

Sustainability Forum: 3rd March 2025

Theme: Helping making Watford Greener

The evening consisted of a series of presentations, followed by a Q&A session. Time was then allowed for members of the audience to talk to the presenters rather than the traditional roundtable session.

The next Sustainability Forum will be on the evening of Wednesday 2nd July 2025 (6:15pm for a 6:30pm start). Please add the date to your diary.

Subsequent dates for 2025/26 are:

- Thursday 23rd October 2025
- Tuesday 3rd March 2026

No updates since October meeting.

Helping Making Watford Greener:

We had a series of presentations on local projects and ways people can get involved. The presentations are attached as a pdf. The presentation topics and speakers were:

- Rediscovering the River Colne – Adam Asquith, Groundwork
- The Green Heart of Watford – Andy Roby, St Mary's Church
- Great Big Green Week – Anna Addison, Friends of the Earth
- Watford Green Gym
- Wilder Watford Project – Susheel Rao WBC on behalf of Amy Trotter, Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust.
- Additional Ideas – Susheel Rao, Watford Borough Council
 - Abbey Line Community Rail Partnerships creating a wildlife friendly garden at Garston Station.
 - Running your own community litter pick
 - Opportunities at Cassiobury Park.

Questions included:

- 1. Why do we have water outflow from industries?**
 - Industries are supposed to clean their water, yet there is not a single healthy river in the UK.
 - In Watford, the Water Quality Forum monitors river pollutants and works to trace them back to their source.
 - It was noted that farming systems, pharmaceuticals, and road runoff (including cleaning roads) are among the biggest contributors to river pollution.
 - Additionally, Buglife is running a campaign to ban flea treatments for cats and dogs, as these are highly harmful to the environment and rivers.
- 2. Who owns the wall of the car park by St Mary's Church, and is there an opportunity for a green wall?**
 - This is owned by CitiPark.
- 3. Is there a way we can involve schools in addressing water?**

- Tales of the River does extensive work with schools, particularly through the Travelling Tales part of their project.
 - Any help or advice on this topic would be greatly appreciated.
4. **Did Adam have any information on river monitoring?**
- He confirmed that he does and mentioned that they produce a yearly report, which is available on their website.
 - It was suggested that we bring this report to a meeting for review.

Roundtable Discussion:

An informal roundtable discussion was held to allow attendees to talk to and ask question of the presenters on the areas which interested them most.

AoB:

Anna is setting up a working group for a repair café. She is looking for around 8–10 people. Anyone interested should message her or sustainability@watford.gov.uk and we will forward it on.