



The Bulletin

December 2018



An end of year reflection on life in Putney

Hugh Thompson, one of our Vice Presidents, has lived in Putney for 43 years – what changes has he seen?

The most important happened early on when the open air market was turned into a very successful shopping mall, The Exchange. Earlier still there had been a concerted effort to turn Putney into a mini Croydon by building office blocks along the Upper Richmond Road. These have now nearly all been converted into apartments and all that is left of what was once a business centre are the rows of estate agents. In my time the numbers of estate agent offices has grown from a handful to over twenty. A function of house prices rising 100 times from 1975-2018.

The High Street? Well, as the gateway to Putney Bridge, it's never going to be perfect. You pay your money in the four horse Apocalypse stakes - pollution, traffic, planning, rents and rates, something is to blame. Recently spurred on by developers, Brexit and on-line shopping, the business cycle has speeded up. Shops come and go, big beasts such as M&S, Halfords and Top Shop have left, other big beasts like Laura Ashley, H&M, TK Maxx, Poundland have come and stayed. Since I got involved in the Putney Society in the early eighties the moans have been too many shoe shops, building societies, betting shops, phone shops, charity shops and coffee shops – but business responds to demand?

When we first came to Putney there were probably only three places to eat, two of them Indian. Now there could be well over 40 and several of the dozen or so pubs have become very respectable gastro centres. Within a mile of the of High Street, on the Lower Richmond Road (LRR), there are now twelve places you can get a cup of decent coffee, forty years ago there was nowhere in Putney. At that time LRR boasted a few



serious antique shops (an overflow from the Kings Road) and at least five convenience stores. Today lower rents on the LRR have attracted specialists such as the

cartoon gallery, clock shop, a high standard art gallery, and others specialising in tiles, kitchens, bathrooms and weddings. Is this the way to go?

Modern trends have seen nail bars and male hair dressers jostle with fast food and coffee shops, while harbingers of the good life like cycle shops, although not extinct, seem to find it difficult. But one trend which is established is the growth of a flourishing arts and crafts scene based to some extent on the Putney Art School.

The whole nation is losing pubs at an alarming rate, Putney has lost the Quill, the Cyclists Rest, the Castle and the White Lion but we have gained the Revolution and the Boathouse. While we have lost a small cinema, the Odeon has upgraded to three screens. Another positive addition, after a false start twenty years ago, has been a very efficient river bus service has been established to and from London Bridge, and all stops in between.

Meanwhile the planes go over every ninety seconds, occasionally there are beggars at the station, but, as the man said, if Putney is such a dump why are the house prices so high?



Putney Society New Year Lunch

Members and their guests are invited to the **Society's New Year Lunch on Saturday 12 January 2019** at 12.30pm for lunch at 1pm. This year we will be at HOME SW15 146 Upper Richmond Rd, SW15 2SW – recently acclaimed as London's Local Restaurant of the Year by the Good Food Guide. The cost will be £39pp for a 3-course lunch to include a welcome drink on arrival. Enclosed with this bulletin is a form to apply for your place at the lunch – **PLEASE** send it back with your cheque to our Social Secretary as soon as you can. Every year stragglers wonder why they cannot join us!

With the end of another year in site many will be looking back this month at the changes and highlights of the last 12 months. Sitting down to write this, I discovered that last December I gave a summary of building work on the High Street for the benefit of those who had missed our November Members' Meeting. One year on and I notice how little has changed in the course of 2018: The Tideway Tunnel and Metro Bank sites are still under construction.

We still don't know what, if anything, will happen to 56-70 Putney High Street, consented by Boris Johnson when he was still Mayor. Halfords and The Works may have moved out, but Barclays are spending lots of money on updating their corner. Opposite there's still no decision on the Putney Bridge Road corner site, whilst the bigger Levellers scheme behind this is waiting for a public enquiry next June. Which means up to another year of the old Robert Dyas and Boots shops standing empty, as probably will M&S next door.

Some sectors are still active. The Spotted Horse and Revolution bars opened roof terraces, and you may all have seen a preview of a new scheme for the roof of the Exchange. Putney could soon be getting some new hotels. The November weekend closure of the Upper Richmond Road was to connect gas and water to the 'Putney Hotel' on the old post office site, whilst the developer behind Metro Bank proposes a

hotel above WH Smith and the corner of Werter Road, with a planning application expected soon.

Roehampton University completed a fine new library, and their new Chadwick Hall student residences got shortlisted for the RIBA Stirling Prize. But elsewhere in Roehampton it's more a case of moving out than on, with the Council starting to empty buildings ahead of a redevelopment that will see housebuilder Redrow double the height of the buildings on Danebury Avenue. And at the opposite end of SW15 replacing the industrial sheds at Point Pleasant with up to 20 storeys of flats continues. Three still under construction and the application is in for the last plot.

STOP PRESS: The proposal earlier this year for the 'Pergola' food and drink venue on top of the Putney Exchange car park raised strong objections from many local residents plus a few voices in support. Some Society members will have seen that the operators are back with a new proposal, the Palm House, now on the High Street side of the car park instead of the back. There's no planning application yet, so still time for you to tell the panel your thoughts both for and against before the application is lodged.

Buildings Panel

Convenor:

Andrew Catto
ac@andrewcatto.co.uk
020 8785 0077

Firstly, some positive news, a defibrillator has at last been fitted in Putney station. This was co-funded by a local charity, Defibrillators in Public Places (www.Dipps4James.co.uk) and the Society. The railway has agreed to 'host' the defibrillator, which is located just inside the station on the left as you enter. Currently less than 1 in 10 people who suffer an out-of-hospital cardiac arrest in the UK survive but in other countries, where the public are better equipped to recognise and deal with cardiac arrests, survival rates are up to three times higher. Our next campaign will be to convince TfL to have one in East Putney underground station.

Many of you will have suffered from the disruption to rail services in mid November. We will be conveying this to local councillors to raise at their regular transport meeting with representatives from Network

Rail and South Western Railway. We will also raise the ongoing lottery of guessing which platform London bound trains will depart from. The mad dash from platform 1 to 2 or vice versa has long lost its allure particularly if you have heavy bags, a push chair or an infirmity to contend with.

We should shortly start to see the long awaited enhancements to Putney High St. The Council expect to have completed the installation of the uplighting improvements to St Marys Church and 14 Putney High Street by the end of November and to have a signed agreement in place with the Odeon Cinema for the installation of a Green Wall early in 2019.

Transport Panel

Convenor:

Stephen Luxford
stephen.luxford@
nao.gsi.gov.uk

FUTURE PANEL MEETINGS

All members welcome
www.putneysociety.org.uk

COMMUNITY:
13 December, 10 January
at 6 Norroy Road,
SW15 1PF (18.30)
Co-convenors:
Vicky Diamond
& Val Jones
vickysw15@aol.co.uk,
jones.val@gmail.com
T: 07746 022654

TRANSPORT:
11 December, 8 January
at 46 Disraeli
Road, SW15 2DS (19.30)
Convenor:
Stephen Luxford
stephen.luxford@
nao.gsi.gov.uk

BUILDINGS:
5 December, 9 January
at 154 Putney High Street,
SW15 1RS (19.00)
Convenor:
Andrew Catto
ac@andrewcatto.co.uk

OPEN SPACES:
6 December, 3 January
at 28 Howards Lane,
SW15 6NQ (19.00)
Convenor:
Judith Chegwidden
judith.chegwidden@gmail.com
T: 020 8788 4489

The Red Box Project: There's a problem for some young women in our schools accessing sanitary products. To help avoid panic, embarrassment and missed classes women from the community sponsor and stock a red box filled with sanitary products and spare pants. The Putney Library now has such a box, situated on the left hand side as you go in. Do contribute, or donate via their website. Contact Melanieabbott@hotmail.co.uk for more details.

Collection box for your unused post cards: The Library has agreed to hold a container for us so that we can donate our unused postcards. These will be handed over to the Work and Play ScrapStore so that they can distribute them to charities and groups of people, many disabled, who, use them and sell them on. It's another form of recycling. The box is in the Library on the left hand side (near the Button Box). Many thanks to the Library for their assistance.

Congratulations to Teresa Reeve, who is one of the longest serving volunteers at the Work and Play Scrapstore (WaPS). She won an award at the

Wandsworth Civic Awards for her incredible service. WaPS diverted an estimated 37t of waste away from landfill or incineration last year

We've discovered that there's a product you can buy (it is a bit pricey at about £22) which you put your fleeces in when you wash them. This collects all the nasty microfibres which are so polluting to the environment.

St Mary's Homeless Shelter are still in need of warm winter clothing, so if you have any spare jackets, thermal underwear (unworn), socks, jerseys, do take them to the Church on a MONDAY. Thank you.

Don't forget the Trussell Trust donation boxes in Sainsbury's and Waitrose to help those in need this Christmas.

Community Panel

Co-convenors:

Victoria Diamond
& Val Jones

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07746 022654

The removal of litter bins where there are no daily rubbish collections (i.e. any location away from a shopping street) continues to be controversial. The Society is calling for the restoration of bins by bus stops – and in areas of high pedestrian traffic – perhaps using more imaginative collection schemes than hitherto. Around the country groups like Keep Britain Tidy have tried out schemes for better use of litter bins. One successful experiment was to transform litter bins into charity collection pots, featuring local charities. The more litter that went into the bins and the less on the ground, the more money the charity received. Another option being trialled by Wandsworth is the use of solar powered litter bins that crush the litter deposited in them and then send an email alert when they are 80% full. They can hold up to 10 times as much litter as conventional bins and thus economise on collection costs. These bins are also being tried out in Greenwich. Let's hope that some of these experimental bins come to Putney in the very near future so that areas around Putney Heath and

Tibbetts Ride cease being litter strewn.

When JC Decaux obtained permission (on appeal) for the illuminated sign on the corner of Upper Richmond Road and Charlwood Road, they were required to carry out some minimal landscaping of the adjacent land. The result was unimaginative and has now degenerated into some weed infested grass and boring hard landscaping. This could be a site for a much more vibrant pocket park serving local people and we hope that Wandsworth Council will take up our suggestions for improvement.

Feedback on the works carried out at the northern end of Putney Park Lane continues to attract opprobrium. The regrading of the surface is encouraging cars to drive faster and the high kerbs are making it difficult for pedestrians – particularly those with pushchairs or wheelchairs.

Open Spaces Panel

Convenor:

Judith Chegwidden

020 8788 4489

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PUTNEY SOCIETY CONTACTS

See website for full details:
www.putneysociety.org.uk

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New Autumn edition of the Wandsworth Historian

An outstanding Putney headmistress and early-twentieth century feminist, the Putney historian who carefully catalogued all the memorials in his local parish church, and the extraordinary proposals in the 1960s that would have turned Wandsworth town centre into a motorway hub: these are just some of the subjects that feature in the latest number of the Wandsworth Historian. Other articles focus on the massive World War One savings drive still vigorously

being promoted within weeks of the end of the conflict.

The Wandsworth Historian is published by the Wandsworth Historical Society, and copies are available price £3.00 plus £1.50 for postage and packing from WHS, 119 Heythorp Street, London SW18 5BT or by emailing 020neil119@gmail.com.

Cheques payable to 'Wandsworth Historical Society', please.

www.wandsworthhistory.org.uk



Portrait of the significant local educationalist Grace Fanner by Thomas Cantrell Dugdale

Letter to the editor

We've donated items to the Trinity Hospice shop on Putney High St, and bought from and donated to their furniture shop on Putney Bridge Road, but we hadn't had dealings with the Hospice itself, or thought about them until we were recently involved in the end of life care of a family member. We cannot speak highly enough of all at Trinity Hospice, and their End of Life Co-ordination Team. They co-ordinate and liaise with everyone: the GP, the hospital and their

palliative team, the Marie Curie over-night carers, district nurses, other carers; the arranging of hospital furniture and equipment for the home, medication, and dispensing advice whenever asked. The wonderful team was there with us at the end too, in the Hospice, where we were lucky enough to secure a bed, and offered superb bereavement services and counselling after it was over, for now, as well as into the future. Trinity cover all of SW London, and their beds are in

VERY high demand, for much needed respite care, and for the last few days of someone's life, when the care needed is beyond what can be delivered at home or in hospital. If you're ever wondering which charity to make a donation to, do consider Trinity Hospice Clapham. They survive on donations in the main. Thank you Trinity Hospice.



The Diamond family



LOCAL EVENTS

If you have an event you would like us to list please contact: chair@putneysociety.org.uk



Putney High School Christmas fair
Saturday 1 December, 12noon-4pm
35 Putney Hill, SW15 6BH

Pauls Cancer Centre - Unto Us a Child Is Born
Thursday 6 December, 7pm St Mary's Church, Putney
Paul's annual Christmas carol concert returns to St Mary's Church, Putney for Christmas 2018. With a mix of performances from the acclaimed Fulham Camerata choir, classic singalong carols, and festive readings.

Music by the Bridge, St Mary's Church, Putney
Sunday 9 December, 7.15 pm:
The Bromley Boy Singers conducted by Travis Baker, An internationally acclaimed choir will perform a

Christmas programme to include Benjamin Britten's Ceremony of Carols.

Tickets cost £5 on the door and Putney Pantry will be open to serve drinks and food.

The Roehampton Lantern Parade
Wednesday 12 December

Meet at Roehampton Library at 4pm for the parade, carols and refreshments.

Dover House Singers Friendly Carol Service
Thursday 21 December 2-3pm

St Mary's Church Church Rd, Barnes, SW13 9HL