



# The Bulletin

April 2020



## A cheerful addition to the High Street - Oarsome Putney

Rowing may have been cancelled this year but we can still celebrate our rowing tradition with the display of decorated oars outside Putney Station. Practice social distancing, but find time to look at all the oars painted by local schools and organisations. Positively Putney Chief Executive, Nicola Grant, came up with this idea and within a month local volunteers had created these great designs. See if you can spot the Putney Society oar painted by one of our members, David Irwin. Many thanks to Nicola and all the artists.



## Donating to food banks

Over the next weeks and months it is very likely that more and more people will come to rely on their local food bank. At the same time many of us will be switching to shopping on-line and will no longer be able to drop food into the bins at our local supermarket.

The Wandsworth Foodbank operates a depot on the Ashburton estate as well as at other locations around Wandsworth. The Trussell Trust operates in Battersea, Wimbledon and Kew. If you cannot donate in kind, both organisations have a website where you can make a donation.

If you are ordering from Ocado, they have a donate food button, which is easy to add to your regular order. Look out for a similar facility on other delivery services.

## Planning for the next few months

While the government continues to advise minimal social contact – particularly for the over 70s - the Putney Society will not be organising any face-to-face meetings. You will have read that we have cancelled the AGM, and the hustings planned for April has also been cancelled in line with the postponement of the GLA and Mayoral elections until 2021.

However, we will attempt to keep the work of the Society ticking over and panels will try to operate using email and online conferencing and collaboration tools. If you want to participate in an online Panel meeting (we will attempt to keep to the same schedule of meetings as set out in the centre pages), please let the Panel convener know.

For the moment we plan to continue with the monthly bulletin although it may be

reduced in scope. In addition we will be regularly posting information on the Putney Society website.

Finally, can we make an appeal to the 114 members for whom we do not have an email address – we sent out letters to you notifying you of the cancellation of the AGM but it would have been much more efficient (and cheaper) to have sent an email. We understand that some prefer to receive a paper Bulletin and we are happy to continue with this method of distribution. However, for quick messages such as this cancellation, an email is better.

**Do let our membership officer know your email address if you have one - [membership@putneysociety.org.uk](mailto:membership@putneysociety.org.uk).** We shall only contact you by email if absolutely necessary.

# Buildings Panel

Co-convenor: Andrew Catto  
ac@andrewcatto.co.uk 020 8785 0077

Many of you will have noticed the work that has been going on since the autumn to replace the pavements down the east side of Putney High Street. It's part of a scheme to make the town centre greener and more pleasant, although sadly the pavements won't be as wide as we had hoped – apparently the drains can't be moved. So imagine my surprise to go to a meeting, organised by the council this month, with new consultants they have appointed to bid for the 'Future High Streets Fund', (after securing stage one money for this), to discover that nobody had told these consultants what is already planned. Wake up Wandsworth!

Also on the High Street you may have noticed the two storey high advert wrapped around the building on the corner with Putney Bridge Road 31-33. Wandsworth had refused, but consent was granted on appeal on the basis that this would be hung on scaffolding that was needed for essential repairs. Which is odd since there's no scaffolding behind that bill board and the owners want to pull the building down as soon as they get planning consent (the 2017 application is still 'on hold') for something a lot bigger. The future of our

town centre is too serious for these games of tit for tat. We have written to the Council asking for enforcement action to get this down.

Elsewhere the volume of planning applications continues to be lower than usual. Possibly a good thing since the system is still catching up after the cancellation of December's Planning committee - which would have been on General Election day, and the process is sure to get slower when virus precautions hit.

I've already mentioned a meeting about the Future High Streets bid, but this was one of five meetings last month with the council and other local organisations where the panel was represented. My sincere thanks to all those who work so hard on your behalf.

My thanks too to Caroline Whitehead, Lynn Percy & Phil Evison for their really entertaining and informative talk on the 24th February about the history of rowing and rowing clubs on the Embankment. I'm not sure how we top that, but we are still looking for suggestions on a topic for the autumn. Is there some other (buildings related) aspect of Putney we have missed?

# Transport Panel

Convenor: Stephen Luxford  
Stephen.luxford46@gmail.com

The Society is backing a campaign by Putney MP, Fleur Anderson, for step-free access at East Putney underground station. Fleur spoke in a Parliamentary debate in March arguing the case. While nearby Southfields already has a lift and Wimbledon Park is getting one by the summer there are no plans for our underground station, despite East Putney having many more passengers than both these stations. Installing lifts at the tube station would enable those with mobility issues, or simply too much to carry, to access services and lead to better integration with the nearby railway station. Our Deputy Chair, Jonathan Callaway, followed this up by raising it with the Mayor at his People Question's Time meeting in Battersea. Wandsworth Council is currently producing a feasibility study and is shortlisting achievable lift options.

On a more mundane note, we are also pressing TfL for action to resolve the long standing issue of incorrect destination boards at East Putney.

The Society is currently undertaking an air quality monitoring exercise on our local roads most directly affected by the Hammersmith Bridge closure – Lower Richmond Road, outside the Odeon and Putney Bridge Road. We hope to be able to analyse the results by early May and plan to compare the outcome with a similar exercise on the same spots in 2018.

Finally, while we may be largely house bound while seeking to avoid the virus, please continue to email if there are transport matters of concern. I appreciate the support already received for the step-free access at East Putney campaign.

## FUTURE PANEL MEETINGS

Panel meetings will be held by using email or online conferencing and collaboration tools such as Skype and Zoom. Please contact the convenor to find out how to join. They will probably keep to the same timetable – but again please check.

### COMMUNITY

9 April & 14 May 18.30

Co-convenors:

Vicky Diamond & Val Jones

vickysw15@aol.co.uk,

jones.val@gmail.com

T: 07746 022654 (VLD)

0208 788 4092 (VJ)

### TRANSPORT

14 April & 12 May  
19.30

Convenor:

Stephen Luxford

Stephen.luxford46

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### BUILDINGS

1 April & 6 May  
19.00

Convenor:

Andrew Catto

ac@andrewcatto.co.uk

T: 07831 761327

### OPEN SPACES

2 April & 7 May  
19.00

Convenor:

Judith Chegwidzen

judith.chegwidzen@gmail.com

T: 020 8788 4489

# Community Panel

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

As I write the nation – and the world – are working their way through a health crisis caused by a virus about which we currently know very little... this is understandably causing fear, panic and distress, and is a situation most of us will not have faced before. Such spread of diseases across the world is not new, however – history books are filled with accounts of bubonic plague, leprosy, tuberculosis and, more recently, HIV, SARS and Ebola – and the ways in which governments have tackled these in attempting to protect their peoples. We will hear much about ‘quarantine’ and ‘self-isolation’ over the coming weeks, as advice based on scientific and medical evidence records the benefits of these strategies in preventing spread of disease. Quarantine (from the Italian ‘quarantina’ – forty days) – reportedly first used in Ragusa (*modern day Dubrovnik*) in 1377 (*and probably much earlier*) was the recommended method and period of isolation, a lazaret was a quarantine station for maritime travellers, and in the 17th century, the Derbyshire village of Eyam managed to protect many of its inhabitants from plague

by sealing itself off from the outside world. So, much changes and nothing changes...

There are many ways we can help one another through these troubling times - many local roads and areas have established email, Facebook or WhatsApp groups, (*see the back page for ways in which Wandsworth Council are coordinating these efforts*) to keep in touch with one another and to ensure that neighbours – particularly those who live alone and/or are older – are offered help with shopping and other practicalities - and contact. None of us should underestimate the importance of the last of these – preserving contact with one another is vital, both to wellbeing, and to ensuring that no one is left alone, frightened or feeling helpless. A cheery voice or message can brighten the most miserable of days. And as Esther Rantzen urged the BBC, amid all the information and advice, please also give us some moments of light-heartedness and laughter, to help us through these troubled times . . . Stay safe and well, everyone.

# Open Spaces Panel

**Convenor:** Judith Chegwidden  
judith.chegwidden@gmail.com 020 8788 4489

The Panel welcomed Patrick Langley, the Arboricultural Manager from Enable, to its meeting in early March. Enable’s arboricultural officers are responsible for all the trees in our streets, parks and open spaces and have been busy planting hundreds of trees a year over the past few years. While many survive, some do not, particularly in a hot and dry summer. If you notice that tree planting has taken place in your street do water the one closest to you – a watering can once a week will help. There is an ongoing programme for tree planting, so if you know of a street where you think trees could be planted please do let me know. Sadly there are some streets where planting is impossible because of the concentration of services immediately under the pavement.

Planning applications where trees are slated for removal are also reviewed by Enable’s Arboricultural Manager, but opposing views from the developer’s arboricultural consultant often prevail. If Wandsworth Council is serious about its Climate Action Plan then there is a real role for tree officers in setting out a requirement for replacement trees to match those removed, in terms of

capacity for carbon sequestration, and for this advice to be implemented.

At the moment we are still making plans for Front Garden Awards in June. The format will be changed from last year. We will concentrate on those streets off the High Street with small front gardens, to try and show that it is possible to increase biodiversity and the streetscape, even if your patch is small. More news on the format of the awards next month.

Inspired by the talk about swifts organised by the Friends of Wandsworth Park, we will work with the Buildings Panel to see if it is possible to require developers to include swift nesting boxes on all new developments. The destruction of nesting sites is a key reason for the decline in swift numbers.

We were hoping to plant two *Prunus avium Plena* in the grounds of Paddock School this month, but a current unavailability of this variety has meant that this has now been put off until the next tree planting season in the autumn.

## PUTNEY SOCIETY CONTACTS

See website for full details:  
[www.putneysociety.org.uk](http://www.putneysociety.org.uk)

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# Community response to Covid-19

In response to the coronavirus outbreak more than a thousand volunteer groups have mobilised across the UK in less than a week.

Focused in specific communities, and even on individual streets, people are coordinating via Facebook and WhatsApp to help those around them who are at a higher risk.

Wandsworth council is helping to coordinate this community response and their advice is reproduced below and can be accessed at <https://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/public-health/coronavirus/how-you-or-your-organisation-can-help/>. If you are an individual, business or organisation that is interested in helping, the council is encouraging you to fill in the online form (*see link above*)

If you are a group in the borough who has been formed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the council want you to contact the Wandsworth Care Alliance (*see link above*) to make sure you have the right processes in place to ensure the safety and wellbeing of those residents who are most vulnerable during this time. This will also allow the Council and its voluntary partners to work together to effectively mobilise individuals who are able to help and match them to suitable volunteering tasks. By registering through the online form, your details will be passed to other relevant voluntary groups helping with the coronavirus response.

It will also enable the council to partner you with key groups, including

Age UK Wandsworth, who will allocate you to volunteering tasks. These may include:

- Shopping for food/supplies
- Delivering food/supplies to vulnerable residents
- Picking-up and delivering prescriptions
- Having a friendly phone conversation with those at risk of loneliness when in isolation
- Walking dogs for those self-isolating
- Supporting with critical transport needs
- Helping with digital skills coaching

#### Other ways of helping include:

- Donating to food banks
- Donating money to registered charities who are supporting the vulnerable and isolated
- Responsible social-distancing and self-isolation
- Avoiding panic buying groceries and leaving those who are vulnerable without basic items
- Avoiding booking delivery slots with supermarkets. Please leave them free for those who are housebound and really need them.

Finally the emergency powers bill now going through parliament will dismantle the planning restriction on restaurants which means they can offer takeaway services at will – a real opportunity to support local businesses.

## Something to read while staying at home

A survey of Putney in early-Tudor times, an unspeakably wicked murder linked to 1920s Battersea that still makes the blood run cold, and the end of Wandsworth's trolley-buses in 1960. These are just some of the articles featuring in the latest Wandsworth Historian. Copies are available price £3.00 plus £1.50 for P&P from Neil Robson, 119 Heythorp Street, London SW18 5BT or by emailing [020neil119@gmail.com](mailto:020neil119@gmail.com). Please make cheques payable to the 'Wandsworth Historical Society'. On-line payment also accepted. [www.wandsworthhistory.org.uk](http://www.wandsworthhistory.org.uk)

## Message from Thames Philharmonic Choir

After the government's announcement on Monday the decision has been made to cancel the concert on 28 March at Cadogan Hall. For those of you who have purchased tickets the hall have kindly agreed that all ticket money will be refunded. It is very disappointing the concert has to be cancelled but it is in the best interest for us all.

## Membership Drive

Welcome to the new member in Colinette Road who won a copy of Andrew Wilson's lovely book "Wild about Putney and Roehampton". It has taken a while to track her down (the frustration of emails going to spam) but she joined at our recruitment stall in the Upper Richmond Road in December, when we entered all new members into a draw.

