

TEDDINGTON SOCIETY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, 2020

As members will know, the Society's annual meeting, planned for April 21st, had to be postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Here are the Group Reports that would have been presented at the AGM. They also appear in the summer 2020 edition of *Tidings*, our quarterly magazine for members.

ENVIRONMENT GROUP REPORT, 2019-20

Last year I reported that the number of litterpicks undertaken by the group in 2018 had been curtailed as a result of my having an infected hand. In 2019 a similar curtailment was occasioned by a seventeen stitch procedure to my left shoulder (what next I wonder?) but notwithstanding that, we had several successful litterpicks including the annual Riverside pick on the longest day of the year, which we rounded off with a few enjoyable libations in the nearby Tide End public house, and the well attended pick at the War Memorial on the day before Remembrance Sunday. Thanks to the large turnout at the latter and, for once, reasonable weather we got the whole area around the hospital frontage and War Memorial into excellent order.

Flytipping continued to be a problem at the Cedar Road, Elmfield Avenue and North Lane (Tesco) re-cycling sites throughout the year but I'm pleased to report that LBRuT always dealt with the matter as soon as it was reported.

The group was, as ever, involved with Chestnut Sunday and the Village Fair and later in the year assisted St Mary with St Alban church with the loan of the Society's gazebo for use as an outdoor overflow venue for the popular and over subscribed Christmas Eve crib services.

As reported last year, the Society has taken over responsibility for the Elmfield Gardens WWI poppy memorial and I wish to record here the Society's appreciation of the work undertaken by LBRuT Parks Department to re-turf the area adjacent to the structure and erect an additional fence to deter folk from taking a short cut across the grass and ruining it. The work was completed just prior to Remembrance Sunday and has enhanced the appearance of Elmfield Gardens as a whole – as the photographs on page 8 of *Tidings* No. 189 prove.

GEOFF HOWLAND

GARDENS GROUP REPORT, 2019-20

TEDDINGTON IN FLOWER

For the first time I can remember we had bad weather which kept numbers down and gave me a chill! However Siân Morgan had organised a great afternoon's tour for the Deputy Mayor, Cllr James Chard, who visited them all. Many thanks to gardeners Dick and Gilly Hughes, Kitty and Geoffrey Wass, Janet Pollock, Gianna Saccomani, Caroline and Peter Sayer and Andy and Claire Oakley, who between them raised £1,206.10 for charity. We topped that up to £1,300, gave half to the Landmark Arts Centre to improve their wooded area, and retained half for Society horticultural projects.

PARISH CHURCHYARD

Throughout the year our colleagues in the Environment Group led by Geoff Howland have helped clear the overgrown churchyard. A classic example of inter-group activity.

POPPY MEMORIAL

Sadly two of the three metal poppies in Elmfield Gardens were vandalised and bent out of shape. Thankfully, Elizabeth Foster, the main donor of the sculptures, contacted the makers and following their instructions managed to straighten them. Later in the year the grass which had been damaged by people taking short cuts instead of staying on the paths was beautifully replaced by Richmond Council's Parks Department, who added low matching railings to further protect the memorial.

RICHMOND BOROUGH IN BLOOM

Gold certificates were awarded to the front gardens of Judy Asher, Sally Howland, Brenda Virdee, Jill Smith and Kate Suttle, as well as the Methodist Church, Elleray Hall and the Adelaide pub in other categories. Altogether 13 Teddington gardeners were winners in what turned out to be the last year the competition will be held – this is because Borough in Bloom's chairman and leading light, Pat Schooling, stood down from the Chair in December after 30 years in office.

CRAIG DOES IT AGAIN!

Once again Craig Ruddick has come to the rescue and identified a mysterious sapling on the corner of Queens Road and Park Lane as a Turkish Hazel (*Corylus colurna*), native to south-eastern Europe which bears fruit that has a fascinating husk. Craig is the Council's Arboriculture Manager and is busy planting a lot of street trees in Teddington.

NEW GARDEN HELPERS NEEDED

We have to thank both Siân Morgan and Kate Suttle for their help but both have now moved on to pastures new. Volunteers to help organise Teddington In Flower are now wanted, so do let me know if you can help. It's a major fundraiser for us and with a bit of hard work you can give hundreds of people a lovely day out... weather permitting!

SHEENA HAROLD

HISTORY GROUP REPORT, 2019-20

The History Group differs from our other groups in that it doesn't have a group leader at the moment. Group members such as Paddy Ching, Ken Howe, Dick Hughes and David Ivison have done their fair share of leading the group in the past, but now feel they need a rest! It is a fully functioning group, meets regularly and answers all sorts of queries about Teddington. Its members contribute many articles to *Tidings* and you'll often find stories by Ken Howe, Paddy Ching, Dick and Gilly Hughes and Hilary Marshall.

In addition, Diana Macdonald regularly provides a somewhat historical quiz for the New Year party. Dick Hughes arranged for Jane Baxter, retiring from LBRuT Local Studies, to come to the Adelaide to give members of the Society an illustrated talk about her work and the historical resources which are available to us. It was a sell-out. We may organise more such events if the right subject arises.

SHEENA HAROLD

PLANNING GROUP (TSPG) REPORT, 2019-20

TSPG currently consists of 11 members, who meet every five to six weeks to discuss any matters to do with Teddington's built environment. These might be, typically, residential planning applications, but also, for example, major local developments, the emerging London Plan and the LBRuT Local Plan.

Members of the group come from many different backgrounds, some of which are property or planning 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 for Teddington and how it develops.

During the last 12 months we considered 109 planning applications. We submitted comments or objections on 14, out of which 5 were refused, 6 were approved and 3 are currently undecided. Of the 6 applications which we objected to or commented on 4 were amended before being approved and 3 were in line with the comments we had made.

Typical reasons for an objection or comment 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 applications are from householders for extensions etc, but with the relaxation of Permitted Development rules many proposals do not now require Planning Approval.

Increasingly it is the medium to large projects that have occupied us. Over the past year these have included new developments at 2-4 Udney Park Rd (Bagnalls Yard) – now rejected, the old HSBC site at 42 High St(not yet decided by the Planning Committee) and 4-6 Manor Rd(which has gone to Appeal-probably to be heard in September).We submitted objections to all of these.

The Planning Inspector has now dismissed the Appeal by Quantum to develop Udney Park Playing Fields and their Planning Application is therefore refused. The Friends of Udney Park raised over £100,000 from Teddington supporters to have representation at the Inquiry. The result was undoubtedly heavily influenced by the "Local Green Space" status granted for the site, a proposal originally submitted by the Teddington Society and FUPPF in 2016! It will now be interesting to see the next moves of Quantum and other parties interested in the outcome such as the CIC and Park Road GPs. Hopefully a community solution will be forthcoming to acquire the site, refurbish the Pavilion and introduce sport for all.

Current projects under our consideration include the LBRuT ideas for Elleray Hall. TSPG are broadly in favour of these on planning grounds and on good use of Council-owned sites. But because there are other community issues to consider we are waiting until the next more detailed set of plans emerge in a few months and then to contribute to an overall Teddington Society consensus on the proposals.

We all want good mobile phone coverage but we are concerned at the seemingly unregulated installation of telecom masts and, more troubling, the proliferation of street level boxes.

The planning application for a pedestrian gate at the Bushy Park's Lion Gate was approved in 2019 and we were advised that funding for this and agreement between Royal Parks and the adjacent Hotel Developer had been secured. We are, however, disappointed that nothing has happened – which does not reflect well on the parties involved.

About 30 additional Buildings of Townscape Merit (BTMs) in Teddington were approved in 2019 plus expanded Conservation Areas. We are adding details of these to our well-consulted BTM Register which you can find on the Society's website.

As to the Borough, we regularly correspond with officials of the Council Planning Department, and we had a helpful meeting and exchange of views recently. We very much support the efforts of Richmond Council to increase *genuinely affordable* and social housing in the borough. A new Richmond Local Plan is now under way with greater emphasis on climate and green issues than previously. We will submit our thoughts to the consultation in due course. The emerging London Plan has been rejected by the Secretary of State as insufficiently ambitious on housing. This could put pressure on Richmond.

We very much welcome new members with fresh views to the Planning Group to help with our workload. We all enjoy our get-togethers and feel we make a difference.

If you would like to get involved please speak to one of us or email planning@tedsoc.org.uk

KEITH ATKINSON

RIVERSIDE & OPEN SPACES REPORT, 2019-20

In general terms the year to March has been a relatively peaceful one without major issues but literally ended with a bang at the end of February with an explosion and fire just after 01.30 on the boat moorings at the end of Ferry Road.

The cause is thought to have been a short circuit on an electrical connection to a moored boat which caused the pontoon to catch fire and ignited a second boat burning through the mooring ropes, both drifted ablaze downstream causing a small fire on a third boat. Thanks to the EA staff the two adrift were "corralled" into the locks to stop pollution and burning wreckage drifting downstream on the tidal Thames. The Teddington RNLI team also were active to prevent further damage and to check there were no people involved. The LFB doused the fires with four engines attending this incident. Both main locks were closed for some time until the sunken wrecks were lifted and cleared.

Roundup of main points over the year:

1. The illegally moored "live aboard" craft are now outside of our area, mostly opposite Garrick's Villa on Hurst Park and on the bank between Platt's Eyot and Walton in Elmbridge. Well done Richmond Council in implementing the by-laws preventing illegal long term mooring in our area.
2. The litter problem on the Ham Bank over the bridges which our members have commented on in previous years has improved. The Ham volunteer group have promised to keep up litter picking work in that area when they are able to do so.
3. Flood prevention overspill weir – it seems that the EA have given a green light for planning work to re-commence on the project. If it went ahead it would fundamentally change the appearance of the lock ait with the addition of a concrete spillway next to the boat rollers. A gap in funding and other priorities for the EA probably means any start on construction is not imminent. The position on this issue will be monitored by the Society.
4. The building work next door to the Anglers on the studio site has just about been completed and the full scale and impact on the lock and Ferry Road area of the flats

built on the studio site is now apparent. The walkway on the river front between the Anglers and the Lensbury in the development is now open to the public, accessible by the paths either side of the estate office.

5. For members with an interest in the river, the Thames Landscape Strategy (TLS) initiative is in real danger of being killed off as the Councils in the area with river frontage are proposing to withdraw financial support from the two people who co-ordinate and organise the work of the TLS along the river from Kew to Weybridge. They are based at Holly Lodge in Richmond Park with Richmond Council as their "lead sponsor" and employer. Kingston have decided to withdraw funding, Richmond are considering a cut this financial year and Hounslow is reducing their contribution. This means the work they do in clearing the towpath, litter picking and lobbying about planning issues next to the river etc. is under threat. There is a charity now formed, the Father Thames Trust, that has been set up to receive business and personal charitable donations to keep their projects going but there is a real risk that this work could cease altogether. See more about what they do and ways to contribute to the Father Thames Trust on their Facebook page, or on www.thames-landscape-strategy.org.uk

ANDY WESTON

ROADS & TRANSPORT GROUP REPORT, 2019-20

1. Covid-19 adversely affecting everything

Very little has happened on the transport front over the last year, but Covid-19 will affect every aspect of any future decision for years to come. From an economic point of view, priority must be given to preserving and protecting our local services and commercial infrastructure, especially our shopping centres which are currently under lock down and cannot trade. These vitally important shopping and business centres have been under serious threat from internet sales for some time, and a combination of inability to trade and significant growth of internet sales is weakening all businesses, so the Society will be taking steps to ensure that the Council and our Councillors make decisions that protect and support our local businesses and preserve and enhance local employment. Our first choice for urgent support is the Waldegrave Road end of the High Street which desperately needs at least the installation of 20 additional Pay and Display places outside the RHP Offices in Waldegrave Road, in the section of road which is empty 10am until 4.30pm every weekday (for more detail see the Tidings article attached).

2. Introduction of 20mph Zones a year ago – air pollution now down 50% under Covid-19

Most of the 20mph teething problems have been ironed out, and most drivers are broadly observing the new speed limits. As expected, there had been no noticeable increase or decrease in air pollution until Covid-19 traffic bans came into force, and traffic induced air pollution levels are now around 50% lower than before. These lower levels of air pollution may well remain until the economy recovers, and if it doesn't, there is just a possibility that if enough drivers switch to electric cars, the current low levels could be sustained.

3. Cycle Routes, cycle hangers and possibility of new pedestrian/cycle bridges over the Thames

(i) There was almost no progress at all in identifying new cycle routes under the previous administration, and very little under the new administration except for an important TFL scheme for the London Road/A316 junction which introduces significant safety

improvements, including revised roundabout sizes and signal controlled crossings to make cycling and walking much safer.

(ii) The Council is looking to introduce Cycle Hangers in various parts of the borough where there is little safe parking for bikes and residents have asked for them. They take up about one parking bay each and will cost £72 per year to rent a space inside (see photo of hanger in Walthamstow). The Council has done some research into likely locations and will consult about their proposed locations which will be subject to gaining planning approval.

(iii) There is a proposal for a cycle/footbridge adjacent to Hammersmith Bridge, which if installed, might eventually become available for installation elsewhere once Hammersmith Bridge is repaired. Quite separately, there has been an excellent report about various potential sites for a cycle/footbridge over the Thames upstream of Richmond – the one we would like to see in place is just downstream of Eel Pie Island as it was agreed as the best location by the Cycle Liaison Group as long ago as 2001. If a new bridge cannot be afforded, the ex-Hammersmith cycle/footbridge might be suitable as and when it becomes available.

4. Possible Teddington CPZ Review

A questionnaire was sent round most addresses in Teddington asking for various details about parking in early March. This questionnaire should have been the subject of consultation with the Teddington Society and Hampton Wick Association and other local organisations under the new consultation arrangements. This would have resulted in a more informative document which could have included the pluses and minuses of CPZs, and in particular, much better use of available kerb space by using Community Parking Spaces as visitor parking or shared use, rather than keeping them empty during the hours of operation. We are to seek further discussion about this document and hopefully agree an improved consultation procedure.

BRIAN HOLDER