



The Bulletin

July 2020



Putney High Street is opening up!

Positively Putney, our local Business Improvement District has been working with local businesses throughout the lockdown providing advice on available grants and loans as well as HR expertise. Now they are launching a campaign to make sure that we all know about the businesses that are re-opening in Putney. To help celebrate they are asking us all to share a photo of a facet of Putney that you love. For those of you on social media, post the picture with the hashtag #shareourputney.



You can keep track of which businesses are opening up at <http://positivelyputney.co.uk/putney-businesses-that-are-open/>.

Reopening of Fulham Palace Garden

The Fulham Palace botanic garden will re-open **free of charge seven days per week**, dawn to 18.00 (last admission 17.00), from **Monday 29 June**. The café will re-open for takeaway only, from 9.30 to 17.00. The external toilets will be open from 9.30 to 17.30. The walled garden will be open 10.15 to 4.15 pm as usual. Many of you will welcome this – particularly those of us lucky enough to hear the talk from Lucy Hart, the Head Gardener at one of our meetings last year.

As a temporary measure, until the end of August, they are introducing a voluntary donation to enter the walled garden – £2 for adults and £1 for children aged 5 and over. Entry will be free for Friends and patrons. The donation for the walled garden entry is designed to help manage numbers to this enclosed space, and to cover the significant additional costs of security, toilet cleaning and supplies

needed to keep the rest of the site free for all our visitors to enjoy.

They will be fully compliant with government guidance, providing frequent cleaning of the toilets, supplies of hand sanitiser at key touch points, adherence to good hygiene by staff working in the café, marked out social distancing for queuing and provision of PPE for staff and volunteers as necessary. They will be actively checking the site and making sure that visitors are observing social distancing guidelines.



Have you signed up to OWL?

OWL – short for Online Watch Link - supports local Neighbourhood Watch schemes and is also useful when there is no scheme in your immediate area.

Once signed up for the OWL Neighbourhood Watch, members will be added to a watch of the 50 or so nearest homes so they can receive highly localised alerts as well as essential borough or London-wide information (such as policing updates, Council community safety updates, scam alerts, COVID-19 advice, crime prevention advice and domestic abuse information). If they choose, members can also report crimes and issues in their areas and respond to alerts with new intelligence. It is easy to sign up just go to <https://www.owl.co.uk/>



Buildings Panel

Co-convenor: Andrew Catto
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Our feeling that there have been fewer applications to respond to this year turns out to be not just local. Figures from the National Planning Portal show that in April applications were down 23% compared to April 2019 – and probably more in Wandsworth. Advertising, mainly new shop signs, is down 61% as businesses hold off new openings - another bad omen for the High Street. Telecoms applications, however, are up 900% ahead of the rollout of 5G. We have already been asked by the residents of one new block to oppose masts on their roof, but decided that, unless we all suddenly stop using our mobile phones, (unlikely!), we ought to concentrate on directing these away from key views.

It's heartening that as I write many more shops are due to reopen. Maybe at last I can collect my jacket that was due back from the cleaners on 23rd March. But the town centre will take a lot longer to get back to how it was. My own office on the High Street will continue mainly to work remotely for some time to come, and we won't be the only ones. Office workers who are a key source of lunchtime trade will be in

short supply well into the future. All the more reason to support your local shops, rather than deliveries from a warehouse who knows where? Let's show the council that the temporary wider pavements on the High Street need to become permanent installations.

Last year your Society participated in the annual London Open House (LOH) festival by providing volunteers to open the little Georgian Temple at Mount Clare in Roehampton. To Putney's shame, however, this was the only building (out of 800 across the capital) open in SW15. The ongoing need to maintain social distancing, amongst other reasons, means that the Temple won't be open in 2020. However LOH hopes to continue this September so maybe you know the owners of some slightly bigger but unusual buildings locally who could be persuaded to take part. Our own contribution may be a guided walk on some aspect of local history – any ideas? Meanwhile LOH, like many charities, has lost much of its income as a result of lockdown. The Putney Society have contributed to their emergency appeal. Maybe you can too?
<https://www.openhouselondon.org.uk/appeal>

Transport Panel

Convenor: Stephen Luxford
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Work on the Council's pavement widening programme in Putney High Street, which was suspended at the onset of the Covid-19 crisis has resumed. A revamp of the junction between Disraeli Road and the High Street has, at the time of writing, almost been completed. However, while Montserrat Road has gained some lovely planters it appears the legacy for Disraeli is a rather unsightly two-tier bike shelter. The Society has strongly supported extra provision for cyclists and have several times suggested alternative sites for much-needed cycle parking space. For example, there is room on Platform 4 within the station and also on the wide pavement on the Upper Richmond Road. Unfortunately there are no immediate plans to pursue these options.

Meanwhile, pavement widening along the High Street has commenced and the bus stop outside the former

W H Smiths has been temporarily suspended to remove a pedestrian pinch point. The Society has written throughout this period to the Council both welcoming action taken and raising issues of concern. The Council's transportation oversight committee has considered a number of further initiatives, subject to funding, which we hope to see implemented over the coming months. One outstanding issue is the pedestrian crossing points at the High Street junctions with the Lower Richmond and Putney Bridge Roads. Currently these crossings clearly do not comply with social distancing but we have been told there are design discussions with TfL which we hope will be finalised shortly.

STOP PRESS: WANDSWORTH COUNCIL WILL RECEIVE £818.5K OF FUNDING FROM THE GOVERNMENT FOR EMERGENCY WALKING AND CYCLING SCHEMES - IT IS NOT YET QUITE CLEAR HOW MUCH OF THIS WILL BE ALLOCATED TO PUTNEY.

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

9 July, 13 August
by Zoom (18.30)

Co-convenors:
Vicky Diamond & Val Jones

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TRANSPORT

14 July, 11 August
by Zoom (19.30)

Convenor:
Stephen Luxford

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BUILDINGS

1 July, 5 August
by Zoom (18.00)

Convenor:
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OPEN SPACES

2 July, 6 August
by Zoom (18.00)

Convenor:
Judith Chegwidzen

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Community Panel

Co-convenors: Victoria Diamond & Val Jones
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Beware of scams - Action Fraud are warning of a huge rise in phone scams. Any calls from HMRC saying that they owe you money, from a NHS Covid19 testing department saying you've tested positive and need to pay for testing kit, or your internet service provider that your internet is about to be cut off due to nefarious activities and inviting you to "press 1" to speak to someone to sort it out, **are all SCAMS. DO NOT PRESS 1.** Do not give any credit card details. If you are contacted about Covid19 you do not have to pay for a testing kit. If you need to contact your bank, either use another phone, or check that the line is clear by ringing a friend first.

By now most of you should be aware of the Locksmith sticker scam, but if you aren't, and you find a small sticker on your front door advertising a locksmith, please remove it immediately! (A report in the Evening Standard suggested some of these stickers might be genuine, but it is better to be suspicious.)

The Minor Injuries Unit at Queen Mary's Hospital is closed currently. We've been told that this is permanent, but on further investigation have been

informed this is pending further discussion. We hope it will re-open, as it would be a huge loss to Roehampton and Putney residents alike, and would just put more strain on A&E departments at Kingston, St George's and Charing Cross Hospitals.

At the time of writing, Richmond Park is still closed to all vehicles, except for bicycles. Should you have a blue badge and want a bit of fresh air, you can gain access to the Sheen Gate car park via Sheen Gate, but must show your blue badge first. Take any rubbish home with you please!

We would also like to thank Mo Smith of Regenerate Rise (based at the Platt Centre in Lacy Road) for the amazing work she and her son Andy have been doing during lockdown, with their team of volunteers, supporting some 300 families in Putney and Roehampton with food and activity packs. Quite a remarkable team.

Any members wishing to join our Community panel meetings by Zoom should email Vicky or Val the day before to ensure they receive the Zoom link.

Stay safe and well, everyone.

Open Spaces Panel

Convenor: Judith Chegwidden
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Our parks and open spaces have been under enormous pressure as lockdown eases. For those living in properties without gardens these open spaces have been a lifeline for exercise and - as lockdown has been relaxed - for socialising. However, as more people have met for picnics, and as pubs and cafés are offering takeaways, this has led to widespread littering. Wandsworth Council have installed huge unlined cages in Wandsworth Park - excellent in terms of increasing capacity for litter, but bleak for the operative that has to empty them. On Putney Common, collections of litter by the Ranger have increased, (litter collection costs across the Commons have increased sixfold) but it is obvious that the bins are not adequate for the amount of litter created. How do we persuade people to take their litter home with them? Local residents have been litter picking, but we have to devise a way to ensure that those using our open spaces treat them with respect. (As we go to press we have learnt that the Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators plan to install more bins in the next week.)

In the longer term, Wandsworth has just launched a consultation to determine what we want from our public open spaces. Public open space provides opportunities for sport and recreation, socialising, tourism and wildlife, making an important contribution to the health and wellbeing of communities, ecosystems and economies.



But the very diversity of the ways in which our parks have to serve the population results in many conflicting interests - active joggers and cyclists, toddlers taking their first steps, children's play areas, picnickers, dog walkers, and organised sports - all putting heavy pressure on limited open space. Make sure your views on the future of our local parks, Wandsworth Park and Leader's Gardens, are heard - go to <https://haveyoursay.citizen-space.com/environment/open-space/>.

PUTNEY SOCIETY CONTACTS

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

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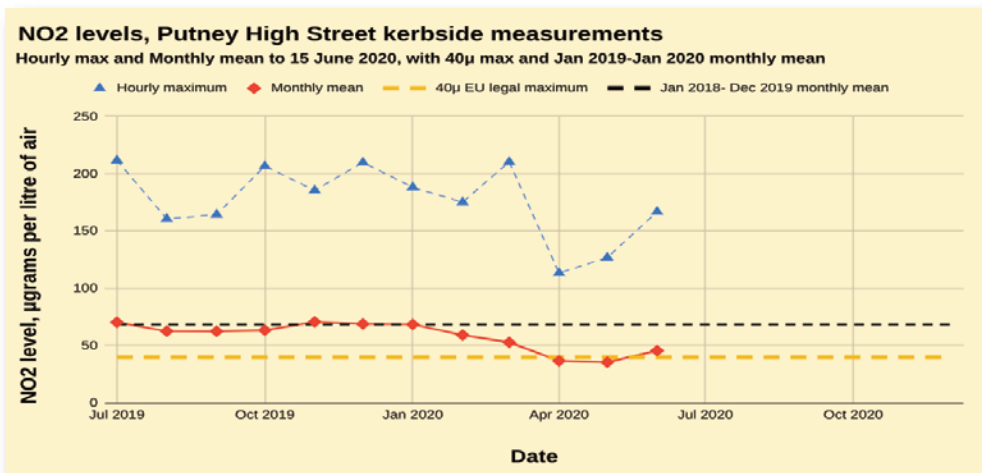
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Why hasn't pollution in Putney High Street (PHS) fallen much more than it has?

Pollution in PHS, as measured by NO₂ levels at the kerbside monitor, has been considerably lower since January this year, largely because of the coronavirus lockdown. From the average monthly mean throughout 2019 of 69 µg/m³ of air, it fell to below the 40 EU legal maximum in April and May, although (with recent increases in traffic) it has started to rise again (see below).

But the question has been raised,

should we have expected it to have fallen much lower? Traffic levels have been as low as three-quarters of pre-coronavirus levels, with London buses having followed a similar pattern, and if motor vehicles are the main cause of pollution, why haven't levels fallen more? Richard Carter, who runs our Air Quality Panel, is following up on this question with the air quality researchers at Imperial College.



Making sure children can walk to school safely

In the short term, the government is encouraging temporary road closures around schools as some pupils return to school. These closures would be twice a day and the Mayor of London is making finance available to local councils to provide temporary barriers and cones to ensure that streets are free of traffic when children arrive and leave. These temporary closures are being rolled out across Putney and should soon be in place to protect the three primary schools around Charlwood Road. However, temporary closures impose an additional burden on staff, who have to move the barriers twice a day when operating schools is already very difficult owing to the COVID epidemic. That is why one member of our Transport Panel has been working with the heads of Our Lady of



Victories, Hotham and St Marys CofE Primary Schools to lobby the council to be included in the next wave of **permanent** School Streets, following their creation in five schools in other parts of the borough. A School Street is where one or more roads surrounding a school temporarily close during school opening and closing times to become a pedestrian and cycle only zone. Residents within the School Street retain access, and signs will inform drivers of the restrictions before the entrance to the School Street. Some closures will have advance warning signs installed.

STOP PRESS: WANDSWORTH PLAN TO USE £220K OF THE EMERGENCY FUNDING FOR CYCLING AND WALKING TO CREATE MORE SCHOOL STREETS - WE HOPE THEY WILL INCLUDE PUTNEY SCHOOLS.

Donate unwanted digital devices

Many local children still do not have a laptop or tablet to enable them to connect to their school or to an educational website like the BBC Bitesize. Two local charities are collecting unwanted laptops and other digital devices so please do contact them if you think you can help.



Keep Kids Connected

(<https://www.keepkidsconnected.co.uk/>) pick up your device and one of their IT specialists erase hard disk data securely so that it is unrecoverable using industry standards such as DoD Short and Sata Secure Erase. They then install CloudReady, a version of ChromeOS, so the devices effectively become a Chromebook. Tablet devices are restored to factory settings, which similarly ensures any data cannot be recovered. Since the beginning of April, Keep Kids Connected has delivered laptops to Heathmere, Granard, Hotham and the Alton Primary Schools as well as to Ashcroft Academy.

The Power to Connect

laptop and tablet collection drive (<https://www.powerconnect.co.uk/>) has been launched to help local families across Wandsworth and patients from St George's NHS Hospital in Tooting who are struggling to stay connected. They too erase all hard disk data and turn the laptops into Chromebooks.

It is really easy to donate using the websites listed.