

## **The Putney Society presents your June 2020 email Bulletin**

**Dear Putney Society Members,**

I hope that you and your families and friends are keeping well through this difficult time.

As the lockdown is eased, we need to ensure that this takes place in a safe and controlled way to avoid a second peak of infections. As you will see below the Society is trying to play its role in making sure this is achieved in Putney and Roehampton.

Kind regards

**Robert Arguile**  
**Chair**

The Putney Society has continued to operate under lockdown restrictions, but this month the panels have all had lively Zoom meetings and your Executive also met online. There has been much to consider as both Wandsworth Council and the local Business Improvement District, Positively Putney, came up with plans for times when more businesses will open, but social distancing will have to be maintained. Our Chair has been in communication with the Leader of the Council and Councillor Ellis, the Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Transportation to advocate for measures which will provide the safest possible conditions in our narrow High Street for both pedestrians and cyclists.

We will continue to use the Society social media accounts and website to disseminate information about local services including council initiatives, shop opening hours and delivery services and our Facebook account to provide some light relief and entertainment including links to online events. Some of you will continue to receive the Bulletin as hard copy – if you have an email address that we can use do let me know.

I am afraid that the Bulletin remains in its rather limited format, but do not hesitate to contact me if you want your views included in the next edition. Meanwhile here are the reports from our Panels. If you want to participate in a panel meeting then do let the convenor know so they can send out a link to the Zoom session.

**Judith Chegwidden**  
**Bulletin Editor**

### **From the Buildings Panel**

As I mentioned last month Wandsworth's planning service is still operating and, despite all the officers working at home, seems to be processing applications as fast as before. But, beware that a new government concession now means that they don't have to post notices of new applications on the streets. The Society is still checking the weekly lists, but we would ask you all to 'stay alert' and let us know of anything new in your area.

Your panel is still meeting too – now on Zoom and by email – and in May commented on three applications, took part in on-line London Forum meetings with other societies and responded to queries from several local residents.

It seems I was wrong to say that large scale applications had stopped. The April on-line Planning Applications Committee approved a considerable variation to allow 37 more flats on the site of the now demolished B&Q on Swandon Way. Wandsworth Council have now opened on-line only consultations on revisions to the 10 storey 'Levellers Court' scheme for the corner of Putney High Street and Putney Bridge Road (no real change, but we have responded). There are also consultations on the revised proposals for the demolition and rebuilding of the heart of the Alton estate. Considering how long these have taken, the changes are limited and this still appears to be a really bad deal both for the affected residents and for you as council tax payers. 5 extra 'affordable' homes still leaves the Council committed to subsidising this essentially private development with over £100 million of your money in exchange for 30 extra council homes. Take this chance to tell them what you think of this by going to <https://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/search-planning-applications/> and entering the application number - 2019/2516 - before 24th June.

A lot of objections to developments, particularly in residential streets, centre around parking. Did you know that the emerging London Plan calls for all new developments to have zero parking, with disabled bays only? This document is currently held up by the Planning Minister, but whatever changes to get it accepted, it won't be this.

**Convenor: Andrew Catto** [ac@andrewcatto.co.uk](mailto:ac@andrewcatto.co.uk)

### **From the Transport Panel**

Just before the lock down measures came into force, the Society undertook an air quality measuring exercise which was designed to see what impact, if any, the closure of Hammersmith Bridge had had on local pollution levels. We measured seven locations on the Lower Richmond Road, Putney High St by the cinema and the first part of Putney Bridge Road so we could make comparisons with a similar exercise in 2018. In 2020, six of the seven locations breached EU air quality limits for NO<sub>2</sub>, and four had worsened over the past two years. NO<sub>2</sub> levels outside the cinema rose by more than 50% while Putney Bridge Road remains well over safe limits.

Surprisingly, there was a slight reduction in levels on the Lower Richmond Road, with the readings by the Sainsbury garage just below the EU limit and outside the Star & Garter still in excess but slightly lower than in 2018. More research would be needed to understand the underlying reasons behind this with wind direction a possible factor.

Work to enhance Putney High Street has recommenced. Originally the council planned to widen the pavement by 2m or more. This has been scaled back because of drainage and cost considerations. Some parts will still be widened by 2m but other areas will only be widened by 80cm - or not at all.

The Society has felt that in comparison with a number of councils, ours has been slow to introduce measures in response to the pandemic. We have raised this with them and highlighted the pavement congestion by the bus stop outside the former W H Smiths – since suspended - and asked them to consider other ideas such as

temporary widening of pavements – now on parts of the High Street -, increased cycle provision and the introduction of temporary ‘school streets’.

The Council intend to discuss more detailed social distancing plans and the impact of Covid-19 at the June meeting of the Strategic Strategic Planning and Transportation Overview and Scrutiny Committee – look out for the agenda at:-

<https://democracy.wandsworth.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?Committeeid=678>

**Convenor: Stephen Luxford** [Stephen.luxford46@gmail.com](mailto:Stephen.luxford46@gmail.com)

### **From the Community Panel**

#### **Regenerate Rise and Roehampton Community Box.**

Regenerate Rise are working in partnership with Heathmere Primary School and Rackets Cubed to provide Community Boxes for those families most in need in Roehampton and Putney, particularly to those on the Alton and Ashburton Estates, where many are really struggling with the current situation. The boxes are full of essential food, activity packs as well as brand new children’s books.

In addition, Regenerate Rise are providing food boxes for the older people in our community. The Society has made two donations of £250 – one to Regenerate Rise and one to the Roehampton Community Box scheme. If you want to make a donation you can do so in one of two ways:

- <https://bankuet.co.uk/roehampton> - see the “Donate now” button and scroll down to find Roehampton
- You can also donate via Just Giving - <https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/TheRoehamptoncommunitybox>

**Healthwatch Wandsworth** is a local organisation that aims to empower local people, service users and patients to have a voice about how their local health and social care services are provided and purchased. In this particularly unprecedented time, health and care services are needed more than ever and, subsequently, the views of local people are more vital than ever. They would really appreciate if local residents would participate in their latest survey which gives people in Wandsworth the opportunity to tell Healthwatch what is important to them. In response to COVID-19, health and social care services have had to drastically change the support they offer the public. Join the survey here:

<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/hww-covid19-2020>

Responses will be kept completely anonymous and will help local health and care services understand what needs there are locally, how their services are working, what is working well and where things can be made better.

**Convenors: Victoria Diamond** [vickysw15@aol.com](mailto:vickysw15@aol.com) and **Val Jones** [jones.val@gmail.com](mailto:jones.val@gmail.com)

### **From the Open Spaces Panel**

Although the Front Garden competition has been cancelled for this year the need to keep greening our gardens has not gone away. As I have been walking the local streets for exercise I have been thrilled to see so many flowering shrubs in front gardens, starting in March with the end of the magnolias, then flowering hawthorns, wisteria and lilacs and now plenty of weigelias and roses. But, there are downsides, more front gardens are paved over with impermeable surfaces, which

totally ignore planning regulations, which clearly state that any hard surface over 5m<sup>2</sup> has to be permeable. There is much still to be done to green the grey in Putney.

The recent hot weather has resulted in very dry gardens –spare a thought for birds and insects in dry weather, and if you have a garden, make sure they have access to a source of water.

The dry weather has also impacted some of the newly planted street trees. If you see new trees in your road remember that they need regular watering for at least a year. The contractor is scheduled to water the trees every month or so, but in hot dry weather this is not sufficient. A can of water every week might save your local tree.

The return of the swifts to our skies over the last month has been welcome but numbers have halved since 1995. Nesting sites are lost as buildings are renovated and the RSPB are campaigning to get more swift nest boxes installed.

[https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/wildlife-guides/bird-a-z/swift-family/?utm\\_source=homes-for-swifts&utm\\_medium=short-url&utm\\_campaign=swift\\_nest\\_boxes](https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/wildlife-guides/bird-a-z/swift-family/?utm_source=homes-for-swifts&utm_medium=short-url&utm_campaign=swift_nest_boxes)

This may need a bit of preplanning but worth bearing in mind if you are using ladders or scaffolding for any reason – just slip a nest box under the roofline.

Next month we will be discussing the Wandsworth Council Consultation on Public Space Protection Orders which at the moment only affect Tooting Town Centre and Battersea High Street. Their use could be extended to parks and open spaces and could affect dog control and the use of legal highs and alcohol. If you want to take part in this consultation go to <https://haveyoursay.citizenspace.com/community-safety/pspo-20/>

**Convener: Judith Chegwidden**

### **Contacts**

Bulletin editor: Judith Chegwidden, 28 Howards Lane, London SW15 6NQ, [judith.chegwidden@gmail.com](mailto:judith.chegwidden@gmail.com)

Chair: [chair@putneysociety.org.uk](mailto:chair@putneysociety.org.uk),

Secretary: [secretary@putneysociety.org.uk](mailto:secretary@putneysociety.org.uk)

Membership: [membership@putneysociety.org.uk](mailto:membership@putneysociety.org.uk)

**The Society's website contains more information about many of the issues in the Bulletin.**

**It also shows updates and changes to meetings. Please use this to keep in touch with what is happening.**

[www.putneysociety.org.uk](http://www.putneysociety.org.uk)

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