



# The Bulletin

For our members in Putney and Roehampton

June 2024

## ‘Just Look Up’ | How well do you know Putney buildings?

**Monday 24 June 7.30**

**at the Community Church Werter Road SW15 2LL**

The Buildings Panel challenges you, your friends and neighbours to discover how well you know the buildings of Putney and Roehampton. For our mid-summer quiz, we have been searching out the quirky details and oft overlooked local landmarks that contribute so much to the quality of our streets. Put together a team of your friends from all corners of Putney to see how

much you recognise of SW15 old and NEW (that’s North East and West) and to learn about the bits you don’t. It’s all designed to remind us why Putney’s a great place for looking UP.

The head in the picture is one of several atop High Street shopfronts between Norroy and Chelverton Roads. **But who was he?**



## Some good news on Air Quality!

Results from our citizen science air pollution monitoring of NO<sub>2</sub> levels show significant improvements between the second half of 2022 and the second half of 2023. Furthermore, the biggest improvements have been where the pollution is worst: along Putney High Street and on Putney Bridge Road - for details, see the fuller version of this article on our website.

The pollution reductions are especially welcome as local progress had stagnated between 2017 and 2022. The improvements are probably mainly due to motorists increasingly switching to electric cars, the new electric buses on the high-frequency 93 route, and successive ULEZ expansions accelerating the removal of the most polluting old cars. NO<sub>2</sub> pollution at all our monitoring sites is still around two to four times higher than the level recommended by the **World Health Organisation**; but hopefully

the switchover to electric will continue to deliver improving air quality.

However, very small particles (PM2.5) are the most dangerous to human health, and these have not hitherto been monitored on Putney High Street. New monitoring equipment being installed by Wandsworth Council will monitor PM2.5, and we will focus increasingly on this type of pollution.

In our citizen science project, started

in July 2022, we work closely with the air quality officers of Wandsworth, Merton and Richmond Councils, and the results reported here incorporate adjustments to align the readings from our simple diffusion tubes with gold-standard monitoring equipment. Our data is the only available indicator of pollution in Putney High Street over this period, because the elderly official monitoring station has been failing frequently.



## Community Panel

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

To continue our search on what to do with items we no longer want or need, and with charity shops taking fewer general items than they used to as they concentrate on clothes and 'attractive' household items, we've been doing more research. Many people recommended the app **Olio**, which seems to cover everything from that spare packet of rice you don't need, to plates or cutlery that you're wanting to get rid of. Decent quality of course. There's Freecycle too. The Princess Alice charity shop in Barnes takes furniture and other items, and also collects. Emmaus can collect items – it's worth checking their website to find out what they will and won't accept. A big discovery, which we've yet to visit, is **GET Free Books** (Global Education Trust), a charity shop in Southside shopping centre. They accept all intact books, DVDs, CDs, records and puzzles. There's a local recycling group in Southfields called Recycle More Southfields, <https://www.recyclemoresouthfields.org/>. Southfields also has Restarters Southfields, and runs regular Mend, Fix and Repair parties – next one Saturday 15 June, 12.00-3.00 at St Barnabus Church, Lavenham Road, SW18 5EP. [www.therestartproject.org](http://www.therestartproject.org). The Furniture Narrative

is an award-winning business, started by Emily in 2021, which sells refurbished furniture, and offers bespoke refurbishing services, helping reduce furniture waste. [www.thefurniturenarrative.co.uk](http://www.thefurniturenarrative.co.uk). We are still trying to find out where homeless people with no financial resources would go to get essential basic items such as crockery or linen...

We met some very nice young men on Saturday night on Roehampton Cricket pitch whilst waiting to see if the aurora would appear for a second time. They were from the Roehampton Cricket Club, which has their pitch next to the Telegraph Pub on Putney Heath. They're interested in getting more spectators to watch their matches, get more involved in the local community, and get some volunteers to help do the teas for match players after their matches. We wondered if there were people who would like to meet up to watch the cricket, have a social chat, and volunteer to help do the teas in the clubhouse? If you fancy baking a cake or biscuits, your costs would be covered. Would anyone interested please email Linda on [oakleylj@btinternet.com](mailto:oakleylj@btinternet.com) or Phone 07786 990077.

## Buildings Panel

Convenor: Andrew Catto [ac@andrewcatto.co.uk](mailto:ac@andrewcatto.co.uk) 020 8785 0077

Between checking out planning applications for the Buildings Panel, and visiting my projects I probably get to see more corners of Putney and Roehampton than most. But it's easy to forget how special SW15 can be – until you see it through other eyes. Last month I had the privilege to guide London members of the Society of the Protection of Ancient Buildings around Roehampton. They were amazed to find three Grade 1 listed buildings and what may be the borough's oldest secular one (which also serves a decent pint) all within a half mile radius.

Maybe that's why I'm 'walked out' and this year your Panel's summer public meeting will be sitting down. See below.

Each monthly Buildings Panel seems to have a different feel due to the variety of applications and consultations we discuss. In April everything seemed to be located on the Upper Richmond Road. In May it was all about the sweeping landscape of Roehampton's Alton West.

The application that caused us concern is from a company that wants to turn some 1980's student housing into temporary housing for the homeless. This would then be let to Wandsworth Council, no doubt for lots of your money, although there seems to be no intention to bring the buildings up to modern standards. And clearly zero intention to spend any money on the rest of the site which comprises the Grade 1 listed Georgian 'Mount Clare' and a fragile 18th century temple (Grade II\*) already on the Buildings at Risk register.

By contrast, directly in front of 'Mount Clare', Wandsworth Council propose to update two play areas. This we support, with a caveat that this is one public open space whose long history and listed landscape status say 'avoid clutter' more than anywhere else locally. Look up our letters about each of these on the Society's website at <https://www.putneysociety.org.uk/buildings>.

The play area proposals are a spin-off from the long awaited 'Regeneration' of the Danebury Avenue area, even if the core of this is on hold since Redrow, now themselves history, walked away. Curiously whilst the play spaces work is going ahead, some Councillors are having second thoughts about other elements. Phase one is construction of new infill site homes into which current tenants can be decanted. But the latest proposal for three new blocks of 'decant' flats on Fontley Way only scraped past the Planning Applications Committee by six votes to four.

We continue to keep an eye on the big schemes developing elsewhere. The developers behind the 38-storey plan for Battersea have come back with 'just' 34. Try harder please. And upriver the 18-storey tower proposed for the Lennox Estate shows directly behind the historic Barnes riverfront when viewed from the historic centre of Chiswick. Just look up – but only 6 floors up, according to the Local Plan.

Which reminds me to encourage you all join in our fun midsummer quiz **'Just Look Up' - How well do you know Putney's buildings?** on **24th June**.

## Open Spaces Panel convenor: Judith Chegwidden judith.chegwidden@gmail.com 020 8788 4489

My colleague, Andrew Catto, convenor of the Buildings Panel has provided a reminder of one of the main reasons that we are promoting the planting up of front gardens with our Front Garden Award Scheme (Judging from 05/06 to 24/06). In 2008, the then Department of Communities and Local Government and the Environment Agency published a joint guidance paper on paving front gardens pointing out that it was now essential to get permission to lay impermeable paving – mainly because of the risk of flooding. The drains in urban areas like Putney were built many years ago and were not designed to deal with the increased rainfall that we have seen - particularly over the last six months. Paving over front gardens just adds to the problem. Although paving over one or two gardens may not seem to make a difference, the combined impact of many people in a street doing this increases the risk of flooding. The best solution is to plant up small front gardens. If seeking off street parking in larger gardens, then permeable materials should be used and as much planting incorporated as possible. It is hard to believe that this guidance has been in place for nearly 16 years but our local Wandsworth Council planners are still approving planning applications which include impermeable paving. The document is available to read in full on our website <https://www.putneysociety.org.uk/open-spaces>. We have drawn attention to RHS advice on greening front gardens in the past – but this link is a reminder <https://www.rhs.org.uk/garden-inspiration/garden-types/front-gardens>

Increased rainfall is also affecting parks and open spaces. Parks such as Pitshanger Park in Ealing and Richmond Park have carried out hydrology studies of their land, which have resulted in the establishment of ponds and swales to capture surface run off. Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators is planning their own hydrology study to determine how to manage increasingly wet areas on their lands. In the long term this could include swales or additional ponds on the Commons. City Hall has identified flooding from surface water as a major threat in London – will it follow other urban areas around the world and recommend creating a sponge city <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c51ngn55gz4o> ?

With advice from the local **RSPB** branch and help with construction from the Community Shed in Roehampton, last year we erected a nesting box on the sycamore at the Putney Tower Parklet. To our delight (and surprise) it was used by a pair of blue tits this spring. One recent Friday, children from Year One at Our Lady of Victories School (**OLV**) were able to see both birds flying in and out of the box with worms in their beaks. We think that the young have now fledged and hope that they survive. Children from OLV have also taken part in seed planting sessions and were able to see that the nasturtiums planted last year have re-seeded and are burgeoning. We anticipate that the London in Bloom judging will take place in early July. If you are able to volunteer for some weeding and watering in the coming weeks your help would be extremely welcome.

## Transport Panel convenor: Stephen Luxford. Stephen.luxford46@gmail.com

Hammersmith Bridge, stabilisation works were due to resume at the end of May. While this is happening cyclists crossing the Bridge will need to dismount. There will also be the occasional complete closure of the Bridge to pedestrians on some weekends while major work is underway. Some 18 months on from the submission by Hammersmith & Fulham Council of the business case there is still no news from the Government whether or not they support plans to undertake the major structural work necessary to fully repair the Bridge.

Thank you to those of you who have contacted me about my comments in the last bulletin about the clustering of rail services around the hour and half an hour mark with seemingly endless gaps in between this. I will raise this with South Western Railway and share their response in a future edition.

We have responded to the recent Government consultation on night flights at Heathrow. The Government are proposing to roll

over the existing arrangements, but we feel there is scope for them to tighten up and reduce the allocated noise quota allowed during night time, especially as planes are becoming quieter with technical improvements. We also passed on our thoughts to local MP, Fleur Anderson, who has responded to the consultation.

**Cycling** – we are considering organising a public meeting on the topic. We would like to hear your views. Maybe you are a regular cyclist who commutes by bike to work but is frustrated by the lack of cycle lanes or space on the roads? Or maybe you are an occasional cyclist who might cycle more if they felt local roads could be made safer? Or perhaps you have been enticed by the new wave of electric bikes to give it a go. On the other hand, are you a local driver or pedestrian perhaps intimidated by cyclists on the pavement or cutting you up on roads? Let us know what issues around cycling you want aired and we will try to put together an interesting meeting.

## FUTURE PANEL MEETINGS

New panel members very welcome. Some panel meetings are held in person and some on Zoom. 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

13 June, 11 July  
at 6 Norroy Road, SW15 1PF (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 June, 9 July  
by Zoom (19.30)

Convenor:  
Stephen Luxford  
Stephen.luxford46@gmail.com

### BUILDINGS

5 June, 3 July  
by Zoom (18.30)

Convenor:  
Andrew Catto  
ac@andrewcatto.co.uk  
T: 07831 761327

### OPEN SPACES

6 June  
at 28 Howards Lane, SW15 6NQ  
4 July by Zoom (18.30)

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



# Leighton: Follower & Breaker of Rules

10 June 8.00pm Dryburgh Hall  
(and by Zoom) visitors welcome

by Sarah Ciacci

Frederic, Lord Leighton, was a bastion of the Establishment and of Academic Art in the late 1800s. However, he was also an experimental artist who explored the possibilities of the radical Aesthetic Movement which adopted critic Walter Pater's idea that 'All the Arts aspire to the condition of Music'. The lecture looks at his Academic Paintings, his Aesthetic Movement works and his pioneering work to raise the status of the decorative arts; in particular the collecting of Islamic tiles which are so beautifully displayed in his purpose-built studio-home. The lecture explores how he was both a follower and a breaker of art rules.

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



Mrs Elinor Guthrie (wikiart)

## Calling for Volunteers! We need your help please!



A project to help young families during the pandemic has now provided over 28,000 boxes/grocery shops to the residents of Roehampton - which equates to approximately 280,000 meals. **The Roehampton Community Box** is a social supermarket, staffed by volunteers, where a £4 donation gives you over £40 worth of groceries. The Roehampton Community Box offers high quality-groceries including a selection of fresh fruit and vegetables for a small weekly contribution. Our customers can select their own products from the stock available.

**We need volunteers to support this community led project.**

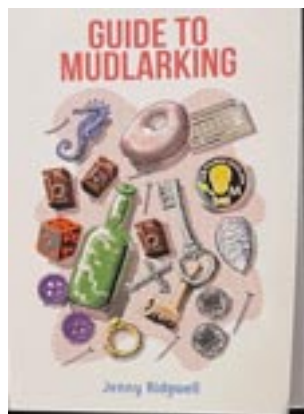
**If you can commit a regular 3-4 hours per week and want to support a local charity please do get in touch.**

[communitybox@racketscubed.com](mailto:communitybox@racketscubed.com)

## The Friends of Putney Library

**Wednesday 3 July 2024**

Jenny Ridgwell will talk about Mudlarking in Putney and launch her new Guide.



**Refreshments at 6.00 p.m.  
Talk at 6.30. p.m.**

Free entry but donations welcome. Please book in advance at the library  
Call 020 8780 3085 or email  
[Charlene.coleman@gll.org](mailto:Charlene.coleman@gll.org)



## PUTNEY SOCIETY CONTACTS

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

**Chair: Robert Arguile**

020 8788 4554 [chair@putneysociety.org.uk](mailto:chair@putneysociety.org.uk)

**Website Editor: Robert Arguile**

[webeditor@putneysociety.org.uk](mailto:webeditor@putneysociety.org.uk)

**Bulletin Editor: Judith Chegwidden**

020 8788 4489 [judith.chegwidden@gmail.com](mailto:judith.chegwidden@gmail.com)

**Secretary: Post Vacant**

**Membership: Chris Orriss**

020 8785 7115 [membership@putneysociety.org.uk](mailto:membership@putneysociety.org.uk)  
22 Pentlow Street, London SW15 1LX

**Treasurer: Andrew Nichol**

07894 982 020 [nicol.andrewjd@gmail.com](mailto:nicol.andrewjd@gmail.com)