



The Bulletin

For our members in Putney and Roehampton



June 2023

Walks around Roehampton organised by the Buildings Panel

**Saturday 24 June 2pm &
Sunday 25 June 2pm**

Roehampton residents mostly know Putney, but how many Putney members know Roehampton? This corner of SW15 has a greater variety of unique and historic buildings and rolling landscapes than you might expect. In place of the usual Monday evening talk, for June, we invite you and your friends to explore Roehampton ancient and modern on one or both of two guided walks led by Buildings Panel co-ordinator and local architect Andrew Catto.

Both start at 2pm from the **'Welcome to Roehampton'** sign by the junction of Roehampton Lane and Danebury Avenue. Buses 85, 170, 265, 419, 430 & 493, direct from different parts of SW15.

Saturday 24 June will be a circular tour focussing on the twin Alton Estates and the Georgian mansions hidden within these plus



some village highlights.

Sunday 25 June will start at the same point but lead (mostly) downhill to the Upper Richmond Road taking in more fine houses, our local University campus and earlier Homes for Heroes.

Both walks are free but please book your place on Eventbrite as numbers are limited.

Go to Eventbrite www.eventbrite.com and search for "Putney Society".

Heaven on Earth: A Road Trip Through Medieval Burgundy

Lecture 12th June 8.00pm Dryburgh Hall

Settled by the Romans, who brought wine and gastronomy, Burgundy is a region of France packed with stupendous and moving architectural wonders dating from the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Autun, Vezelay, Fontenay, Pontigny and Cluny were spiritual service stations for crusaders, pilgrims and monks, profoundly influencing Western European art in the Middle Ages.

The lecture by Dr Caroline Shenton, will provide an armchair tour through this wonderful Romanesque region, and look at how the Benedictine abbeys and Cistercian monasteries

there created some of the best wines in the world.

Visitors Welcome

Please check our website for details of how to register for the Zoom Lecture.

<https://www.theartsocietyswlondon.org.uk>



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

We are still seeking help to run the Society

Secretary:

Prime responsibility is seeing that the Society operates in accordance with its Constitution, good charitable practice and its own Standing Orders. Writes draft agendas for the Executive Committee (EC) and the Admin Sub-Committee (ASC) meetings. Arranges meeting rooms when necessary. Takes minutes of ASC, EC & AGM. Perhaps suitable for a job share?

Social Secretary:

Organises at least one social, face-to-face event per annum with possible additional scope to organise some local visits and walks.

If you are interested in either role, please contact the Chair (chair@putneysociety.org.uk)

Community Panel

Co-convenors: Victoria Diamond & Val Jones Vickysw15@aol.com & jones.val@gmail.com 07746 022654

You've no idea the difference YOU can make to the lives of those who are lonely and isolated. Some people have no family at all and just need face to face contact with a friendly person. This is from Age UK Wandsworth:

Calling Putney locals! Age UK Wandsworth desperately need volunteer befrienders in Putney. Can you spare 30-60mins a week after work, during the day or at the weekend to have a cup of tea and a chat with an isolated and lonely older person in your area? If yes, please email Marc on bah@ageukwandsworth.org.uk

Thamesfield, West Putney and Roehampton all had police SNT (Safer Neighbourhood Teams) meetings recently. The police warned again not to leave ANYTHING in a vehicle, including under the parcel shelf at the back, as this area is now being targeted. Don't put laptops or phones under seats – apparently would be thieves wander down roads with their phones looking to pick up Bluetooth signals, which alerts them to electronic devices nearby. Criminals now don't just clone remote access keys to cars – they can now buy a legal fob that writes a key, just by taking the signal from the car! Putting a physical barrier such as a steering wheel lock does act as a deterrent. Thamesfield has the highest monthly rate of theft from vehicles, probably because that's where the Town Centre is located. Do warn any

visitors you have arriving by car not to leave anything in it.

Positive searches were conducted in West Putney, leading to further discoveries of firearms and a vast number of stolen items and identifications of other offences across London. There was also a burglary from which information obtained led the police to an address in Ealing where they recovered a number of stolen pedal cycles.

Roehampton Community Week has been so successful the past two years that it is now going to be over three weeks from 5 – 25 August. This promises to be full of activities and events for all ages, and will continue to help grow the community spirit in Roehampton. So much has been achieved since the first lockdown, with Roehampton Response Network leading to the formation of the Roehampton Women's Network and other groups that are all working together for the benefit of everyone in Roehampton. Congratulations to all involved.

There is so much new on the health front, e.g., how General Practices are employing more staff with differing roles, such as physiotherapists and physician assistants, that we think it would be useful to have a public meeting later in the year where we can learn more about these new functions, including a new App which can help patients self-manage certain ailments.

Transport Panel

Convenor: Stephen Luxford. Stephen.luxford46@gmail.com

Many will have read of plans to close Wandsworth Bridge for essential repairs for ten weeks from 23 July and wondered how much of the displaced traffic will now come our way and what this might mean for air quality? We will look closely for any changes in our air quality, and if there is a dip, hopefully it will only have a short-term impact.

The Council's Citizen Assembly on air quality has now concluded following its final meeting at the end of April. Details of the concluding remarks can be found on the Council website.

So, what next? The facilitators of the exercise will produce a final report for the Council by the end of May and the Council will give an initial response by mid-June. Following further consideration, a full Council response and a new Air Quality Action Plan will be issued in September.

So how will we know if the air quality in our High St and

surrounding roads is improving? The Society are exploring with the Council whether we can have further air monitors in Putney, ideally near to where more vulnerable people are likely to congregate such as schools and doctors' surgeries. More news when we have it.

Finally, a victory for the Society. While we can't claim to be the sole influence, we have long campaigned for cleaner buses on the High Street with a particular focus on the very polluting 93. At long last the first electric 93s have now been spotted serving Putney, with more to come. Our attention will turn to challenging the remaining full diesel service, the 39 bus route.

Looking ahead, we are considering holding a public meeting later in the year on river transport and plan to approach the Port of London Authority to speak. If you have any thoughts about this issue, please let me know so we can take this into account.

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

8 June, 13 July
by Zoom (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

13 June, 11 July
by Zoom (19.30)

Convenor:
Stephen Luxford

Stephen.luxford46@gmail.com

BUILDINGS

7 June, 5 July
by Zoom (18.30)

Convenor:
Andrew Catto

ac@andrewcatto.co.uk
T: 07831 761327

OPEN SPACES

1 June by Zoom (18.30)
no meeting in July

Convenor:
Judith Chegwidgen

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

Open Spaces Panel convenor: Judith Chegwidden judith.chegwidden@gmail.com 020 8788 4489

May has been a busy month for panel members as we prepare for the Society's Front Garden Award scheme. Our leaflet promoting the message "Plant not Pave" was delivered to over 1,000 households in central Putney. Two successful stalls giving away plants and gardening advice operated on 13 and 20 May when we met a number of neophyte gardeners who went away clutching some starter plants. We hope that we will see the results when we judge central Putney gardens from 4 – 18 June. But more needs to be done to combat the tide of concrete and impermeable paving – why was planning permission given for the impermeable paving over of a large front garden in a local conservation area? Well vegetated gardens help to keep temperatures down in hot weather, provide crucial habitats for wildlife, help absorb polluting particulate matter and are a delight for the eye. What does hard paving have to offer?

With the encouragement of the site owner, JCDecaux, we have entered the parklet on the corner of upper Richmond Road and Charlwood Road in the London in Bloom category, "It's Your Neighbourhood". In the 15 or so

months since we started to help with this parklet we have improved the soil with manure and mulch, nurtured some of the existing planting by reverting to hand weeding rather than a herbicide blast and learned that we have to choose drought resistant plants on a site with no water supply. We are also developing our links with Our Lady of Victories School, where children have planted seeds and corms and helped with planting out some perennials and shrubs. They can now see nasturtiums shooting up in the planters and greenery from the corms (*Liatrix spicata*) peeping through. Before the beginning of June, we will be planting out some more perennials – so we hope that the site is truly blooming when the judge arrives at the start of July.

We were delighted to welcome Lucy Hart the Head Gardener at Fulham Palace on 22 May. Her talk on Increasing biodiversity in the gardens of Fulham Palace was riveting. Surveys of butterfly, moth and bird numbers have been used to determine planting across the garden from wilder patches to ornamental beds.

Buildings Panel convenor: Andrew Catto ac@andrewcatto.co.uk 020 8785 0077

This month's notes are about the workings of the planning system as much as the individual cases the Panel looked at in May. Workings that seem to get slower by the day. At the time of writing my architect's practice has four straightforward planning applications overdue for decision by Wandsworth Council. One is late because they 'forgot' to post a site notice. On another we have been asked for extra time because 'the Council are still experiencing a high volume of applications. Data from the Government's Planning Portal however says applications are down 12% on last year.

Slow decisions might be acceptable if they were at least consistent. Sadly, despite sustainable drainage being Council policy (as well as good for reducing flood risk) we have spotted at least one recent consent for concreting over a front garden in a conservation area. The drawings said 'brick paving', but it's still concrete below. Please Wandsworth Council - can 'permeable' become a standard condition?

But they do also get it right. Many of you will be familiar with the tables on Putney Lower Common outside the Spencer Arms. These were recently given a new five-year temporary consent conditional on both the seats and the pub toilets being available to all, not just pub customers. Not surprisingly this application received lots of comments in support from locals.

For those refused planning permission, the next step is an Appeal to the Planning Inspectorate. This is even slower, so recent decisions reflect last year's decisions from the Council. Good news for one Society member who has

been allowed photovoltaic panels on his conservation area roof, but not so lucky for the Putney Park Lane resident refused the same thing. I hear that Wandsworth is investing some of their pension fund in a company installing ground source heat pumps Will the Council start approving the air source variety which we will all need in the next few years as gas boilers are phased out?

Well done those West Putney members who rallied round in huge numbers to oppose an extra storey on Elystan Court on Howards Lane, where the Council's refusal has now been backed up at appeal. Speak up in numbers and you can be heard all the way to Bristol. Opposition from the panel and neighbours also helped get a refusal for the roof terrace built without consent on Burstock Road that has now been removed.

The panel has been watching emerging proposals from Wandsworth Council for 'infill' blocks to add extra social housing on the Eastwood and Ashburton estates, and one coming up soon for Bessborough Road. We are aware that some residents don't want any development here, but what we see so far (no final schemes yet) seems to be in scale with the original blocks and leaves more open space than can be found on traditional streets or the rows of standard houses I recently saw spreading across open fields in the North of England.

I'm looking forward to seeing many of you in person in Roehampton on the 24 & 25 June where some of these sites will be on the route of our walks. See page 1 for details.

Alton, a place I call home

'Alton, a place I call home' is a multi-generational theatre project created and performed by the residents of Roehampton's Alton Estate.

Working with Group 64 Theatre Company, residents of the Alton Estate have created an exciting new piece of theatre that offers an insight into the past, present and future of Alton.

'Story catchers' have been collecting a multitude of stories from all over the estate from people of all generations, to show and celebrate the rich culture and joyful sense of community that exists there.

G64 Directors have been working with children from Heathmere Primary School, along with



teenagers, adults and older people, to understand what it really means to be from Alton!

'Alton, a place I call home' will be performed on the Alton Estate and at Putney Arts Theatre as part of Wandsworth Arts Fringe 2023.

DOWNSHIRE FIELD (BULL GREEN)

Alton Estate, London, London,
London, SW15 4DY

10 June, 2.00pm — 3.00pm

10 June, 4.00pm — 5.00pm

PUTNEY ARTS THEATRE

Sunday 25th June 7.45pm

Free – no booking required

WANDSWORTH ARTS
FRiNGE



St Mary's Church Putney
Putney High Street
SW15 1SN

Saturday
17th June 2023
7.30pm

The Ionian Singers
Cristina Di-Bernardo harp
Jocelyn Coates soprano
Timothy Salter conductor/piano

composers include
Elgar · Howells · Faure
Chaminade · Debussy
Ravel · Skempton · Salter

Tickets £15.00 (£5.00 for under 16s & full-time students)
in advance from Eventbrite or 07932 766513 or info@ioniansingers.co.uk
The Ionian Singers Charity No 285271



The Friends of Queen Mary's Hospital Car Boot sales:

11 June and 9 July
7.30-11.30am

And then 2nd Sunday
of every month up to
12 November
Queen Mary's
Hospital car park,
Roehampton Lane

Blankets £5, Cars £10,
Large Vans £15 –
no need to book
www.friendsqmh.com
/car-boot-sale

Letter to the Editor



Dear Editor,

I noticed with some concern that the Rev. Brutus Green has been appointed President of the Putney Society.

Members may not be aware that he has recently organised the removal and destruction of the original pews from inside St Margaret's Church in Putney Park Lane that were an integral part of the overall design of the interior.

A key role for the Society is looking after Putney's conservation issues, and I have to question whether he is therefore the right choice for such an important position.

Yours etc

Julian Berry

Editor's note: We hope to get a response from St Margaret's for the July Bulletin.

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www.putneysociety.org.uk

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