

Wandsworth Society

Newsletter November 2019



Now you see them ...



... now you don't. *O tempora o mores* ...

Wandsworth Planning, Tree Wardens and Mount Nod

Local planning is at the heart of any local 'amenity' or 'civic' society such as ours. As we approach our fiftieth anniversary (2021), it is appropriate to review what we have 'achieved'. It is perhaps surprising that we have not for so long attempted such a meeting as the one held on 14 November, entitled 'The Good, the Bad and the Inappropriate - what 'Planning' has done to/for Wandsworth'.

An audience of about fifty Society members braved a wintry night and stayed the course. Four members of our Planning group (led by Bruce St-Julian Bown, with Peter Farrow, Cyril Richert and Philip Whyte) cantered through the major developments in the built environment that the Society has grappled with over the years - 'failures' and 'successes'. The audience was invited to reflect and to return a feed-back form to Philip Whyte - we look forward to reading them. There was also much to learn for many about the complexities of 'planning' and the handling of applications. There will be a fuller report in our

next Newsletter and we hope to place some of the material used in the presentations on our website.

The meeting was also an opportunity to celebrate the work of the borough's Tree Wardens, four of them Society members - Barbara Cox, Celia Jones, Susy Lloyd (Secretary of the Wardens) and Cllr Sarah McDermott. The Wardens had just received a Civic Award from the Council (the first such for an environmental group). We gave them a hearty round of applause.

It is good too that the Council has now agreed - it has taken some time - a new Tree Strategy for the borough that takes account of the Wardens' earlier advice. The Society will have more to say about Wandsworth's tree policy in the New Year. The images on this page show the trees on Swandon Way as they were until recently - and that same view 'now' - it follows the start of work on the B&Q site to build 14 tower blocks of 8 to 15 storeys, a scheme to which we strongly objected .

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If you haven't booked for our Christmas party (see back page), **book now!**

Cleaner air

Leonie Cooper, Society member, Furzedown Councillor (Labour) and London Assembly member for Merton and Wandsworth, spoke to the Society in September

Air pollution is one of the most significant health threats Londoners face, contributing to almost 10,000 early deaths each year, of which up to 150 are in Wandsworth alone. That's why I welcomed the chance to speak to the Wandsworth Society recently about air pollution in our local area. The good news is that the London Mayor, Sadiq Khan, is working hard to improve air quality across London and bring nitrogen dioxide levels within legal limits by 2025. Taking stringent action is vital to protect children's health and end preventable deaths from air pollution, but we all need to play our part in cleaning up Wandsworth's air.

The Ultra-Low Emissions Zone (ULEZ), commenced on 8th April and has already improved air quality by 20% in central London. Nearly 13,000 fewer older, more polluting non-compliant vehicles are entering the zone each day. This figure will increase, as enforcement and awareness of the ULEZ increase. A 'ULEZ-compliant vehicle' must meet at least Euro 4 standards for petrol and Euro 6 standards for diesel; in practice, petrol cars registered from 2005 onwards and diesels registered from 2015 are compliant. The ULEZ is administered and enforced using the same system as the Congestion Charge, making it accessible and easy to understand for Londoners and visitors alike. However, it does operate 24/7.

The Mayor has developed a Scrappage Scheme for micro-businesses, and will be extending it to charities and low-income families, meaning that Londoners wanting to switch to a cleaner, ULEZ-compliant vehicle face fewer barriers. Better still, the Scrappage Scheme will be providing vouchers and incentives to ditch the car altogether by switching to public transport and active travel. Make sure you look out for the details of the scheme when it's launched later this year.



In 2021, when ULEZ expands up to the North and South Circular roads, Wandsworth's air pollution will be 27% lower than without any action. This improvement in air quality will benefit the whole Borough, despite the ULEZ ending at the South Circular, as people are incentivised to get rid of older and more polluting vehicles. By 2025, just one residential pollution monitor in Wandsworth will be in an area with illegal air pollution, at Nine Elms. Currently there are over 450. There will also be no schools in areas with illegal pollution, which is crucial as children's lung development is compromised by toxic air - and once stunted, children's lungs do not grow back.

Another initiative to improve air quality around schools is the School Streets programme, being introduced across London. This involves closing the streets leading to schools to motor vehicles at drop-off and pick-up time, encouraging active travel to school and reducing children's exposure to harmful pollutants. Wandsworth Council is currently consulting on School Streets for five schools in the Borough. School Streets are frequently recommended to schools under the Mayor's Air Quality Audit programme, and we know that they work for children's health. Walking or cycling the final stretch to school, if not all the way, is the kind of simple, yet effective, change that many families can make, and closing the streets around the gates guarantees a safe and healthy route.

Air pollution is one of the most pressing issues facing modern London, which is why I'm glad the Mayor is taking action - and leading efforts nationally - to clean up our air. However, London urgently needs Government support, including access to the Clean Air Fund, in order to make the biggest difference to health.

Wandsworth Society

November 2019

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You will note from our back page that next February's Society meeting will be a talk on the Huguenots and Wandsworth - and, if there is interest, we shall organise a 'Huguenot Wandsworth' walk in the spring - which will encompass more than Mount Nod, the Huguenot burial ground (behind Book House at the top of East Hill). Mount Nod can now at last (there were protracted legal issues over ownership) be given what we believe will be an appropriate 'makeover'. Funding is available and restoration of the tombs has just started. Our Society and the Wandsworth Historical Society have been invited to participate in the taking forward of an 'interpretation project' - essentially, the presentation of the history of the cemetery, its tombs and who sleeps there. If you would like to participate, or just be kept in touch, please e-mail me.

I am sorry that this Newsletter has again been delayed. We remain very grateful to our deliverers of the printed edition. You can now all look forward to The Bedside Edition of our newsletter. And time now to wish you a Merry Christmas. A new year beckons,

David Kirk

Message from the Chair

Do we have your email address? As well as the Newsletter, many Society members also receive up-dates on events, activities and other news via monthly email 'flyers'. Email is also often the most efficient means for the Society to contact you. If we don't have your e-mail address, please let us have it - it won't be used for any non-Society purpose. email Gill Gray, our Membership Secretary, at membership@wandsworthsociety.org who can then ensure that you are kept up-to-date with the latest Society news, via our flyers.

Membership Details

Could you also please ensure that the amount of your Standing Order is correct; some have not been updated since the rate increase (household/individuals now £15; senior citizens £10; organisations £30.) And If you have not completed a Gift Aid form, ask for one from Gill Gray at membership@wandsworthsociety.org.

Website

www.wandsworthsociety.org

Planning News

The planning group has had remarkably few new cases to deal with in the last few months, other than reviewing and supplementing previous comments and objections to cases currently with the planning authority – not that we mind! but the caseload may be an indicator of a confused market created by the Brexit debate, a somewhat slower residential market and despite historically low interest rates, and a reluctance of both borrowers and lenders to "get on with it"!!!

Trinity Road/Burntwood Road intersection

We have followed up our previous discussion and correspondence with the Council, to be advised recently that the Council are still awaiting further reports from their consultants. The first phase of "yellow boxing" the junction has not been implemented which is needed to trial any improvements before moving onto subsequent work to improve traffic flow. Don't hold your breath.

Ferrier Street (2018/5699) This application has stalled until recently as the Council were awaiting further and better information on details which included traffic controls within Ferrier Street to assist safe crossings between the proposed new buildings and the play area which involves providing raised platforms across the carriageway. Minor elevational alterations have been made to the eastern tower block and one unit has been lost through changes proposed.

Jaggard Way (2018/5413) This application for Outline consent follows the refusal of a previous application. The content of the scheme which contains a mix of residential and commercial uses is in our view inappropriate, as the planning guideline contains no direction/encouragement for residential use. The proposed scheme is unnecessarily dense and has heights which impose on the adjoining residential accommodation in Ravenslea Road. A recent revised daylight and sunlight report has been provided which appears to vary, clarify and qualify a previous report. We have written again emphasising our concern and objections to the proposals.

Neals Lodge, Wandsworth Common The Society has been party to discussions about the future use and repair of the part of the Lodge



Proposed view along Ferrier Street

which is currently unused. A project steering group reporting to the Wandsworth Common Management Advisory Committee (MAC) has been set up and is currently considering next steps (several of its members also Society members). There is likely to be a public consultation about future possibilities next year. Incidentally, the Skylark café in another part of the Lodge has undergone redecoration recently and remains a very popular venue for meeting on the Common for coffee and tea (the writer has no vested interest.)

Riverside/Haldane Place off Garratt Lane (2018/4176). This is a major application for the existing business centre including the Trampoline centre fronting Garratt Lane. The writer attended a presentation of revised proposals in June which reflected comments from a previous public consultation, including a reduction of the height of blocks overlooking King George's Park and the River Wandle. The Council have not advised of the receipt of revisions to the original application to date.

King George's Park The Society has been involved with consultations which have taken place in respect of a Use Strategy for the future of this major green recreational area in the centre of the town. It is extraordinary how many different aspects of the Park's use have to be taken into consideration when devising a



Osiers Road Proposed view from Enterprise Way

comprehensive proposal. Birds, bees, cyclists, pedestrians, footballers, tennis players all have to be properly considered, to say nothing of the ongoing maintenance and repair for which the Council and their contractors are responsible.

Osiers Road (former Linton Fuels site) An application for the redevelopment of this site was refused by the Council as being "too overbearing" amongst other reasons. It came as no surprise that the Mayor of London called the application in for his determination, after the use of the residential portions of the building had been changed to reflect no open market housing, thus all "affordable" in the three categories specified in legislation. The form and content of height and massing had not been altered, thus will still be overbearing!

Alton Estate, Roehampton (2019/2516) Although outside the Society's 'area of interest', the Alton estate is of more than local interest architecturally and we share the strong objections to the proposed development expressed by the Putney Society. Given the

significance of the application, the Mayor of London's office has been consulted and has commented adversely on the proposals. Revisions will evidently be needed if the scheme is to continue and we shall follow developments with interest.

The **Local Plan** is again up for review - a task we do not relish but have been working on. The Tideway Tunnel continues to bore its way underground. The Armoury Way gyratory, we understand, is still slowly progressing - latest start date 2022!

Have you been to the new cinema complex in the old Studios at the north end of the new Ram Quarter? well worth a visit, we think.

B&Q Swandon Way closed at the end of October. Shame, as it has provided much needed tools, garden equipment, plants and everything else for the handyman/ woman for over twenty years. As regards the trees ... see the cover of this Newsletter.

Philip Whyte

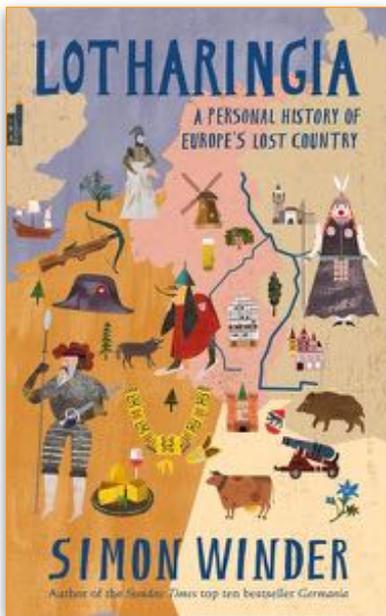
General Election hustings

The Society, with some regret, is not arranging a hustings event this year, but members will be welcome to attend:

The Battersea Society and Katherine Low Settlement are sponsoring a hustings on Thursday **28 November**, 6.30pm start, at York Gardens Library, SW11 2UG. - "your chance to hear and quiz Battersea's election candidates": Conservative - Kim Caddy; Green Lois Davis; Labour - Marsha de Cordova; Lib Dem - Mark Gitsham.

The Putney Society hustings is on Tuesday **3 December**, 7.30pm start, at the Community Church in Werter Road, off Putney High Street (opposite Sainsbury's). All candidates for Putney, Roehampton and Southfields constituency will speak (Conservative - Will Sweet; Green - Fergal McEntee; Labour - Fleur Anderson; Lib Dem - Sue Wixley) and take questions. There will be an opportunity to meet the candidates afterwards.

A (virtual) trip to Lotharingia with Simon Winder



Wendy Cater reports on a talk that raised a host of questions and comments from the Society audience at our meeting on 10 October

Lotharingia: what a haunting, enigmatic name! Visions of wispy turreted castles in misty mountainous landscapes threaded with winding silver rivers fringed with pinewoods - home to

sleeping beauties, mounted princelings and Rapunzels galore. Where could it be? Well, you may already have been there: if you have ever visited the Netherlands, Belgium, north-eastern France or Luxembourg, you have certainly been there.

Our genial, well-travelled and witty speaker, local author Simon Winder, has now completed a trilogy of books that bring three lost kingdoms of northern Europe back, if not to life, then to public recognition - and so *Lotharingia* has joined *Germania* and *Danubia* on the bookshelves. Simon had previously introduced us to the last two, and has now enlightened and entertained us with his personally explored and immaculately researched account of this least-known European land that time has forgotten.

When the three grandsons of Charlemagne were squabbling in 843 over how their inheritance of the

Holy Roman Empire of the Great Charles should be divided, Charles II got the western third, which became called France, Louis I the eastern part, thenceforth Germany, and the long thin middle section went to Lothair I. His original possession was reduced by inheritance and dissension, but, after northern Italy and Provence had been sliced off, the remainder was named after his son Lothair II. That name lives on in much reorganised France as Lorraine, and in much reorganised Germany as Lothringen.

So, long ago but not so far away, mysterious Lotharingia played a crucial role in the travails of western Europe. As Simon Winder writes, it “has provoked wars in every century and has been the site of many of the events which have defined European civilisation” - a worthy subject indeed for a splendid talk. We thank Simon most warmly for informing us so enjoyably, and I recommend his new book for its vivid recording of his travels through space and time in his personal exploration of what I shall now always delight in referring to as Lotharingia!

Lotharingia: A Personal History of Europe's Lost Country by Simon Winder is published by Pan Macmillan and is available of course from all good booksellers.

Is twenty plenty?

Further to the successful boroughwide 20mph implementation on residential roads, Wandsworth Council is now considering a selection of classified roads - Northcote Road, Bolingbroke Road, Bellevue Road, Rectory Lane and Silverthorne Road.

Wandsworth Council would like to know your views before deciding whether to proceed with implementing the proposal. Details on these consultations are available at <https://tinyurl.com/20mph-consult>

A clarinet and piano recital with Jennifer Carter and Katie Lockhart



To lighten a wet and gloomy autumn evening (Sunday 13 October), Wandsworth Society patrons took refuge in the welcoming ambience of 14 Patten Road where they were treated to a heart-warming recital by pianist Jennifer Carter and clarinettist Katie Lockhart.



They started the programme with four of Gerald Finzi's Five Bagatelles. Finzi was described as the quintessential Englishman who loved the countryside and 'collected' apple trees. The Bagatelles were in turn sunny and

dappled, gently rocking and wistful, ending with a jaunty, twirling dance of snakes and ladders!

Next came Witold Lutoslawski's Five Dance Preludes. The composer had a tragic early life - his father was executed by the Russians when he was six; as a young composer, he hung around in cafes with Polish friends and wrote 'resistance-style' music. The Preludes are tuneful country dances from his early period, suggesting chickens in the farmyard, sweeping views, little hops by children or birds, something hasty in the woodshed and, finally, a dizzying dance racing up to a high squeak...

The first half ended with Francis Poulenc's Sonata. Poulenc liked wind instruments and, having written his much-loved wind sextet, decided in 1962, towards the end of his life, to write a sonata for each of the instruments. Sadly, he died before he could complete all of them, but the Sonata for piano and clarinet was commissioned - and first performed - by Benny Goodman and Leonard Bernstein. It was beautifully played by our guests. The movements of the sonata

ranged from mad scamper to dreamy arpeggios from 'bluesy' lilts to 'helter-skelter', from two-step cabaret to lyrical grandeur. Terrific!

After the interval (and drinks) Jennifer and Katie performed 'Pastoral' by Sir Arthur Bliss, a composer of many styles. Raised with no need to earn a living, he demanded when World War 2 came that 'someone should put him to work' - and so he became Director of Music at the BBC! 'Pastoral' is a lovely work; it evokes rolling fields and skies. There is a hint of wistfulness - and a peaceful ending.

The final item in the programme, Robert Schumann's Fantasiestücke is among the most famous and the most transcribed of all his compositions. His very troubled life is well documented - the early death of his mother, his sister's suicide, the death from cholera of his brother and his wife. Although he eventually won the hand of his great love, Clara Wieck, his mental state declined dramatically. He claimed to hear angelic or diabolical voices and was driven to attempt suicide in the Rhine. However, none of these tragedies can be guessed at in these three charming pieces, in nature poetic, reflective, sweetly flowing, and then cheering and affirmative.

The audience's enthusiastic applause was rewarded with the lovely 'Vocalise' by Rachmaninov as the encore. Many thanks to Jennifer and Katie for their beautiful performances - and of course once again to Arjang and Stefan Byron for their welcoming and warm hospitality.

Helen Blumer

All Society members and their guests are welcome to our soirées - informal, usually musical, events. We hope that the next will involve David Ward, the musician and WS member who began the tradition (at the other end of Patten Road) some 30 years ago.

Events

BOOK NOW

Friday 6

... and, be still my beating heart, the

Society Christmas Party

St Anne's Church Hall (note venue and start time)

St Ann's Crescent, Wandsworth, SW18 2RS

Always good value for Society members and their guests - tickets are £15 a head (payment to be made at the door on your arrival), for first drink and supper - and entertainment with ...

The Swingtime Sweethearts

Book now, click [here](mailto:events@wandsworthsociety.org) or events@wandsworthsociety.org to send an email, or call Caroline Pook on 020 8870 4958 and leave a message.



... and in 2020

Thursday 9 January

7.45 for 8pm

West Side Church, corner of Melody Road and Allfarthing Lane, SW18 2QQ

GUERRILLA GARDENING

Presentation by Nina Kowalski of Southfield's Green the Grid initiative. It began in Spring 2018 with the aim of encouraging local residents to make their streets visually greener and more friendly to wildlife, and to improve air quality and help prevent flooding. In other words to help Southfields become London's first 'Front Garden Friendly Neighbourhood'....



Thursday 13 February

7.45 for 8pm West Side Church

The Huguenots and Wandsworth

A talk by a member of the Huguenot Society will cover who the Huguenots were and why they came here, their persecution, emigration, immigration and assimilation. You will hear about the Huguenots who lived in Wandsworth, the skills they brought with them, and the way Wandsworth's heavily industrialised past is reflected in today's town.



Thursday 12 March

7 pm start at West Side Church

Annual General Meeting

Details of the AGM and subsequent talk/ presentation to be announced.