



The Bulletin

August 2020



Annual General Meeting

Monday 28 September 2020 at 7.30pm By videoconference

You will probably remember that our annual AGM last March had to be cancelled owing to the COVID-19 pandemic. As the resumption of physical meetings still looks to be some way away, we have decided to hold an online AGM in September using videoconferencing in order to conduct necessary Society business such as the elections of the Society's President and Vice-Presidents, Officers, Executive Committee, and Auditor for the next 6 months. Members will be able to attend and vote online.

Please note that this online meeting will only discuss AGM business; there will not be a speaker on this occasion. We plan to hold the 2021 AGM in March in the usual form

unless the pandemic is still with us.

The next issue of the Bulletin, the September Bulletin, will include details of how to participate in the online meeting.

Enclosed with or attached to that bulletin will be the papers you will need for the AGM if you wish to participate online: the AGM agenda with 2019/20 Annual Report, and the Treasurer's report and 2019 accounts.

If you wish to stand for election to the Executive Committee, please contact the Secretary and she will send you a nomination form. Nominations should be returned to the Secretary by Monday 21 September 2020.



How can YOU help with the work of the Putney Society?

The Putney Society depends on its trustees and volunteers to keep functioning – so this a call for any of you that can spare a little time to come forward as a trustee (member of the Executive Committee) or as a volunteer.

If you have an interest in our built environment, transport issues, air quality, waste reduction, our open spaces or anything that makes Putney a better place – then think about getting involved.

You could help with our campaigns, admin tasks, recruitment or social events. If you can spare a couple of hours a month please do contact the Chair or the Secretary to find out more.

A Putney link to Czechoslovakia

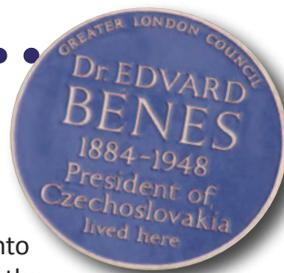
Who links a GLC blue plaque on 26 Gwendolen Avenue, Putney, "a quarrel in a faraway country between people of whom we know nothing", and the speaker of those shameful words, in one of the less glorious episodes of Britain's history, brandishing a piece of paper to an enthusiastic crowd at Heston aerodrome on 30th September 1938? The answer is Dr. Edvard Beneš (1884-1948), president-in-exile of Czechoslovakia during World War Two, who lived in Putney for two years, from late 1938 to late 1940.

The words were spoken on the radio on 27th September 1938 by PM Neville Chamberlain. The 'quarrel' was Hitler's pressure on Czechoslovakia to cede the territories occupied by the Sudeten Germans – about a fifth of the population. And the piece of paper was the Munich agreement, accepting the cession of the Sudetenland to Germany and signed in the early hours of the 30th by the leaders of Britain, France, Italy and Germany, but not Czechoslovakia.

Beneš had no choice but to resign, on 5th October, and almost immediately went into exile in Britain, suppressing the resentment he must have felt. With his wife Hana, he moved into 26 Gwendolen Avenue, already leased by his nephew Bohus, and set up a National Liberation Committee. In November 1940, with the danger posed by air-raids and feeling they would be safer in the country, they moved to a house in the village of Aston Abbots, Bucks.

On 16th May 1945, a week after VE-Day, Beneš triumphantly re-entered Prague and restored democracy. However, debilitated by the travails of his country, two strokes in 1947 and the 1948 Communist 'coup', plus the defenestration (probably murder) in March 1948 of his friend Jan Masaryk, son of the first president, he resigned again, on 7th June, and died, a broken man, on 3rd September 1948, nine years to the day after Britain declared war.

A more detailed version may be published in a future issue of the Wandsworth Historian.



Buildings Panel

Co-convenor: Andrew Catto
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A month after I wrote about the High Street starting to reopen it's noticeable how much still has not. I did get my jacket back from the cleaners, and have now even had a haircut, but the number of people on the pavements is still noticeably down, while the number of empty shops is rising. Please tell me that you are shopping local. Recovery needs us all.

Wandsworth Council has put the Planning Applications Committee onto video conferencing and is still receiving and dealing with planning applications, but it's mostly low key domestic stuff, or keeping alive unbuilt consents like the nine flats agreed (for the second time) for the roof of Belvedere Court opposite the Leisure Centre. The big developers, with one exception, are building out that which they had already started, but holding off on new ideas.

The exception of course is Wandsworth Council, still pushing ahead with only mildly tweaked proposals to demolish the centre of Roehampton's Alton estate to make way for 800 over dense and mostly private flats. We have objected strongly to this by now outdated proposal as much for failing to tackle the Climate Crisis

the council so publically embraced, as for the social impact of ten years heavy construction. The local buses were already full before the Covid restrictions. The flats proposed barely meet current energy regulations let alone the targets for 2030 or 2050. They will need expensive upgrading even before the last is built. We are asking the council to take advantage of partner Redrow's decision to quit the London market to cancel this white elephant and consider refurbishment of the existing buildings as an alternative. Late in the day Heritage England have 'listed' the landscape on much of the estate, which has pushed out the date for comments on the application to early August.

Redrow's decision reflects the fact that families who have spent too long in lockdown want houses with gardens, even if further away, instead of flats. Meanwhile we are watching the Government's new announcements about relaxing planning rules still further to stimulate construction. Maybe we do need to allow homes to replace surplus shops, but is two extra storeys on top as well the right way to go? Insulation and upgrading our older homes would create more jobs than 'Build, Build, Build'.

Transport Panel

Convenor: Stephen Luxford
Stephen.luxford46@gmail.com

Work began in late July on refurbishing Wandsworth Bridge. For around two months, probably till the end of September, traffic will be reduced to single lanes. Pedestrian and cycle access should be unaffected. The Council anticipate that some traffic may instead divert to Putney Bridge.

Meanwhile at Hammersmith where the Bridge has been closed for over a year TfL are proposing to install a temporary pedestrian bridge nearby to enable repair work on the main bridge. This is subject to planning approval. There is still no news as to whether there will be funding to undertake the main Bridge strengthening as TfL are very short of funds particularly given the sharp decline in fare income during lockdown.

The Council's High Street improvements which were temporarily suspended during the lockdown have resumed. Work to revamp the junctions between the

High Street and Felsham, Monserrat and Disraeli Roads have all now been completed. Parklets – attractive green seating areas – have been installed in Felsham and Monserrat Roads. Two double tiered bike racks have been installed in Disraeli Road but with, to date, few users. Pavement widening from Disraeli Road along the High Street is ongoing. The wider pavement will run close to Specsavers at which point it returns to normal width. There is also a wider pavement around the junction with Montserrat Road and this will eventually extend south towards Werter Road. However there will still be some significant pinch points on the eastern pavement which will hamper pedestrian flow.



FUTURE PANEL MEETINGS

For the moment all panel meetings are held on Zoom. We will let you know as soon as the guidance allows us to meet in person. 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

13 August, 10 September
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

11 August, 8 September
by Zoom (19.30)

Convenor:
Stephen Luxford

Stephen.luxford46@gmail.com

BUILDINGS

5 August, 2 September
by Zoom (18.00)

Convenor:
Andrew Catto

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OPEN SPACES

6 August, 3 September
by Zoom (18.00)

Convenor:
Judith Chegwidan

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

Community Panel

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

For those who don't have access to a computer, but want to know what's happening locally:

Putney Library is open Mon 10am-2.30pm, closed Tues and Sundays, open Wed-Sat 10am-2.30pm. Call or email, or reserve online via the library catalogue and they will pack and have a selection of items ready for you to collect. Call on 020 8780 3085 or 01527 852 385 (24 Hour Renewal Line). The public toilets remain shut. You can book Computer sessions, for a max of 30 minutes. All payments are to be cashless, and there are no events, activities, socialisation or meetings to be held for the foreseeable future. There is no studying in the library either. You return borrowed items, which go into quarantine, in the drop box at the entrance to the library.

Parking permits – if you can't do it online, ring 0208 871 6000

Freedom Pass – 0300 330 1433

Oxfam Putney is now open (looking for volunteers).

Call before taking in donations on 0208 789 3235. Open Tues and Wed, Fri & Sat 11am-5pm. Other charity shops are also opening up.

Richmond Park:

- Pembroke Lodge gardens are now open. Tea rooms open 11am-4pm. Parking on weekdays accessible from Richmond Gate. No parking at the weekends.
- Isabella Plantation is now open again
- Some public toilets are now open
- Cyclists are now welcome on weekdays on all roads during opening hours. Weekend cycling is for commuting keyworkers and under 12's with accompanying family only.
- Blue badge holders can park in Sheen Gate car park, accessible via Sheen Gate every day 7am-7pm

This was all as of the 16 July, and is subject to change!

Open Spaces Panel

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

One of the adverse effects of the period of lockdown has been the startling increase in the **volume of litter** in all our open spaces. In July, the Royal Parks reported that soaring lockdown littering levels led to an astonishing 258.4 tonnes of rubbish collected from London's eight Royal Parks in June alone - the equivalent in weight of 20 new London buses, or 74 elephants. Richmond Park accounted for 42t of this total – compared with just 5.6t in June 2019. Similar increases in the volume of litter have been reported on Wimbledon and Putney Commons and in Wandsworth Park – and this despite the installation of more litter bins.

Plastic waste can get worked into the ground, plastic bags can blow onto waterways harming waterfowl, and wildlife can ingest items causing them pain or even death. For example, there is a video on the Royal Parks website showing a deer in Richmond Park with a

discarded inner tube wrapped around its antlers <https://youtu.be/pvUJ5QtfsYw> . While the increase in visitor numbers may account for some of the increase in litter, there also seems to be a change in attitude to our communal open spaces and a lack of concern about the impact of individual actions.

The future of our parks - don't forget to take part in the consultation that is now under way that will help shape future plans for the 32 designated parks and commons that are open to the public across Wandsworth. The council want up-to-date information to ensure that there is adequate provision of accessible, high-quality open spaces that meet the needs and aspirations of local communities, local people and people who work in or visit the borough. <https://haveyoursay.citizenspace.com/environment/open-space/> **Closing Date 08/08/2020**

PUTNEY SOCIETY CONTACTS

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

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Proposed West Putney Low Traffic Neighbourhood (LTN)

The Society understands that this exploratory LTN will be based on the analysis and proposals set out in Paper 20-059 at the Strategic Planning and Transport Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 6 February 2020. In brief the proposals are:

Dover House Road

- Alteration of mini roundabout/ parking bays and installation of a bus gate to the north of the Parkstead Road mini roundabout to remove rat-running issues.
- Point closure to the north of the Parkstead Road/ Huntingfield Road mini roundabout to compliment the Dover House/ Parkstead Road bus gate and remove north-south route.

- Point closure to the north of Parkstead Road junction with Putney Park Lane to compliment the Dover House/ Parkstead Road bus gate and remove north-south route.



The bus gate could be enforceable at all times or alternatively could be restricted to peak hours only, this would permit access at weekends and off-peak for residents.

Westleigh Avenue - removal of mark only 'phantom' traffic calming in lieu of speed bumps.

Carslake Road

- Explore the feasibility of a school street with Ark Putney Academy
- Review existing road layout, looking at pedestrian crossing points, cycling opportunities, parking and waiting restrictions

Genoa Avenue - Stop-up Genoa Road for a distance of 60m from Westleigh Ave. as there are no direct property frontages in this section and the bus movement would still be permitted. This would initially be a trial to understand the impact and appropriate measures developed.

In addition some junctions within the area would be improved to improve visibility and options for improving cycling routes will be considered.

Be vigilant, be tick aware!

Ticks are prevalent - and can transmit Lyme Disease

Now that our beautiful parks, gardens and woodlands are open again, many of us have seized the opportunity to be out walking, enjoying the benefits outdoor activities bring. It's good to be aware, though, of the risk of contracting Lyme disease from tick bites . . .

Ticks are present throughout the UK and Ireland, prevalent in London and the south east, and found in urban parks and gardens as well as in rural areas. Spread by infected ticks, Lyme disease is a bacterial infection. The first thing you might notice, if you find a tick and think you have been bitten, is a developing 'bullseye' rash, like the one shown (but not everyone gets a rash like this – see websites below for more details). Following the bite you may

develop other symptoms, including fatigue, headaches and flu-like symptoms. So when you are out walking in areas of woodland, heathland or long grass, try to protect yourselves – and don't forget pets, as they can be bitten too

- Stay on paths and avoid long grass and woodland when out walking
- Tuck trousers into socks, wear long sleeves, use insect repellent
- Ticks can be tiny and easy to miss - check yourselves, children and pets when you get home
- Remove ticks as soon as you see them – see websites below for how to do this



- If you develop a rash or other symptoms see a doctor as soon as possible

If you would like to know more, these websites have lots of information:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/lyme-disease/>

<https://www.rcgp.org.uk/clinical-and-research/resources/toolkits/lyme-disease-toolkit.aspx>

<https://lymediseaseuk.com/>

Happy walking!