

TEDDINGTON SOCIETY Reports for the 2017 AGM

ENVIRONMENT GROUP - Geoff Howland

During the Spring, Summer and Autumn the group conducted the usual round of litterpicks and re-cycling site clean ups. Two litterpicks stand out in my memory for difference reasons. The annual Riverside pick in June was unusual in that we discovered an illegal cable stripping operation on the island between the two bridges at Teddington Lock. About a hundredweight of plastic cable covering and steel rods were removed for disposal and a report made to the police. This was in addition, of course, to the several black sacks of everyday rubbish we cleared away. The other litterpick I particularly recall was the well-attended War Memorial pick on the day before Remembrance Sunday when, once again, the heavens opened and we all received a thorough soaking. As in 2015 the weather improved for the service the following day on Remembrance Sunday.

The group, once again, assisted Radnor House School with their litterpick on “Make a Difference Day” in early October and a very nice letter of appreciation was subsequently received from the Head.

No one living in Teddington can have failed to notice the truly appalling state of the re-cycling sites in February/early March with mounds of fly tipping and general rubbish strewn about every site. This state of affairs was occasioned by the breakdown of the Council’s contractor’s only “hi-ab” vehicle. (Please do not ask me what that acronym stands for but it is the vehicle which empties the paper and cardboard igloos at the sites.) I was in contact with the Council more or less every day and after a delay arrangements were made for an ordinary dustcart to visit each site on a daily basis for rubbish and fly tipping to be removed by hand. This was a most unfortunate period with the town looking like a run down, fly blown, town in the Middle or Far East (and I hasten to add that I have lived in both areas). However some good may come of it as Cllr. Pamela Fleming, the LBRuT Cabinet Member for the Environment, has informed me and I quote “We are, as you know, looking at a programme of much tougher enforcement” (against fly tippers and those who abuse re-cycling sites) and “fly tipping is getting far worse and we have to get really tough so people know we mean business”.

Another problem is that some businesses in the High Street fill up the igloos with cardboard and other packaging instead of paying trade rates for the disposal of these items. The council are addressing this problem and again I quote Cllr. Fleming “We know there’s a problem with businesses using these sites and this is one of the things we are looking at in our review of the “bring sites”.

All I can say relating to these matters is “we shall see”!

One good bit of news is that I understand LBRuT are not planning to reduce the frequency of the landfill and re-cycling weekly collections from our homes and again I quote “this is not an area where we are seeking savings” when I asked the question directly.

HISTORY GROUP - Ken Howe

Our membership number is static and there is a waiting list for new members. We have had a very busy year and with a diverse number of activities as follows:

- Work is still proceeding with the Valerie Sullivan archive and we hope to report fully before the end of the year. We are still involved with Richmond Council in the World War 1 Partnership.
- The joint project with the Planning Group was expanded to include details from the censuses for 1841 – 1901, a very time consuming job but nevertheless a most important one.
- Work is still ongoing for the Teddington Hospital Timeline and it is hoped that this will be unveiled by the summer.
- We were called upon to assist with three out of area projects :
 1. The possible Pembroke Lodge Museum at Richmond – this was to support an application to build a new museum within the grounds of Pembroke Lodge to house the Daniel Hearsum Collection.
 2. The Anglo-Belgian memorial stone on the site of the Charles Pelabon factory in East Twickenham. This was to commemorate the role played by the Belgian refugees in East Twickenham during WW1 in the Pelabon Munitions Factory.

3. Royal Star and Garter Home Surbiton – this is to organise a programme of lunchtime history based talks for the residents of the Home.
- Mr Richard Emmerton of Gomer Gardens celebrated his 100th birthday and we provided some pictures which were projected onto a wall.
 - A summer walk took place in July when we walked along Broom Road and with the help of Sebastian Kaiser and some friends, we were able to go into private areas and look at some of the surviving boathouses. Also noted was the old sewage works on the site of Teddington School and the last of the old coach-houses near to the film studios site.
 - A plaque to mark the site of the Bronze Age Barrow in Sandy Lane was erected and unveiled by the Mayor.
 - St Mary's Church have asked us to join them in celebrating Teddington 800, the 800th anniversary of the first record of the Parish of Teddington. There will be 25 major events taking place from June to November and we will create a Timeline of notable events, including the lives of some well known characters of Teddington History. Our involvement will culminate with a joint lecture on the Life and Works of Rev Dr Stephen Hales at the NPL lecture theatre.

There was only one talk to deliver this year and that was "*Teddington Lock from its beginning to the present day.*" This was held at Lensbury and 170 people bought tickets.

In addition to all of these activities, we still receive regular enquiries on all different aspects of Teddington Local History. This year we received 51 which have been dealt with, with varying degrees of success.

PLANNING GROUP - Planning Committee

The Planning Group currently consists of 12 members, who meet every four to six weeks to discuss any matters to do with Teddington's built environment. These might be, typically, planning applications, but will also include, for example, the local plan, the village plan and Richmond Council's attitude towards certain planning issues. Members of the group come from many different backgrounds, some of which are property related, but this is by no means a pre-requisite. In fact, a broader spectrum of views is always valuable. The only qualification for group membership is to care how Teddington develops. We have welcomed three new members over the year.

During 2016, we considered 128 planning applications, compared to 106 the previous year. We submitted objections on 19 (2015:12), of which 9 were refused, 2 were approved and 4 were withdrawn. As at the beginning of March, there were 4 undecided. Typical reasons for an objection might be issues of scale and massing, as well as being out of character with either the street scene or a wider conservation area. The majority of the applications are from householders, for extensions and loft conversions, but there will also be larger projects in the pipeline that require more detailed consideration. Over the past year the most important of these has been Udney Park Playing Fields, but the Richmond Housing Partnership proposal at 2, High Street is more immediate and will have a significant impact on the Teddington skyline.

The group has continued to support the Friends of Udney Park Playing Fields in maintaining an objection to the principle of any development on the land. We last met with the owners, Quantum, in December 2016, in advance of publication of their latest plans. These showed development at the northern end of the fields, to include an 80 bed care home, 130 extra care apartments and 148 underground parking spaces. We are expecting a planning application from Quantum Spring/Summer this year. During the year the fields were granted Local Green Space status, which gives a considerable level of protection, but which is subject to continuing support through the Local Plan Review. In spite of the group's views, this is a divisive issue and there is a significant level of local opinion in favour of some development, if it secures an improved sports provision for the community. Those in favour include the Teddington Community Sports Ground Community Interest Company (CIC) and a local Teddington surgery that is looking to relocate. We are expecting that the next stage for any further comment will be in response to the planning application.

The proposed office and flats building at 2 High Street is very significant to the Teddington community, due to its height. The planning group objected to the original application, stating that one floor should be removed. The issues for the Council's planning committee were the scale of the building versus the benefit of shared ownership flats. In the end, the application was passed by 5 votes to 4. Some people think that the Teddington Society should have done more to oppose this development. The planning group believe that the greatest impact comes from the height of the building and objected on that basis. What is an appropriate height for buildings in this location? That is a matter of judgement. Issues to do with design are more subjective and we chose not to object on this basis.

The group contributed to the last consultation on the Teddington Village Plan in December 2016. This is due to be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document during the early part of this year. The Council has also been reviewing the Local Plan. The latest consultation stage ended in February. The Council will now be considering all responses to the consultation. The next stage is a public examination of the reviewed Local Plan later this year.

Finally, the group was very saddened by the death last year of Michael Foss. He had been an extremely valuable and respected member of the group and, for many years, its convenor. Teddington should appreciate and value the contribution he made to the town, particularly in maintaining the character of the High Street.

TREES & GARDENS - Sheena Harold

Teddington in Flower - Sadly this time last year we were unable to mount our annual opening of back gardens to raise money for local charities as we had no-one able to organise it. Instead Kathy Gold had a great idea: that you all planted up your front gardens in a one-off "Garden Fit For The Queen" in celebration of the Queen's 90th birthday and paint the town in royal colours. Unfortunately most of you preferred to hold street parties instead! However this year we will again be mounting "Teddington In Flower" as we have Sian Morgan back with us organising it. The weekend of June 10th/11th will also be the launch weekend for Teddington800 so one not to miss. Sian will be happy to hear from you if you can help by gate sitting for us on Sunday 11th. Her email is sianmorgan155@btinternet.com or phone her on 07930 331 107.

Joan Freeman Memorial Tree - Joan was a member of the Society from its early beginnings and for nearly 20 years organised "Teddington In Flower" raising thousands of pounds for local charities and giving enormous pleasure to thousands of garden visitors over the years. Following her death in December 2015 at the age of 96 the Council's Tree Officer, Craig Ruddick, helped organise the planting of a Black Walnut tree in Park Road at its junction with Adelaide Road. A fitting tribute to our late Vice President.

Teddington Triangle Planted Up - We finally managed to bloom up the rather boring triangle of grass & trees at the junction of Hampton, Stanley and Queens Roads and Broad Street with two beds of lovely plants bought from Squires Garden Centre helped by a generous discount from our corporate member. We have had tremendous help from Strawberry Hill House Gardeners in Charge - first Jennifer and now Kate - and they have adopted the bed on the Stanley Road side. The Society has taken responsibility for the one opposite the Hospital. The council Parks Dept. and their contractors, Continental Landscapes, have been extremely generous and everyone has been most complimentary about the results. Just recently our Vice Chairman, Alan Benns, and Mrs Benns have given the beds a good weeding and with the bulbs bursting through they look splendid. We look forward to the Alexander Pope rose bushes blooming this year.

Bee Friendly Boxes - Having made contact with the Bee Friendly Trust whose aim is to help bees and therefore propagation, a visit was made to Teddington Station to examine the possibility of putting in 2 or 4 raised wooden beds packed with bee and insect friendly plants. We await their decision to proceed.

Richmond in Bloom - We continue to support the efforts of the Richmond In Bloom Committee in their efforts to brighten the whole Borough by getting householders, businesses and schools to plant up every little corner they can. Not all gardeners want to enter competitions, it being enough to see the results of their greenfingering work but it is a competition that is open to all comers no matter what age, sex or ability so do please have a go and boost Teddington's entries. This year LBRuT are entering our borough in Britain in Bloom so all our efforts will go to helping them get a good result.

RIVERSIDE AND OPEN SPACES GROUP – Andy Weston

Illegally Moored Boats on the Thames Banks

As has been widely reported locally the craft that were illegally moored in our area all last year were towed away after a massive effort by Richmond council and the Environment Agency “EA” to deal with the situation. It appears that following this action the owner paid a fine and had all the boats returned. They are now moored upstream above Teddington.

Kingston are taking action to enforce the 24 hour rule about mooring on their property, such as the embankment in Kingston Town Centre. It is likely that the boats will dodge about to avoid large penalties and the local bylaws and it is not beyond the bounds of possibility that they will return to our area.

I want to thank the tremendous efforts of RoR (Reclaim our Riverbank) with our member Mike Pemberton in the lead in campaigning about this issue and we can only hope that they will stay out of our immediate area due to the actions taken by the council, the EA and due to the protests of local residents.

Teddington Drawdock

Thanks to Society members and the Richmond Council cleaners the drawdock area in Teddington continues to look reasonably clean and tidy. The amount of rubbish is low and mainly brought in by the tide. The vegetation in the area is under control. The brick structure at the end of Ferry Road is obviously now ageing since the work was completed by Thames Water (as it was called then) and could do with more maintenance to structures and fittings. There is mention of this in the Village Plan. The brick structure at the end of Ferry Road is not a flood barrier but a large brick double skinned wall filled with plants and now leaks large quantities of river water into the road when a very high tide comes up to it on the river side of the wall.

Ham Hydro

Following the decision against Ham Hydro from the Judicial Review instigated by the Lensbury Club, the project is on hold and with changes in the green generating subsidies and other funding considerations it remains to be seen if any action on the project will happen soon. This does seem very unlikely in the short to medium term.

EA Proposals for Teddington (River Thames Scheme) Flood Prevention

There are concerns over the proposed EA “Option 1” scheme to put an emergency by-pass weir right across the Lock Ait next to the historic boat rollers. This proposal would reduce the number of boat moorings in the tidal Thames and direct any flood water, which would be the only time when the spillway would be called into action, straight at the riverbank under the offices in the boat house and the flats next door. The Teddington Society has taken the view that the EA “Option 2” to put the spillway at the end of the zig zag weirs next to the upstream end of the Lock Ait would be better, both from the aesthetic view of the area, preservation of the gravel beds next to the Lock Ait and the ability of the deep piling on the riverside bank opposite this point to be more capable of taking the impact of a severe flood flow current. Further concern about the ability of the Lock Ait banks to cope with large strong flows ripping down the lock side of the island to the proposed spillway if constructed next to the rollers remain as, up to now, all flow has been diverted over the weir.

EA Work on the roller sluices

The completion of work is now very much behind schedule, however no reports of any problems to residents or river users have been received. There has been evidence of a resumption of work on the sluices recently by the EA and it is believed that this will involve the installation of electrically operated sluices to replace the old mechanisms.

Open Spaces

The areas monitored such as the Shacklegate Lane Cemetery, Manor Road Recreation Ground, Broom Road Recreation Ground, Langdon Park and other open spaces have not had any major issues during the year except requests for vegetation management and clearance.

ROADS AND TRANSPORT - Brian Holder

1. Keeping members informed – why not use your Smartphone?

The Society's Website and Tidings keep members up to date with the Society's activities, but if you want really up to date news, or want to make your views known to Committee members, you should register your email address when renewing membership, and you will automatically get emails about major current issues from the Society. In addition, members who are on my open to all "Consultation/Information" email list also get information about transport, flooding, hydro and other consultations being carried out by other organisations and many of you regularly provide me with valuable local information which I can pass on to all interested parties.

2. Proposed Cycle QuietWay up Teddington High Street – possible loss of 24 parking spaces

In early July 2016 we were informed for the first time about TfL's plans for the Cycle Quietway from Wandsworth to Teddington Lock via Richmond Park, being extended to include Teddington High Street and Bushy Park then on to Hampton Court. Teddington has no need of such a Quietway scheme, as it already has four very safe "Family Routes" to various Bushy Park gates, plus a signposted London Cycle Network route up the High Street – all of which have been in place and in use since about 2002. These routes have been fully described in the Christmas 2016 TIDINGS issue. I and other Teddington residents and businesses have attended three exhibitions at the Baptist Church and made it clear to Officers that the Quietway plans are unacceptable to Teddington due to safety issues and to the loss of High Street shoppers' parking spaces and the consequential loss of business. The most serious safety issue is the proposed loss of our supersafe, incredibly busy, and much loved staggered Zebra Crossing on the High Street railway bridge which has been in use since late 2001 when it was installed as part of the Teddington Town Centre Improvements Study. There is a very important Cycle Liaison Group meeting on 18th April at York House which includes Quietways 1 and 2 as agenda items. I will be at this meeting and will be demanding the immediate scrapping of the proposed High Street scheme. I am also circulating Agenda and Minutes to residents to encourage them to attend and make their views known. An update will be given at the AGM.

3. New Controlled Parking Zone arrangements for Waldegrave Road area

A new Zone T1 for the North Teddington and Arlington Road area, and an increase in hours for Zone T (Waldegrave Road, Library and RHP area) have been put in place. The hours for both are now 10am - 4.30pm, Mondays to Fridays. The unnecessary loss of 20 parking spaces outside London Square has created parking pressures in surrounding roads, and the Society will be seeking a review of the yellow lining. As far as Zone T (Waldegrave Road) is concerned, there is a loss of 40 important public parking spaces throughout the day. However, this includes a minimum of 20 Communal parking spaces (ie. those not outside residents' properties) which will be vacant 10am to 4.30pm that could be converted to free one hour turnover spaces. Three free one hour turnover spaces are already in place outside the RHP offices, but Councillor Peter Buckwell, Cabinet Member for Transport has indicated that he is willing to discuss Teddington Society's urgent request for all the spaces on the East side of Waldegrave Road to be made free one hour turnover parking with no return within 3 hours – allowing an estimated 120 Library users, visitors, and shoppers to park at various times throughout the day - a potential major boost for our shopping centres - and a disaster if not installed. An update should be available at the AGM.

4. Teddington Station Foot Bridges - upgrades requested

I have met Network Rail representatives to discuss how the station can be made fully accessible for everyone. At present, their preference is for lifts at the main footbridge if access can be obtained from the Garden Centre. I pointed out that ramping the southern footbridge would be a much better option, being cheaper to install and maintain, and would give rail travellers a quicker and more convenient entrance if they preferred to get on trains close to the footbridge end of the platform – and as a bonus, be fully accessible for cyclists.

5. Request for Route R65 type bus service between Kingston and Richmond via Hampton Wick

The diversion of the 65 bus via Hampton Wick when Petersham Road was closed for important roadworks was tremendously popular with residents all along the route, but not so with bus operators who claim that the new one hour window for a single Oyster Card journey to be used on two bus journeys for £1.50 was just as good – it isn't. Councillor Buckwell has asked for a new service similar to the R65 to be installed.

FLOODING - Andy Weston is providing an update – nothing further to report from flood perspective.