

West London River Group

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Newsletter compiler
Philip Whyte

Battersea Society



Lots Road Power station

The Battersea Society is pleased to announce that it's just launched its second photo competition in partnership with the Royal College of Art, this time on the theme Battersea Past Present & Future. This is open to all amateur photographers, of all ages; do please think about entering yourself, and spread the news to anyone else who might be interested. The competition runs until 31 August 2023 and entrants can submit up to three photos, to be taken within Battersea and fit into one of the three competition categories: Battersea Past, Battersea Present and Battersea Future. There are cash prizes on offer and we'll be putting on an exhibition of finalists' entries at the RCA's Battersea campus in early October.

Representing: [Barnes Community Action Group](#) | [Battersea Society](#) | [Bishop's Park Co-ordinating Group](#) | [Cheyne Walk Trust](#) | [Fulham Society](#) | [Hammersmith & Fulham Historic Buildings Group](#) | [Hurlingham Yacht Club](#) | [The Kew Society](#) | [Thames21](#) | [London Forum of Amenity and Civic Societies](#) | [Mortlake Community Association](#) | [Mortlake with East Sheen Society](#) | [Putney Society](#) | [Strand-on-the-Green Association](#) | [Thamesbank](#) | [University of London Boathouse](#) | [Wandsworth Society](#) | [William Morris Society](#)

Our last competition on the theme of My Battersea back in 2021 attracted a fair number of entries with a Thames theme, including our competition winner, Fire by Louis Benne. Louis was just eleven years old when he took this stunning photo featuring the foreshore near St Mary's.

Dr Clare Graham

Fulham Society



Fulham Football Club

Fulham Football Club was granted planning permission for the redevelopment of its Riverside stand in March 2018. Work began in 2019 and the towering structure of a stand with an ultimate 8650 capacity now dominates the skyline at the upstream end of Bishops Park. The barges and cranes have gone, and the external work is finished. The structure is still undergoing some internal refitting; the lower half of the stand is now used at matches and the project is expected to be completed in time for the 2023-4 season.

The planning permission was given for the stand to include new leisure and retail facilities; restaurants overlooking the river, a rooftop pool, a hotel, a roof terrace and, of particular interest to the general public, a new river walkway to make a continuous path between Putney Bridge and Hammersmith Bridge. The walkway is yet to materialise although planning permission was given on the basis that it would be opened once the external structure was completed.

Following the partial opening of the stand we, The Fulham Society, contacted the Club last Autumn about their legal obligation to open the new section of the river walk. No progress was made, so a formal complaint was made to the Council in January. We hope the Council will uphold residents' legitimate rights as well as the integrity of the planning system.

Nothing further has been heard about the plans for a riverside pier since the flurry of publicity that provoked petitions and adverse comments last year.

Hammersmith Society



Hammersmith Bridge

It is now four years since the bridge was suddenly closed even to pedestrians and cyclists and even no boats allowed to go underneath. Fortunately pedestrians and boats were allowed back shortly afterwards and the proposals for a ferry did not have to go forward.

There have recently been well-publicised consultation meetings either side of the river, covering the repair and refurbishment of the bridge together with proposed Foster/COWI temporary bridge to enable a quicker and cheaper means of getting the bridge fully open for buses and cars. Photos of the models can be found on the hammersmithsociety.org.uk website.

This has inevitably provoked further controversy with some people not wishing to see it reopened for vehicles.

As has been reported previously Foster + Partners/COWI have come up with a proposal for a temporary two tier temporary structure laid on top of the existing bridge span which is now to have planning permission and Listed Building Consent applied for in April to the Boroughs on both sides of the river. This will be a cheaper and quicker way of getting the bridge fully reopened.

The Hammersmith Society committee members have had 1:1 discussions with the Foster / COWI team to answer our questions and listen to our suggestions. It's important to realise that this proposal is a separate undertaking to the 'stabilisation' works already underway (and we understand nearly completed), and which are a necessary precursor to this project.

This proposal involves:

- Once the temporary roadway is installed the existing roadway can be removed from below.
- The structural parts can be restored offsite, which will lead to a higher quality and lower cost result
- Replacing the roadway by a stronger and lighter steel structure, again as we originally suggested which will allow heavier battery electric or hydrogen powered buses.
- Repainting in the original Bazalgette green.

Once the work is completed the temporary structure can be removed and recycled for use on other bridge repair projects anywhere in the world.

We're delighted to see that the designers have adopted our previous suggestion to widen the pathways alongside the bridge to at least 2.3m, to better facilitate walking and cycling which are currently rather less than ideal. We understand that Historic England are satisfied that this won't harm the setting of the Grade 2* bridge.

It is of course necessary to have all the finance in place so that the temporary bridge doesn't become permanent, and everyone is aware of that risk. We understand that the three-way agreed split between LBHF, TFL/Mayor and national government remains, with at least a real prospect of a toll to pay for LBHF's portion, details TBD.

Latest up date as at mid June : the planning applications for the bridge reconstruction have been made to all those concerned.

Riverside Studios

We are very sad to learn that administrators have been called in at the very popular and well used Riverside Studios, both as an arts venue and café and meeting place. We hope that their finances can be sorted out without it having to close down.

Putney Society

Putney Tidy Towpath Group have run 12 sessions over the 12 months. They collected 142 bags of litter with the help of 148 volunteers – a total of 296 ‘man’-hours of volunteering. They have extended their area further towards Barnes. This period there have been no fatbergs and the towpath appears to have less new litter – such as cups sweet wrappers, but there continue to be lot of old plastics dropped by high tides including a lot of micro plastics. They have removed 1394 Single Use Plastic glasses and bottles in the period.

They have 1 Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award students, 4 silver volunteering with collections for their award. They are no longer insured to offer this to Bronze students. One of the volunteers, Sam Johnson, has trained with Thames21 and has now set up the Battersea Beach Clean group <https://e-voice.org.uk/batterseabeachclean/> to tackle huge amounts of litter found in the Old Swan Wharf area of the foreshore (no towpath). Currently Sandi is helping and supporting her in setting up and running these sessions whilst she increases local volunteers from the area.

Leader Sandi Bloomfield has been nominated for the Thames21 Celia Hensman River Leader of the Year Award – results will be announced at the end of April.

The Two Piers Planning Applications: The conflicting applications from the present (Livett's) Pier and the new Uber Pier came to the March planning applications committee. The Livett's Pier extension was refused and the Uber Pier approved with conditions. The latter will be accessed from the Tideway Tunnel promontory. The Putney Society, The Putney Bid and The Conservation Area Advisory Cttee supported the Uber application, although The Putney Society suggested that it would be better situated east of the bridge.

Waterman's Green: Now that Tideway Tunnel have almost finished their works on Waterman's Green a planning application has been submitted for the refurbishment of the Green. This involves step-free access from the embankment, planting of shrubs and flowers, provision of seating and enhancement of the boundaries. The tables and chairs accessed by the vaults from the restaurants on the Lower Richmond Rd will remain at the eastern end.

Tideway Tunnel: The work at Putney is progressing steadily towards the finish in 2024. The temporary slipway has been removed and the old slipway next to Waterman's Green reinstated. We look forward to being able to view next year's Boatrace from the promontory.

Caroline Whitehead
Putney Society.

Wandsworth Society

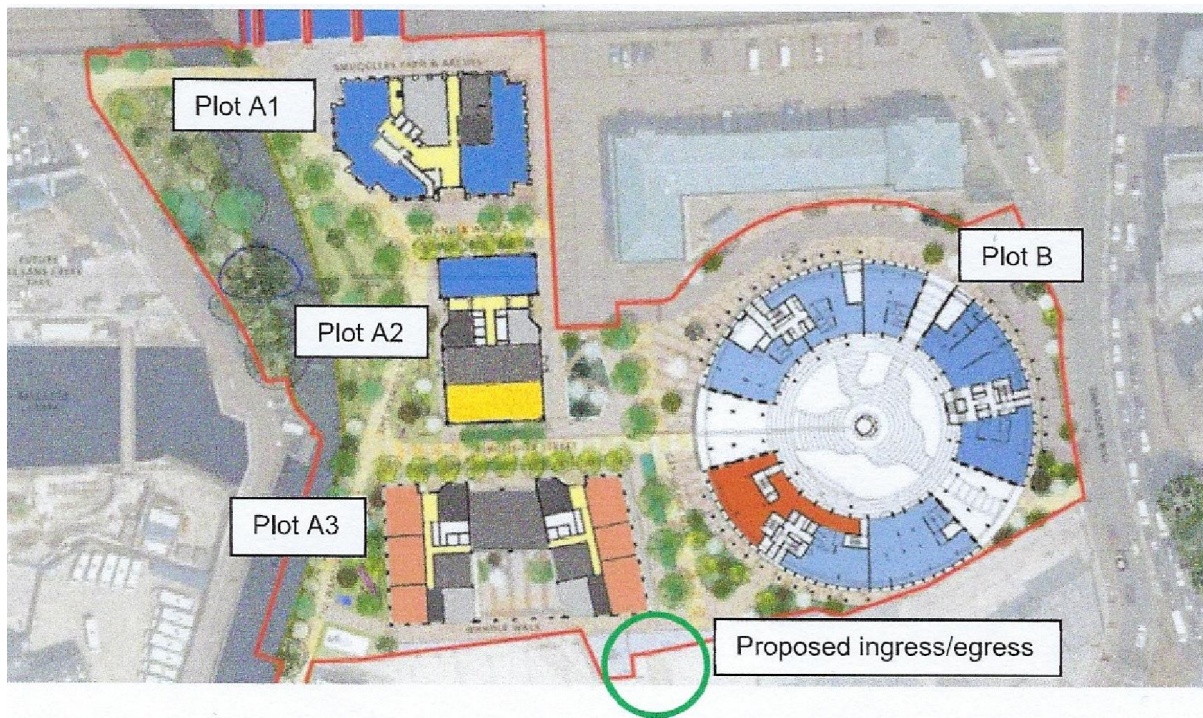
The major concern of the Society is the current application No 2022/3954 for the redevelopment of the former gasholder site adjoining Armoury Way in central Wandsworth.



Artist impression of Plot A



Artist impression of Plot A1, A2 & A3



Overall layout as proposed.

The illustration above shows part of the proposals for a 30 storey tower close to the River Wandle at the northwest corner of the site. This application is in “hybrid” form (part detail and part outline) with the predominate use as residential.

The Society’s main concerns are that the application flies in the face of an adopted Masterplan of which this site forms part, the heights and density of the proposed buildings, the gross overshadowing of the River Wandle and the somewhat restricted pedestrian and vehicular access arrangements. The site is within a flood plane and is highly contaminated from the former filling of a canal running across the site.

Most of the riverside sites between Battersea and Hammersmith on the south bank have now been redeveloped, however we keep a “watching brief” on where improvements can be made. If members have any suggestions which we can take up with Wandsworth Council or any other body concerned with the environment please contact the writer.

Philip Whyte