



# The Bulletin

For our members in Putney and Roehampton



September 2023

## Focus on the River Thames



- Do you walk by the river and care about the towpath and the trees?
- Do you enjoy a drink by the river?
- Do you row or sail on the river?
- Are you worried about the pollution in the river?
- Do you like travelling on a river boat?
- Would you like more freight to go by water and off our roads?

Do you know that all these issues come under the responsibilities of the **Port of London Authority (PLA)** who operate between Teddington Lock and the North Sea?

If you care about any of these things then come along to hear from **Jim Trimmer, Director of Planning and Development at the Port of London Authority.**

**Monday 25 September at 7.30pm at the Community Church, Werter Road, Putney (opposite Sainsbury's).**

Topics he is likely to cover include: progress on Thames Tideway; the proposed new Putney pier and ways to increase passenger and leisure use of the Thames; river pollution – do you realise it's the PLA and not the Environment Agency who have responsibility for monitoring this issue in the Thames? He will also discuss their plans to encourage more freight

to be carried by river and off our roads. And he is also happy to cover items pertinent to us such as the towpath and the maintenance of trees along the river banks and how the PLA prepare for major events such as the boat race.

**Please come along with plenty of questions to ask and encourage others to attend.**

Free to members, but guests are asked to consider making a suggested donation of £3 to cover costs of the meeting.

We hope to live stream the meeting – if you are interested in joining online, please contact [registration@putneysociety.org.uk](mailto:registration@putneysociety.org.uk)



Lambeth, Kew, Southwark and Barnes - a fleet of four purpose - built harbour patrol vessels used in the middle and lower districts of the tidal Thames, between Putney Bridge and the North Sea.

### Just one Saturday left to take advantage of **OPEN CHURCH at ALL SAINTS' PUTNEY**

All Saints' Church on Putney Common will have its doors open for visitors from 10.00 - 2.00 pm on 2 September. The Church is renowned for its G. E. Street architecture and the William Morris and Edward Burne-Jones stained glass windows. Next year the church will be celebrating its 150th Anniversary with various events, so this is an opportunity to become acquainted with a local architectural and religious gem.

## Community Panel

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

We had two enjoyable **litter picks** on Putney Heath. Quite a bit of rubbish was collected but pottering around the wonderful green area we are lucky to have on our doorstep was lovely.

We helped plant the **Baths in Roehampton**, which had been worked on by the Community Shed to make rather attractive features for a community space. The planters on Medfield Street are thriving!

### Thamesfield Police Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) meeting report.

Commendations go to PCSO Creti who identified a prolific burglar when she was off duty, and had him arrested, as well as another criminal she spotted when she was shopping. Although street violence and robbery/theft against a person have risen very slightly, the numbers are low compared to other parts of the borough. Residential burglary is also low, although it was noted there was a burglary in a road off the High St recently where the front door only had a Yale lock. This was picked in seconds. If you have a front door with only that simple lock on it, the police advise strongly that you get a deadlock installed as well. Theft from motor vehicles has risen, with hot spots on the Embankment, Felsham Road and Festing Road area. There is also an increase in speculative smashing of rear windows, just in case someone has left something in the boot. You cannot leave anything in the car that you would miss having! Warn any friends or family you have visiting to make sure they don't leave

valuables in their vehicles. Criminals are also targeting high value vehicles and shipping them off to Eastern Europe very quickly. Sometimes they are left for a day or two on a nearby road, just to see if there's a tracker attached. If you have clear footage or photos of a criminal or suspicious person (e.g., someone trying doors on cars down the street) on your own CCTV/Ring doorbell then send it to them. Email whichever SNT your area is in, and they will tell you where to send the footage. It helps the police either identify the criminals or alerts them to areas they need to target.

Thamesfield has the highest number of Anti-Social Behaviour warnings issued to street drinkers, beggars etc. They are working hard on trying to help matters. The next meeting of the Thamesfield SNT will be on 2 November at Putney Pantry, St. Mary's Church.



## Transport Panel

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



At the time of writing good weather finally appears to be here so please take advantage of the new weekend boat service from Putney Pier!

A surprise poster has appeared at East Putney underground station alerting passengers to a temporary fault in the Eastbound destination board which may show an incorrect destination. This 'temporary' fault has been in place for possibly as long as 20 years! Hopefully it may finally be about to be corrected.

A month into the repair works on Wandsworth Bridge, the Council reports it is currently on schedule to re-open as planned on 1 October. Fingers crossed this progress continues. In the meantime, there has been predictable traffic delays in Putney with those using Putney Bridge Road to enter the High Street suffering the most.

## 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

**14 Sept., 12 Oct. (18.30)**

in person but contact convenors for confirmation

Co-convenors:

**Vicky Diamond & Val Jones**

vickysw15@aol.co.uk,

jones.val@gmail.com

T: 07746 022654 (Vicky)

T: 07780 674114 (Val)

### TRANSPORT

**12 Sept., 10 Oct. (19.30)**

by Zoom

Convenor:

**Stephen Luxford**

Stephen.luxford46

@gmail.com

### BUILDINGS

**5 September (18.30)**

note temp. change to Tues.

**4 October (18.30)** by Zoom

Convenor:

**Andrew Catto**

ac@andrewcatto.co.uk

T: 07831 761327

### OPEN SPACES

**7 Sept., 5 October (18.30)**

in person at 28 Howards Lane

Convenor:

**Judith Chegwiddden**

judith.chegwiddden@gmail.com

T: 020 8788 4489

Writing this report on a sunny afternoon looking out on my (slightly overgrown) garden, it seems perverse to feel gloomy about the state of “leafy Putney”. However, at the same time the Wildlife Trusts across the country have just been granted £6M by the Ecological Foundation Trust for rewilding and nature recovery – here in Putney the wave of impermeable paving in gardens continues. The fact that the Dept of Communities and Local Government has issued guidelines that planning permission is required for areas of impermeable paving over 5sqm (and that it should be discouraged) seems not to deter the planners, who continue to permit impermeable hard standing, or the contractors who install it.

And while still in slightly controversial mode, it would be good to get feedback about the increasing levels of light pollution. On a bat walk in Wandsworth Park, the light pollution from the floodlighting of Putney Bridge and St Mary’s Church was very obvious. Undoubtedly these structures look impressive when floodlit – but what is the cost to local wildlife? It would be good to get members’ views on this – write a letter to the Editor!

We are concerned about the damage to the banks of

Beverley Brook caused when Barn Elms Sports Trust recently extended the fence on the path from Putney Common to the side of the sports ground. In addition, some kind of manure or composted grass clippings seems to have fallen into the water at this point. Debris has also been piled up next to the fence. We are following up on this and will report back in the next issue. It is particularly disappointing to see this damage to the brook when so much has been done to improve the banks and the water quality in both Richmond Park and Wimbledon Common.

Volunteers from the Open Spaces Panel took advice from the London in Bloom judges and thinned out some of the *Liriope muscari* plants at the JCDecaux parklet in August. We are now making plans for some additional bulb planting and some further additions in the spring. Meanwhile, when pupils from Our Lady of Victories return to the site, they will find that we have erected a bird box, in addition to the two insect hotels already in place. We are very grateful to the Roehampton Shed for making these structures. The nasturtiums planted by the pupils earlier in the summer are still thriving. Some members of the panel will be attending the London in Bloom awards ceremony in September – mainly to get inspirations from other community gardeners.

Well, I was wrong about one thing in my last column. Even the ‘phone mast that nobody opposed got refused by the planners. Don’t bother getting the latest 5G ‘phone. There’s no signal in West Putney. We are still waiting for a reply from Wandsworth Council to our letter asking what their policy is for 5G masts in areas that are fortunate enough not to have tall buildings.

Last month, I also mentioned the dilemma and delayed decisions over hot food takeaways. Soon after I wrote that, the Planning Committee approved consent for new ventilation plant (the only thing they actually have control over) for one vacant unit on Putney High Street, six months after getting the application, but refused the same thing next door. As a result, Chopstix at no.92, although fully fitted out, still can’t open after waiting nine and a half months (and several revisions to the proposals) for this decision. It’s amazing anybody tries to open a business in Putney.

**Stop Press: Despite the refusal Chopstix opened on 24th August – we will see how this situation develops**

On the subject of what the Council can’t control, most of you will have read the item last month about the lost planting and public bench in front of Oxford House and Cambridge House on the Upper Richmond Road. Enquiries by local councillors got the response that, because this was private land, the owners were free to turn an oasis into desert if they felt like it. The danger here is that, on the Upper Richmond Road in particular, almost all the mature trees are in fact on private forecourts. One or two, including

the big plane tree opposite East Putney station are protected by Tree Protection Orders, but the rest, including the six mature planes just west of Putney Hill (now behind a construction barrier) depend on the goodwill of the building owners. Is it time to ask for protection for all of these?

Now some good news. Roehampton University (although they only lease the building) have now raised enough funding to start repairs to our favourite hidden gem, the little Georgian garden temple on Minstead Gardens. Well done Gilly King, the University’s heritage champion, for getting this together. That leaves just one SW15 landmark on the ‘Heritage at Risk Register’, the White Lion by Putney Bridge. Closed and boarded up downstairs since 2015, and unoccupied upstairs since before WWII. But at the other end of the High Street, the equally badly treated ‘**Revolution**’ is being refurbished so as to become the ‘**The Railway**’ again.

And of course, for enthusiasts for London’s extraordinary diversity of architecture (and just the merely curious), September brings the annual Open House Festival. Once again there’s not as much as we might hope to see on offer in SW15, but highlights include guided tours of The Royal Hospital for Neuro-disability on West Hill on Saturday 9th and of the Alton Estate led by our own Miriam Howitt on Saturday 16th. Details and booking at <https://programme.openhouse.org.uk/calendar> then find Wandsworth near the bottom of the list of boroughs.

**Quiz question.** Which famous landscape gardener’s work can be seen at both?



# Putney Supports Ukraine

## A report from our Vice Chair, Jonathan Callaway

The report on the Convoy of Hope to Ukraine in April's Bulletin convinced me I needed to do something concrete to help Ukraine in its hour of need. So, I volunteered as an ambulance driver on another convoy organised by Medical Life Lines Ukraine (website: Home | Medical Life Lines). This one set off from Putney, Wimbledon and Barnes at 4am on Sunday 23rd July and safely delivered four ambulances to the Ministry of Health in Lviv on the afternoon of Tuesday 25th.

As before the ambulances were loaded with all sorts of urgently needed medical supplies. The long drive across five countries got us to the Polish border with Ukraine, some 1,200 miles away, by Tuesday morning. We were fortunate that there were no hiccups along the way; the convoy managed to stick

together despite other drivers squeezing in between us, one or more of us getting delayed by traffic lights and all-too-slow border crossing formalities.

The handover ceremony in Lviv was a bit of a marathon too – formalities started about 4pm and we finally made it back to our hotel about 11pm after endless toasts with our host's excellent homemade vodka, a meal in an underground restaurant in the centre of Lviv followed by a rush to get back to the hotel before the midnight curfew.

An unforgettable and uplifting experience: you only have to turn on the news to realise how urgent the continuing need is in Ukraine for medical equipment of all sorts.



Fleur Anderson MP, 2nd right, has been very supportive

More convoys are planned, the fundraising continues and anyone who would like to support us should click on this link: Fundraiser by Daniel Whitehead : Essential life-saving equipment for Ukraine (gofundme.com). Alternatively please contact Sally Strahan at sallystrahan@outlook.com. Lastly, a huge thankyou from me to all those who responded to my request for donations – your contributions came to almost £11,000, almost enough to buy another secondhand ambulance.

## SUNDAY EVENING CONCERTS

### AT ST. MARGARET'S, PUTNEY PARK LANE

After the summer break the concerts are resuming; there is no charge to attend and no need to book a seat. Drinks will be served in the garden - weather permitting - from 5:30pm, concerts start at 6pm.

**10 September:**

**Malinda Haslett, Soprano and Piano**

**17 September:**

**Simon Watterton, Piano**

**24 September:**

**Tom Jesty and George, Cello and Piano**

Details of further concerts and the Grand Piano Celebration in the October Bulletin.



THE ARTS  
SOCIETY  
SOUTH WEST  
LONDON

**11 September at 8.00pm Dryburgh Hall, SW15 1BL**

## SIR CHRISTOPHER WREN AND THE REBUILDING OF THE CITY OF LONDON OUT OF THE PLAGUE OF 1665 AND THE GREAT FIRE OF 1666

Lecturer: Janet Gough

Starting at the Monument to the Great Fire of London, designed by Sir Christopher Wren and Robert Hooke, the lecture uses Wren's buildings to tell the story of the rebuilding of London after the Plague and disastrous Great Fire of 1666. Drawing on royal patronage and up-to-the-minute science, Wren worked with a team of eminent collaborators to rebuild 51 new churches, crowned by the extraordinary domed, baroque St Paul's Cathedral.

**Visitors Welcome.** Please check our website for details of how to register for the Zoom Lecture. <https://www.theartsocietyswlondon.org.uk>

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See website for full details:  
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