



The Bulletin

For our members in Putney and Roehampton



August 2023

Putney packs out Church Square for festival of film and tennis

Congratulations to **Positively Putney** for their 3-day cinema experience in Church Square in mid-July. All viewings, from Frozen early in the morning, to Top Gun in the evening were booked out, but it was absolutely packed for the Wimbledon Men's Final, with standing room only! Occasional showers did not seem to deter people who had come to try out Putney's first open air celebration of tennis and film. Local food and drink businesses provided food and drink stalls across the weekend. And other Putney businesses provided deck chairs and cushions.

Nicola Grant, CEO of Positively Putney said *"The final thank you goes to all the amazing Putney businesses who funded this event and helped to bring the community of Putney together across the weekend"*



A valuable resource for anyone interested in local history

Phil Evison has converted six of his Putney Library talks into illustrated articles, in PDF form. They are: **Putney's Burial Grounds, Putney's 'Great Houses', The Roehampton Mounting Block, Notable Graves in Putney Vale Cemetery, Putney Pubs - Past & Present** and **The Story of Putney's Cinemas**. If you would like any of them, email him on philipevison0@gmail.com or contact Putney Library

More bikehangers planned

The council's programme of installing bikehangers is continuing as numbers are scheduled to nearly double. The next phase of the rollout will see another 110 hangars being placed in residential streets. There are already 118 hangars in Wandsworth. In Putney, more are planned for Chartfield Avenue, Disraeli Road and Felsham Road. Local residents can have their say about these proposed locations by going to <https://haveyoursay.citizenspace.com/wandsworthcs/bikehangars-23/> before the deadline of 15 August.

A bikehangar is an on-street cycle parking apparatus that securely houses six bicycles and takes up the space of about half of a car parking bay. Bikehangars can only be accessed by registered users. They have a hydraulic opening mechanism that keeps noise to a minimum when the hangars are opened or closed.

The borough's housing estates are also being earmarked for additional hangars with more planned. In the most recent programme 37 new estate hangars were delivered with a special focus on Roehampton



which is poorly served by public transport and where secure cycle parking spaces are scarce. Of these 37 hangars, 30 have been installed in the Roehampton area.

We attended the Wandsworth Sustainability Partnership Meeting in June, which was most interesting and informative. Wandsworth Council is working hard to reduce its carbon footprint and is making many changes to its working practices, including

- Converting its waste vehicle fleet to run on vegetable oil
- Doing further trials of waste food collection in selected areas; it is committed to collecting food waste across the borough by April 2024
- Introducing waste electronic materials banks (the WEE scheme) – 20 across the borough
- Establishing a Library of Things, so that people can borrow equipment such as drills, chain saws etc.

SURPLUS CLOTHING: Some charity shops haven't been taking clothes recently, as they've got too much stock, but there are other options. TRAIID bins, such as the one on the corner of Upper Richmond Rd/Charlwood Rd, are good to use. Wandsworth is its main collection area in London. Everything collected in its bins is carefully sorted, graded and kept from landfill or incineration. TRAIID generates £500,000 income from sales, which is then distributed to countries such as Bangladesh where many clothing factories are based.



www.traid.org.uk/clothes-donations/find-a-bank

The tip at Smugglers Way also has clothing bins, and H&M will take ANY fabric/material/clothing for upcycling, and give you a voucher in return.

https://www2.hm.com/en_gb/sustainability-at-hm/our-work/earn-points.html

The Royal College of Art in Battersea has a Textile Circularity Centre which works with the fashion industry to try to discourage the 'buy it cheap, throw it away' behaviours which come with cheaply produced and widely available clothing.

REFILL/RECYCLE: Pupils Profit – see pupilsprofit.com - runs an eco-refill scheme with schools across London, selling laundry liquid, washing up liquid etc, refilling existing bottles and therefore avoiding plastic waste.

Laura Goossens is a collage maker using recycled materials and runs group sessions for up to 25 people. See details of her work at

<https://uk.linkedin.com/in/lauragoossenscreative>

We might try to get a group together, because it sounds wonderfully creative and inspiring, and helps mental wellbeing. One of her collages is on display by the US Embassy in Vauxhall.

SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD TEAMS (SNT): We contacted all the SNT police teams to find out about events in August, but at time of writing have only got some Roehampton dates for the diary:

7 August – Coffee with a copper/ Q&A – Roehampton Library 15.30 – 17.30

9 August – Bicycle marking Danebury Ave junction with Roehampton Lane 15.30 – 17.30

18 August – Bicycle marking Queen Mary Hospital 15.30 – 17.30

20 August – Crime prevention stall 1530 – 17.30 Danebury Avenue junction with Roehampton Lane 15.30 – 17.30

24 August – Catalytic convertor marking 15.30 – 17.30 – pre-book ONLY (Email Roehampton@met.police.uk for more information)

25 August – Coffee with a copper 15.30 – 17.30 Roehampton Library

ROEHAMPTON COMMUNITY WEEKS:

4th – 26th August: It's going to be a really busy three weeks, with SO many different events and all ages catered for. Congratulations to the organisers and those involved.

Events include:

4 August – 4–8pm Over 60's Summer Party at Manresa Clubroom

5 August – Ranger Guided Walk on Wimbledon Common, 10.30 – 12.30, meet Roehampton War Memorial

6 & 12 August – Putney Society Litter Pick – meet 10.15 am outside Roehampton Library

There's a women's cricket evening, tennis coaching, a flash mob salsa party, a bazaar, a tree trail, pickleball, basketball, bike markings etc. It's a very impressive list of activities that have been lined up. You'll have to look at the schedule! Plenty of opportunities to join in.

<https://www.roehamptonvoice.org/roehampton-community-weeks>

LOCAL AIR QUALITY

We await a response to our application for a Breathe London air quality monitor. If the bid is successful, it would be placed at the bottom end of the High Street, close to the cinema, because our diffusion tube monitoring suggests this location has particularly high levels of NO₂ pollution. For those unfamiliar with them, Breathe London monitors have the advantage, compared to our diffusion tubes, of providing live readings on the internet which anyone can consult. They also measure particulates. Meanwhile the Council are about to tender for long term replacement for the air monitor midway down the High Street.

Buses – slowly but surely the buses serving our High Street are reducing their emissions. Electric buses are being rolled out on the 93 route while the 39 route will be converted later this year. This leaves the 424 as the outstanding polluting bus route to address.

Earlier this year the Council set up a Citizens Assembly to look at air quality. The Assembly has now reported and you can find the full report on the Council website

https://wandsworth.gov.uk/media/13723/wandsworth_citizens_assembly_on_air_quality.pdf It makes some familiar suggestions including greener and better integrated public transport; the collection of better and more accessible data on air pollution; and, measures targeted at improving air quality for children and around emissions from houses and businesses. The Council are considering their response to the recommendations which they hope to share through a revised Air Quality Action Plan at the Environment Committee in September.

BRIDGES

As we go to press Wandsworth Bridge (see below) will have been closed to road traffic, though not to pedestrians, possibly until the end of September. The closure is for 'essential safety works' but, while it has been deliberately timed to coincide with the annual drop in road traffic over the summer, it will inevitably have an impact on our local traffic levels particularly as the schools will have returned before it is completed. The Society will be keeping an eye on our local air quality levels. Meanwhile there are reports that the estimated cost of repairing Hammersmith Bridge has mushroomed to £230m. We await official confirmation of this and how it might be funded. Alas we also still await a sign of when major repair work will finally begin.

PUTNEY RAILWAY STATION

Many of you will be aware that the ticket office at Putney station will be amongst those set to close although the timing of this is to be confirmed. There has been a very brief consultation period, a sign perhaps the rail authorities are intent on this move. One argument is that the move will enable more staff to be on hand in the concourse to assist passengers but there are unanswered questions about how vulnerable groups, such as the visually impaired, will be better off as a result of this move.

BOATS

From the end of July Thames Clippers will run a weekend boat service to and from Putney Pier as far as Greenwich.

See <https://www.thamesclippers.com/plan-your-journey/service-changes> for more details.



Schools will be out by the time you read this, and the Bulletin took a break in July, but here on the Buildings Panel we need to keep watchful 12 months of the year because even if the planning applications are slowing down, new planning policies and consultations are still coming thick and fast from both central Government and Wandsworth Council.

The biggest of these changes is the new Wandsworth Local Plan, due to be have been adopted by the Council on 19th July. Consultation on this started in 2019, which means that policies are based on data from Wandsworth as it was BC (Before Covid). Which is probably why most of them are little changed from the 2016 plan. Don't blame the Council for this. The plan making process with its many layers of consultation is set by central government, although they are now proposing 'accelerating' this to 30 months. A proposal in the Levelling Up Bill that's now over a year late!

Fast food deliveries illustrate how policies have failed to react to change. Shops are now nearly all interchangeable within a single business use class, which only excludes hot food takeaways if the food is 'mostly' taken away. What policy makers haven't noticed is that at Greggs or the old school 'chippy' – both hot food takeaways by this definition - the public come to buy their own food and walk away with it. However, since the delivery riders aren't employed by the shop, they too are counted as members of the public. New watertight definitions on a postcard to Mr Gove, please.

Getting a balance between setting policy and responding to public comments is never easy, as illustrated by two recent applications for 5G phone masts. These of course start from the classic NIMBY dilemma that everyone wants a great 'phone signal, as long as the source is invisible. In June two companies applied on the same day to put very similar masts, about half a mile apart, on patches of roadside grass on two Putney council estates. One of them received a single comment, not opposed. The other caused a social media storm and drew well

over 300 objections before it was withdrawn. Result? The one in a valley will get approved, the one correctly sited on high ground will not. We have asked Wandsworth for a clear plan for where they think these masts ought to go, rather than this lottery by social media. Maybe they will ask us what we propose. So, members, if you have a mobile phone, where do you think the masts should go in areas of west Putney where there are no high buildings?

Talking of invisible, in a recent decision, BT were refused consent to take away two derelict phone boxes outside Lidl on Putney High Street and replace them with a much smaller single narrower information post (and phone). Refused as 'street clutter' although within this 10m of pavement there are already 3 bollards, 2 traffic control boxes, a road sign bigger than each phone box, a bin and a streetlight with 2 CCTV cameras and a council banner (did that have advertising consent?) on it. Who defines clutter?

Policy from government seems to skip all the consultations. Earlier this year the Mayor of London pre-empted changes to Building Regulations by demanding that tall housing blocks must have two sets of escape stairs. One result for Putney is that the three 'saved' but unbuilt consents for tall blocks on the Lidl / TKMaxx block on Putney High Street and across the road on the Putney Bridge Road corner may still have permission, but can't be built as designed with single staircases. Watch this space for revised schemes.

Other than these we can probably expect fewer applications coming forward. Recent data shows a fall in applications of all kinds, but particularly for new homes, and consents falling even faster. My office has already had the first project cancelled due to rising mortgage rates. Wandsworth's estate infill schemes are all getting the thumbs down from existing residents, and whilst recent consultation for the Alton Estate showed residents want new homes, they do not want them on any of the open spaces.

THE CANTERBURY TALES

Adapted by Lindsay Price, Directed by Frances Bodiam

Performed in the gardens of the Hurlingham Club during the Hurlingham Festival.

30 August – 2 September **Wednesday–Friday performances: 7.15pm. Saturday performance: 2.30pm**



putney
arts
theatre

The Canterbury Tales will also be performed in the gardens of St Margaret's Church, Putney Park Lane, on 9 & 10 September at 3pm

Inspired by Chaucer's Canterbury Tales but re-written into modern day English with hilarious effect, this fun version loses none of the charm of the original tales that have had such an enduring legacy on popular culture.

Brought together by the Hostess of the Tabard Inn, here are our group of travellers on the way to Canterbury, among them the

Wife of Bath, with her bawdy manners, The Pardoner and his relics, the anxious Cook, and the Prioress with her dog.

This outdoor production is a delight for the senses with the cast performing in promenade style with lots of physical theatre, dancing and singing.

Tickets from <https://www.putneyartstheatre.org.uk/event-5304387>

Responding to the challenge – Plant don't Pave

The results of the Putney Society Front Garden Award scheme were announced at the end of June: 129 gardeners in the streets of Central Putney were acknowledged. Despite a long period of drought followed by a torrential rain storm we found many gardens which met all or some of our criteria. We were looking for:

- **Visual appeal** – a good selection of plants – a pleasing garden which leaves the onlooker with an overall visual impact.
- **Adding to biodiversity** – a good selection of pollinator plants – monocultures are not very good for pollinators
- **Design:** good use of available space and design coordination between plants and other elements.
- **Sense of care:** a well-maintained, healthy garden.
- **Originality:** Something that makes the garden unique, catches the eye and makes it linger. The feeling that you want to see more of this garden.



London in Bloom judges with Putney Society volunteers

10 residents gained a Gold award, 32 a Silver award and 87 a Bronze award. Congratulations to them all. A hint for those that did some planting but failed to win an award – plants in limited spaces such as pots and window boxes need a lot of watering in dry spells - it was sad to see many desiccated specimens. Many thanks to all our judges and those that assisted with our stalls on the two days that we gave away plants.

Our volunteer gardeners were very busy at the beginning of July, working on the Putney Tower Parklet. On 4 July, judges from London in Bloom came to assess our plot in the It's Your Neighbourhood category. We will have to wait until September to find out our score! Volunteers have continued to work with a local school during the summer term and the plot is now benefitting from seeds that they have sown. Planting still needs some attention as does the soil but we no longer have to carry water to the site – many thanks to JCDecaux who have installed a secure water tank at the rear of the site. If you are interested in joining our volunteer team to help with watering, planting and weeding - **please do contact me.**



Two of the winning gardens

FUTURE PANEL MEETINGS

New panel members very welcome. **Some panel meetings are now being held in person.** Please check details below. If you are new to panel meetings, please contact the panel convenor by email if you want to take part in the Zoom meeting and they will send out an invitation.

COMMUNITY

10 August, 14 September in person but contact convenors for confirmation of venue (18.30)

**Co-convenors:
Vicky Diamond & Val Jones**

vickysw15@aol.co.uk,
jones.val@gmail.com
T: 07746 022654 (Vicky)
T: 07780 674114 (Val)

TRANSPORT

12 September by Zoom (19.30), no meeting in August

**Convenor:
Stephen Luxford**

Stephen.luxford46@gmail.com

BUILDINGS

2 August, 6 September by Zoom (18.30)

**Convenor:
Andrew Catto**

ac@andrewcatto.co.uk
T: 07831 761327

OPEN SPACES

3 August, 7 September (18.30) in person at 28 Howards Lane

**Convenor:
Judith Chegwidden**

judith.chegwidden@gmail.com
T: 020 8788 4489

What is happening to the frontage of Oxford and Cambridge House?



In spring 2023, practically all of the long-established bushes (shown above) were removed from the planters in front of these office blocks at 182, Upper Richmond Road and they were replaced with some curiously shiny yellow woodchip. Until 12 July, there was also a concrete seat built into the front wall of this property, conveniently placed to be used by those waiting for eastbound buses from the 'Putney Station' stop. On 13 July it was walled up. The convenor of the Society's Buildings panel notes "My understanding of the law of easements is that since this has been there, and well used, ever since the buildings were put up around 1980 (well over 20 years ago), the public have acquired an easement to use this seat. Now they have to stand whilst waiting." Councillor Locker has taken up this loss of amenity with the Wandsworth planning department and the enforcement officer is investigating.

But bushes are not protected by Tree Protection orders so there is nothing to stop the owners of this building ripping out a vital green lung in this part of the Upper Richmond Road. Is this one more example of Putney landlords neglecting the interest of the wider community?

Letter to the Editor



Dear Editor,

In response to Mr Julian Berry's letter of your May edition, I have taken the onus upon me to reply as I am regarded as the foremost expert on the Revd Dr Brutus Green. We have been married for eight years this summer, and since an unfortunate incident on our honeymoon (where I endured a tour of over a dozen churches in a single day around Lake Como) we have an agreement that I will not be made to tolerate more than three church visits per day. No man could respect and hold more dear a love for church architecture.

Whilst I take utter delight in the idea of my husband ripping out the pews one by one, slinging them over his shoulder and then devilishly dancing round a bonfire of burning oak singing 'kumbayah my lord' whilst rattling a tambourine, the entire electoral roll at St Margaret's voted on the pew removal, the primary reason for which was utterly practical, and was not taken lightly. The pews were neither original nor integral to the original design, being twentieth-century, and the petition to remove them was backed unanimously by the PCC (trustees) and the Diocesan Advisory Committee and approved by the chancellor of the diocese with appropriate notice.

To Mr Berry - I don't think we've met at one of our community lunches (which sees over 40 guests per week), at the free weekly recital series on Sunday nights, at the free playgroup which hosts between 50-100 people every week, at an immersive performance of La Bohème, or any of the other services and events St Margaret's can now host with greater ease without being encumbered by unergonomic seating, but should he ever wish to visit, he'd be welcome to join in the community spirit or sit with me and heckle, perhaps from the few remaining pews at the back of the church.

Kind regards,

Rhiannon Llewellyn

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www.putneysociety.org.uk

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