders are expected at the first meeting on 6 October at the Brookmill Pub, managed by Subo and Paul, with representatives from Lewisham Council, Highways and the Green Party potentially attending.
- **St John's website:** will be updated by the end of the year. Initial meetings have been held, and plan is to commence during September with committee review of what we want, what we want it to look like, and what we need it to do for us.
- **Friendly Gardens free film festival:** JH to liaise and provide an update, so that we have a clear plan for 2027 which can be added to the events page.

3.4 2026 BAU Activities / Forward Planning

- New website under development with end of 2026 as a deliverable date.

3.5 Vacancies

- **Website & Communications Coordinator** - Keep the website up to date with the latest information, Add and update community news, articles and announcements, Keep the events calendar updated with meetings and community activities, Work with the committee and volunteers to gather and publish information.
- We are also on the hunt for new members who are keen on greening, planning, transport, arts & culture, waste, recycling, health, wellbeing and communications.
- Interested residents to contact Sabine on info@st-johns-soc.org

3.6 Funding

If members and residents of St Johns would like to make a regular payment to support our work, the bank details are as follows, this can be as little as £3-5 per month which will make a huge difference to what we can deliver.

Bank	Natwest
Account name	St Johns Society
Sort code	60-00-01
Account no.	36364606

4. Events

- Community Ward Panel Meeting – Tuesday 8th September 2026, 7pm at St John's church, with the Met police

- Front Garden Sale – 12–13 September 2026
- St John's railway crash memorial plaque – to be unveiled on 19th September 2026
- Community Collective – planned for 6th October @ The Brookmill
- Unveiling of the Brookmill Rain Garden – October 2026
- Memorial Tree Unveiling Ceremony – 8th November 2026 (Remembrance Sunday); further details to be communicated
- Additional showing of the National Emergency Briefing film – date tbc
- Rail disaster book / film launch at the Art House is planned for 4th December
- Christmas activities – to be confirmed

5. Actions Summary

Action	Owner
Review the draft constitution and send comments to PM before end of August	All
Organise a stock of small tools to maintain the rain garden	CH
Contact Vicky Foxcroft MP seeking her support in challenging Network Rail and helping progress the woodland improvement scheme. A short social media video explaining the proposal was also suggested.	FT
St John's Rail User Group – PM to support SP on reinitiating efforts to progress, and to liaise with Vicky Foxcroft MP on gaining additional insight and support for step-free access	PM, SP
Invite Claire Chambers to the rail disaster book/film launch	NB
Meet local councillors on the new character appraisal (Thurs 10 Sept)	NB, SP
Produce a satirical/informative film to support the planning campaign	SP, NB
Look into helping with website management	SP
Liaise with fahzan@freefilmfestivals.org on Friendly Gardens free film festival. Plan for 2027 events.	JH, PM
Identify support for the front garden sale in September	SP, RG
Confirm plan on the sale of Tote Bags	ATW, NB
Review and agree December festive activities	PM, Committee
Review and confirm Brookmill Pub mural winner and communicate results	ATW, SP

6. Next Meeting

Tuesday 17th November 2026.