



Happy Birthday Skydec

(see page 5)

Wandsworth Society

Newsletter February 2012

The Wandsworth Society visits the tip ...

... could it be more fun? Well yes it was!

A group of us visited the Material Recycling Facility (MRF) at Smugglers Way in early November. We were told it would take about an hour – but we asked so many questions and got into a good discussion, that we came out after nearly two hours!

Steve Ford of the Western Riverside Waste Authority (WRWA) started by giving a brief overview of how our rubbish is dealt with. No longer does 'black bag' rubbish go to landfill in Mucking – all rubbish is now sent to Belvedere in Kent where it is burnt, leading to energy production. This is a more efficient process than extracting methane from the old waste landfill sites. Incineration produces about 72 megawatts of power of which 6 megawatts are used to power the incinerator and the rest is sold to the National Grid.

The 'black bag' rubbish waste from four London boroughs comes to Smugglers Way where it is compacted and put into containers before being loaded on to barges which are floated down to Belvedere on the outgoing tide, and then floated back the next day.

We moved to a viewing room beside what looked like a vision of hell – a huge pit that holds up to 400 tonnes of orange-bag recyclable waste (about 300 tonnes arrives daily). There are some 100 conveyor belts moving the recycling waste around the system which can handle up to 25 tonnes per hour. Every day some 100 people work at the site, in two shifts, which allows time for cleaning up and maintenance.

First a grab crane picks up 1.5 tonnes of waste and either drops it back in a different position so mixing it up, or puts it on to a conveyor belt to a bag splitter. This belt has six 'watchers' who have to remove manually any contaminants such as food waste and the orange bags themselves (which get baled up for recycling). Bags have already been crushed and partially split in the collection lorries; glass is also likely to have been broken.

The next stage is to transfer the waste to an angled mach screen¹ which separates cardboard from all the other material streams.

Then the waste goes to the top of two stacks of three tiers of steep, toothed belts. Paper is taken out and bits of glass falls through four-inch gaps in the upper layer and two-inch gaps in the next. And therein lies a problem – plastic or metal bottle tops, corks and other small items fall through these gaps as does shredded paper and so cause the glass to be contaminated which has to go off for 'decontamination'. So we were asked to PUT SHREDDED PAPER INTO BLACK BAGS – it will be sent for incineration and will therefore generate energy. Or you could add it to your garden compost.

This leaves plastics and cans. Optical sorters identify different

plastics by colour and density. Only limited plastics can be recycled here at present – you should look for items stamped with PET1 (such as water bottles), PET2 (such as detergent bottles) and food trays, tubs and pots (such as food packaging mentioned in the recent Brightside). And as referred to above, no small items like bottle tops or floss containers, even if made of PET1 etc, which get in with the glass. All these and other plastic items should go in with black bag waste unless you are able to re-use or donate to charity (in the cases of re-usable plastics such as toys for example).

Textiles should not be placed in the orange sacks – you can take them to special containers at the general tip where they will be sent away for re-use. In the crushing and mixing processes, glass shards get tangled with the material and cannot be extracted, hence the reason it is important not to put them in the recycling sacks.

I took a bag of mixed items with me so that we could find out if they can be put into orange sacks. Alas all polystyrene items, foil, 'metal' food containers, shiny paper, plastic wrapping and cellophane have to go into black bags. We should all be aware of what we can do to minimise waste in the first place – don't accept unnecessary packaging from shops and supermarkets.

The MRF is run by Cory who have a contract from WRWA until 2032. They 'own' the recyclable materials and can retain profits from them – but if the markets change or they make a loss they bear that cost. We were pleased to hear that as part of the tendering process, Cory provide comprehensive waste audits to ensure that all materials are in fact recycled. Approximately 80% of orange bag waste is paper/card; this is less profitable than some of the other items such as aluminium or steel cans.

Green waste from the skips is sent to a composting facility outside London. You can arrange for hazardous waste to be collected from your home (collections tend to be free of charge to the resident, however there is a charge for collections over a specified amount).

To write about the rest of the discussions we had about the hows and whys and costs of recycling methods would make tedious reading. But our thanks to Steve who was an informative and entertaining host.

Jenny Massey

¹ 'Mach screens' are escalator-like back-and-forth moving platforms which allow heavier materials to drop between their gaps to more mach screens waiting below

Wandsworth Society

February 2012

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From the chair

The Night at The Opera was a fine night and we had a record number for a programme of operatic arias sung by Gabriela Istoc, a fine soprano from Romania and Carlos Fidalgo a powerful tenor, from Spain, opera lovers will surely be hearing more of them. They were accompanied by Philip Voldman, who has settled in Clapham, so we may well have the opportunity of hearing him again too.

The programme was very varied indeed, including works by Bizet, Debussy, Tchaikovsky, Puccini, Verdi, Charpentier and Lehar, all performed with the professional expertise we have come to expect from the talented students of the National Opera Studio.

Each year the Studio auditions some 250 applicants for only twelve places, ten singers and two repetiteurs, so we see the best.

We are thinking of attempting another Summer Party if we can find a venue where we can, how shall I put it, enjoy more food / enjoy food more easily / enjoy more food more easily? Ideas welcome as always!

Do we have enough events? What would you like to have more of – more talks, more walks – more visits?

We could do with a bit of help and input on the Events Group, would anyone like to join us? If you are shy, you would not be obliged to introduce speakers and we can be flexible about meeting times to suit – currently we meet at 4.30 for about an hour or so every couple of months, then keep in touch by email.

Another useful task for a volunteer would be liaison with the Putney and Battersea Societies to enable us to promote each other's events in our respective websites or newsletters. It has been suggested many times that we should do this, we really do need more folk to do stuff.

You can talk to me on 020 8767 3814 or email vytprojects@aol.com.

Valerie Taylor

Did you know that any member is welcome to attend any of our Sub-Committee meetings – even on a one-off basis – simply telephone the Convenor for details.

Planning matters

Ram Brewery

No application has yet been received. The Council has set up a Design Review Panel that considered the latest designs proposed by the developers as shown at the last public exhibition. The Panel agreed with a number of points which the Society has made in the past. We have asked the Council for a meeting which we hope will be set up in the near future.

Skydec

It will be two years on the 19th February since the Inspector refused a planning appeal against an Enforcement Notice. Is this a record for inactivity! Despite letters and emails to both the Council and the developer's agents, to say nothing of the comments to the Inspectorate in Bristol, nothing has been heard. We will keep pressing to try to resolve this most unsatisfactory situation.

Thames Tunnel

The planning group has kept the progress of this proposal under review and comments have been sent to Thames Water about two of the sites in the Borough which directly affect our members. The Dormay Street site (off Armoury Way) will be one of the main dig sites and it is presently proposed to remove all the spoil by road. This could impose a great additional strain on Armoury Way. We have suggested that consideration should be given to the removal of spoil by river if feasible. King George's Park will also be used as a dig site and we have supported those seeking changes to prevent unnecessary closure of paths during construction and the reinstatement on completion of work is done in such a way to ensure as much visibility through the site as possible.

Peabody Estate, St John's Hill

A most interesting presentation was made to the Society in January at which the rationale behind the scheme was explained. A number of comments were made, particularly on the height of buildings and the need to introduce more unpaved areas to soften the landscaping.

Emanuel School Bridge

A proposal has been made to provide a new bridge across the rail lines to the west of the existing bridge from Windmill Road. This is to afford NetWork Rail ease of access to embankment works and to afford Emanuel an alternative and additional access to the school. We have considered the proposal but have not yet written expressing our views. We are aware that individual members have written to object.

Wiseton Institute, Wiseton Road

We have been asked by the Council to respond to the latest scheme proposed for this site. The proposals include the demolition of part of the existing buildings, with

reconfiguration of the remainder. Significant basements are proposed which we believe are unrealistic. Very little outside space is proposed for the residential accommodation. No workspace is proposed, for which we believe there is a continuing demand.

Eltringham School, Eltringham Road

(by the Wandsworth Bridge roundabout south east corner). A consent order has recently been given for the demolition of the existing school buildings despite being noted as having historical and architectural merit in the Site Specific Allocations Document. The site is proposed to be sold by the Council with consent for residential use. An application has been made to which we will respond. The proposed affordable housing content is well below that required by the London Plan and the Council's own Core Strategy. We have taken this up with the Council.

Southside (north end)

An application has been made for the rebuilding of a substantial part of the centre. New retail units are proposed along the Garratt Lane frontage, the mall by the Post Office will be included in a new large-space user, declared to be Marks & Spencer, who have agreed terms, and a number of new unit shops. A gym will also be provided – we are unsure whether this is a replacement of the existing facility off Buckhold Road or an additional user. The plans show a futuristic sculpture on the High Street which will be ideal to catch low-flying birds and plastic bags. Unfortunately all remaining trees appear to have been sacrificed for new seating, bike stands and refuse collection points.

Melody Road car park

The Council have proposals to provide a new block of residential units on part of the existing car park to the rear of the old Alvering Library. The indicative proposals are for a three-storey block with roof terrace to provide ten units for those requiring 'assisted living'. A public meeting was held on Tuesday 7 February and by a show of hands the proposals were considered unacceptable by all those attending. The Council will be reporting to the departments concerned. The Society has not been asked to engage at this stage.

Old Alvering Library

A new preparatory school is proposed at the old library. The applicant claims planning consent is not required for change of use (as library and educational use are in the same Use Class) but will require consent for alterations proposed. It appears that there was no public consultation prior to the commitment to a school. A public meeting was held on Thursday 26 January at the library when the plans for the facility were presented and an introductory talk given by the Principal. It is The proposed school will accommodate a maximum of 140 pupils and 30 staff, I wonder where

Transport matters

they will all be put! These numbers will be built up over some years, the first-year intake is expected to be 18 pupils, equal numbers of each sex. Many questions were put to the Principal, including drop off congestion, car parking for staff and parents, noise, playspace and the fencing around the site for 'security' reasons. This last will form a 2m-high impenetrable barrier restricting sightlines for motorists and severely limiting views of the common from Alfarthing Lane and into the green space which surrounds the library building. We will be commenting on the application.

Please let us know if you have any matters which you wish us to consider or to join us at our regular monthly meeting.

Philip Whyte

And a post script to **Skydec ... Happy Birthday**

The Skydec development on the corner of Heathfield Road and Windmill Road is universally considered to be an eyesore. For the sake of probity it should probably be said that it is almost universally considered to be an eyesore, although we have yet to meet anyone who says otherwise. There are a variety of reasons for this opprobrium, but the height and shape of the roof of the tall building are the chief cause. Five years ago the building emerged from its scaffolding too high and with an ugly roof, and five years ago the building owner was told by the Council that the development 'differed materially' from what was approved.

It would not be right to say that nothing has happened in the five years since then. An Enforcement Notice has been served, but it has not been complied with, and on 19 February 2011 it will be the second anniversary of the rejection of an appeal against the enforcement notice served on the building owner requiring compliance with the planning permission - and the fourth anniversary of the decision to take enforcement action.

In July last year the building owner suggested they were considering alternative designs to reduce the height and bulk of the roof of the tall building. We had hopes this could be a successful alternative approach, but that seems to have gone quiet.

In March 2011 we wrote to the Council and said - "... we believe the Council should prepare a statement of intent, establishing a set of requirements to remedy the breach of the enforcement notice, prepare a timetable for compliance, and put in place processes to ensure that the requirements and timetable are met.'

We will write again.

Peter Farrow

The Roads and Transport Committee is meeting regularly at the County Arms, and in December we worked on setting our mission statement, and on the areas that we wish to focus on in the coming year. Our statement is to monitor, inform and campaign in the context of local road and transport issues. Those present voiced concern about the particular issues of:

- public transport provision, particularly buses and with reference to newly planned residential areas
- public behaviour with reference to transport use
- aircraft noise
- the state of pavements generally and specifically the issue of cyclists on pavements

We hope to monitor the Strategic Planning Overview Committee in its dealings with the above issues and will inform members of what to expect. Should you be interested in any of these local issues, or any other transport development, we would be happy to have you on the committee. Two vital issues that we will be addressing are, locally, the Trinity Road-Burntwood Lane-Bellvue Road Junction, where we are concerned about the possible loss of land to Wandsworth Common, and, London-wide, The Times' Campaign for safe cycling.

The Olympic year will of course see disruptions to transport, but should also see the torch arriving in Wandsworth as well as improvements in bus "Countdown" arrival time information, and also the completion of Earlsfield station. Do let us know (ulrich.linda@gmail.com) if there are any other developments or problems that you would like us to tackle.

Linda Ulrich

This space is intentionally blank, well intentionally blank in that it is devoid of anything other than this. It was intended to be full of interesting stuff, but interesting stuff did not appear. There's a logistic problem you see, newsletters have to be 2, 4 or 8 pages long, and quite often there's only 3, 5, 6 or 7 pages of stuff, and we have to get this out to let you know about the AGM in plenty of time, see page 8.

If you feel this disgraceful state of affairs should not occur again please write and let me know, preferably with an interesting piece, preferably about Wandsworth, or if that fails to inspire anything at all, the more so if you want less of this drivel ...

Thursday 19 April 2012

Election Hustings

Engage with democracy

The local GLA election husting is an opportunity to find out all you need to know in order to do your bit for democracy and VOTE

This is a Putney Society event, to which other local societies are invited, at St Mary's Church Putney, beginning at 7.30 (ie earlier than usual Wand Soc events).



THE NEXT SOCIETY SOIRÉE

will be on

Sunday the 25th March

7:15 for 7.30

at 4 Patten Road, SW18 3RH

Anna Tilbrook piano, *Lowri Porter* violin and
Rozzie Gladstone cello

'A young trio with great potential' will play
Rachmaninov Trio elegiac, *Haydn* 'Gypsy Rondo'
trio, and *Mendelssohn* trio in D minor.

Places at £15 and £12 concessions available as
usual from the Wards on
020 8874 4938 or davidwb.ward@virgin.net



... and some dates to be pencilled in ...

Thursday 17 May

Françoise Carter will give a talk 'May I Have the
Pleasure? The importance of dancing in late 17th-
and 18th-century society'.

Monday 28 May

'In the footsteps of Edward Thomas' – Richard Purver
of the Edward Thomas Fellowship, who gave such
an interesting talk on the residences in Battersea and
Clapham of the poet Edward Thomas, will lead a
walk around these locations, on the afternoon of 28
May. The walk will last approximately two hours and
may include a tea-break.

Out of breath? Air quality in Wandsworth, the facts & what's being done about it

A meeting arranged by
Wandsworth Environment Forum
at
Wandsworth Town Hall - Room 123
Wandsworth High Street
SW18 2PU

21 March 7:30 - 9pm

This is an issue that affects all Wandsworth
residents, although there are particular
concerns in Putney. The Putney Society has
done a lot of work already to raise awareness
of the issue and get the council on-board to
start addressing the problems there.

Each member of the panel will each do a
short presentation, which will be followed by
a Q&A session. The panel includes:

Cllr Russell King (tbc) - Wandsworth
Borough Council

Jonathan Callaway - Putney Society

Simon Birkett - Founder and Director of
Clean Air in London

For further details and to register please go
to -
<http://outofbreathwandsworth.eventbrite.co.uk/>

Wandsworth Environment Forum (WEF) is a
voluntary association which brings together
residents and representatives of community
groups to discuss their local environmental
concerns and co-ordinate/initiate positive
actions.

Wandsworth Society

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Thursday 22 March 2012

7.00 prompt for annual reports, a review of the Society's work and the election of officers and Executive Committee at the West Side Church, at the corner of Melody Road and Allfarthing Lane, followed by ...

A programme of keyboard music from
David Ward, with *accompanying readings*.

The Musical Travels of Dr Burney, and his Local Connections

And though we are sure, oh best beloved, that you will not need to be reminded that Charles Burney FRS (7 April 1726 – 12 April 1814) was an English *music historian, organist, composer* and *father* of authors *Fanny Burney* and *Sarah Burney*, we thought we would mention it ... just in case.

Complete the form at the bottom of this page with your idea of who would be useful to the Society – probably a good idea to ask them first!

If you have any questions you would like to raise, particularly about the constitution please let us know in advance, seven days notice please, to the Secretary, John Dawson – that is by 15 March – telephone 020 8785 0077 or email to jd@andrewcatto.co.uk

The Society is keen to meet interested people who can bring fresh ideas and lend their support to our aims of safeguarding the local environment. Please use the slip below for your vote and nominate someone or offer yourself.

Nominations for the Wandsworth Society Committee 2011 - 2012

Nominee – name and signature

Nominator – name and signature

Seconder – name and signature

Please hand in at AGM or send to Sheila Allen, 13 Earlsfield Road, London SW18
or telephone Valerie Taylor on 020 8767 3814 if you would like a chat about the implications of volunteering.
