

## Introduction

Our 2016 AGM will take place at The Cricketers, Richmond Green, on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> April 2016. This newsletter summarises the key events of 2015.

## Talk on Richmond Green by Valerie Boyes

At the invitation of the Friends of Richmond Green, lecturer and local historian Valerie Boyes gave a talk entitled 'The History of Richmond Green: the familiar and unfamiliar', on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2015 at Richmond Adult Community College. Over 70 people attended.

Every building on The Green and Little Green is recorded, but more information is still welcomed. Although time did not permit a mention of them all, some of the buildings featured were the former Royal Palace, Old Palace Place, Maids of Honour Row, and the demolished Royal Theatre. Another notable building was the very grand Fitzwilliam House with extensive gardens. Pembroke Villas currently occupies a part of its site.

There is much more in the PowerPoint presentation that Valerie has placed in the Museum of Richmond. She would welcome any additional information on the houses or any other area of The Green. It is intended that her talk will be published as a booklet and sold from the Museum.

## Heathrow

On 10<sup>th</sup> December the Government announced the deferral of its decision on airport capacity until the middle of 2016. We assume this will be after the EU referendum on 23<sup>rd</sup> June. The choice is still between Heathrow and Gatwick, with the option of no new runways ruled out.

During last year Richmond Heathrow Campaign (RHC), which represents the Heathrow interests of FoRG and

the Richmond and Kew Societies, spent a considerable amount of time seeking to influence the airport decision. Peter Willan is chair of RHC and was re-appointed Secretariat to the All Party Parliamentary Group on Heathrow and the Wider Economy (Heathrow APPG) after last May's general election.

RHC and the Heathrow APPG have undertaken a considerable amount of research on airport expansion and the reports can be viewed at [www.richmondheathrowcampaign.org](http://www.richmondheathrowcampaign.org), [www.rhcfacts.org](http://www.rhcfacts.org) and also at [www.heathrowappg.com](http://www.heathrowappg.com). Using this evidence, RHC last year wrote to the Prime Minister, Chancellor, Secretary of State for Transport and the Cabinet Committee established to consider airport expansion, and to all MPs, and met with the Aviation Minister. Our aim is primarily to demonstrate how the conclusions in the Airports Commission that recommended an expanded Heathrow were substantially at odds with the evidence in the Commission's report and that, based on the Commission's evidence, no new UK runways are justified. The evidence covers environmental issues of noise, air quality and climate change and the local and wider UK economics. RHC's arguments are gaining traction

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in the media and with the government. However, at the end of the day it may come down to a judicial review if Heathrow is chosen.

RHC is increasingly involved with Heathrow, the CAA, NATS and Dept for Transport on the re-design of London's airspace. Reports and Minutes of meetings can be seen at: [www.heathrow.com/noise/making-heathrow-quieter/our-noise-strategy/working-with-local-communities/heathrow-community-noise-forum](http://www.heathrow.com/noise/making-heathrow-quieter/our-noise-strategy/working-with-local-communities/heathrow-community-noise-forum)

This year there will likely be an airport decision and government consultation on night flights, and possibly on Aviation Policy. The government's ability to satisfy the law on air quality, the fifth carbon budget and the World Health Organisation's review of noise will all be important events.

## Licensing

During the year there were several licence applications at premises in the vicinity of Richmond Green. These included Yuma Sushi in Brewers Lane and Liquid Gold Cave in a boathouse on St Helena Terrace. A change in layout sought by the Britannia in Brewers Lane was refused. A new street trading licence was granted to Revolution on the Riverside, but greater use was turned down. Revolution has just returned with an application for extended street trading on the riverside. Clientele of The Lot in Duke Street have caused serious problems of disturbance on Richmond Green over many years. Mitchells & Butlers sold the premises during the year to Darwin & Wallace who were granted a new licence and opened as 1A Duke Street. Considerable concern has been raised with the plans and licence granted and the Council refused

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

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Please be there to support  
your committee and discuss  
the issues. (Note that we are  
back at The Cricketers.)

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Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2016  
at 7:30pm, upstairs at...

The Cricketers  
Richmond Green

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planning permission for the kitchen extraction plant and roof terrace, which refusal is currently under appeal. Much time was spent working with the council on a licence for the Rugby World Cup Fanzone in Old Deer Park. Alcohol-related, low-level anti-social behaviour in Richmond's open spaces is still too high and FoRG continues to work with the council and police on the issues.

Busking on the riverside and in town remains an issue, but little progress was made during the year on controls that might be introduced. Most, if not all, busking sites in Richmond expose residents to noise. Designation of The Green, riverside and the town as a dispersal zone was not renewed last year and concern remains with regard to the practicalities of controlling low-level anti-social behaviour. The Council now has very limited resources applied to licencing and police funding is shrinking, which increases the difficulties the community faces in dealing with low-level anti-social behaviour.

### **Fountain on The Green**

FoRG is considering how we might enhance the setting of the stone drinking Fountain (Grade II listed) at the south-east corner of The Green, last restored in 1977 by private subscription. The preliminary cost of renovating the Fountain had been estimated by the Council as £13-£14k, to include cleaning and stone repair (£5k) and replacement of the unsuitable brick surround with York Stone paving (£8k). We are investigating sources of funding for this project.

### **Accounts**

The accounts for FoRG, for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015, will be distributed at the AGM and show total income of £1,224 (2014: £1,221) and a deficit of £81 (2014: surplus – £824). Total reserves amount to £7,117 (2014: £7,198). The principal source of income was, as for last year, a share of film receipts; the principal reasons for the deficit were the costs of holding a

public lecture on the history of Richmond Green; additional costs to supporting Richmond Heathrow Campaign, and higher 2015 AGM costs. For the third year in succession we made a donation of £250 towards Richmond Town Centre's Christmas tree lights.

### **Old Deer Park**

FoRG is a member of the Old Deer Park Working Group (ODPG), chaired by Peter Willan, along with four other societies, including the Richmond and Kew Societies. In July 2012 the Group published a report: 'The Old Deer Park - A Framework for Future Conservation and Enhancement' which sought to highlight outstanding projects within the Kim Wilkie Landscape Strategy 1999. The Crown Estate leases for Old Deer Park expire in 2016, including the area bounded by the river, the A316, the golf course leased by the Council, and the areas leased by Richmond Athletic Association (RAA) and Richmond Cricket Club.

There are opportunities for remedying the deterioration of some of the assets and improving access to the Park. The Group supports the use of the Park for outdoor sports and the activities of the Pools on the Park. But there are risks and the Group seeks to avoid development not in keeping with the conservation and preservation contained in the Kim Wilkie Strategy.

During the year the Group met with the Council and other parties in discussions on the future of the Park and in particular on some specific projects that the Council and the Group had identified. But the Rugby World Cup intervened and a significant part of the year was taken up with preparations for the Fanzone in the Old Deer Park, including licencing, noise and dispersal issues. Unfortunately little progress was made, either with regard to the long-term future of the Park or with the specific projects. The aim this year is to make progress with the projects,

the renewal of the leases with the Crown Estate, and to develop a "Village Plan" for the Park. The Council has decided to keep the Park's Plan separate from the Richmond Plan. On-going meetings are being held between the Group and the Council, the Crown Estate and the RAA.

### **Events**

We were disappointed about the charity cricket match in July 2015. Following objections from FoRG in 2014, there were considerably fewer cars and lorries parked on The Green throughout the event, and noise levels were lower. But the fun-fair and commercial stalls in our view added no value whatsoever to the event, and were poorly used this year partly because of the weather. A genuine charity cricket match is acceptable, but not the quasi-commercial fun-fair which has no place on The Green. The Council has agreed that there will be NO increase in the number of commercial stalls in future years, and that the parking of cars on The Green during such events will be very restricted.

The BAFTA event in August, for the *Downton Abbey* Special Award, seemed to be organised very effectively, with little noise pollution and with the reception marquee build-and-break being efficiently managed, without damaging impact to The Green. The main problem arose from the sheer amount of limos waiting for VIP guests around The Green from 9pm onwards: the log-jam caused considerable inconvenience. The cars, we suggest, could have been parked in the local car parks and then called up as and when required.

Although the remit of FoRG does not extend to Old Deer Park, the Council generally keeps us informed about proposed events and we endeavour to ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place concerning such things as PA systems, sound amplification, sanitation arrangements and parking.

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We are grateful to the organisers of the Richmond Running Festival 2015 for removing The Green from the runners' route. High tides in lower Old Deer Park just before the event caused major challenges for the organisers, but they kept to the agreed route by removing trees and shrubs; laying sand and laying a temporary running path over the water. However, noise levels from the event were excessive and intrusive and the organisers have made a commitment to managing the sound better this coming year.

The past year has seen a lot of activity on Old Deer Park. We had a 'Fanzone' for six weeks as part of Rugby World Cup 2015; the general consensus was that the Fanzone worked very successfully. Although there was considerable damage to the grass and ground, reparations have now started.

Of concern are plans to hold on the same Old Deer Park site as the RWC Fanzone further events that are likely to have a similarly damaging impact on the ground. Of these, one ('Unsigned') has been turned down; but a 'Surrey Food Festival' is scheduled to take place on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2016. Of equal concern is the lack of any obvious local legacy from the RWC, when hopes had been real for some local benefit (eg. renovation of the public toilets alongside the A316, plus more facilities for children, etc.). The council is in dialogue with the organiser about some contribution to Richmond to benefit local amenities, although the level of such a contribution, if there is to be one, is not known.

## Website

As some of you will have seen, we have a new website, developed for us by South West London Environment Network (SWLEN). If any of our members have photographs of The Green – current or historic – that we might use on the website, we would love to hear from you. We are also, with the help of SWLEN, looking into ways in which we can communicate better with members,

for example through Facebook or Twitter. If any of our members have the time and skills to help us improve our website, again we would love to hear from you. Our website address is unchanged: [www.forg.org.uk](http://www.forg.org.uk)

## AOB

We have made no further progress with the Council on the pruning of the plane trees on Greenside. There is a new Council Tree Policy that seems entirely comprised of matters of risk, public safety and access, rather than light or aesthetic issues. Several rows of plane trees in the Borough have been significantly pollarded in the past 12 months, but we have not been successful to date in getting the plane trees on the Green pruned.

There is still no resolution of the future of the listed twin BT phone boxes on the edge of The Green, whose material condition continues to deteriorate. It appears that BT's sale of one of the boxes was incorrect; the other is still owned by BT. Possible alternative uses for the listed boxes are being investigated and as soon as we have further information we will share it on our website.

In May 2015, the bollards around The Green were cleaned and repainted.

At the last AGM a request was made for a later postal collection from the post box opposite the Palace Gateway. We approached the Post Office but they declined our request, saying that there are less than 50 pieces of mail typically in this box and the postman now empties it on his round.

We are concerned about motorbikes parked for free in car-parking spaces and will monitor the situation.

We have also chased the Council on numerous occasions regarding the Gateway lighting, which has not worked as intended for a considerable time.

## AGM

**We hope to see as many of you as possible at our AGM at The Cricketers on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> April 2016, and hope that you will stay and join us for a complimentary glass of wine at the end of the meeting.**

**Vivien Harris**  
Chair

We are again very grateful to Featherstone Leigh for printing this newsletter.

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## **FRIENDS OF RICHMOND GREEN**

Contact details: Chairman – tel: 020 8948 3384

Email: [mail@FoRG.org.uk](mailto:mail@FoRG.org.uk)

The ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING will be held on

**Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> April 2016 at 7:30pm**

in the upstairs room at The Cricketers, Richmond Green

### **AGENDA**

**Apologies**

**Minutes of last meeting**

**Matters Arising**

**Report of the Executive**

**Financial Report and adoption of Accounts**

**Election of Officers** – those standing are:-

Chairman	Vivien Harris	8 Pembroke Villas
Secretary	Vacancy	
Treasurer	Mark Sebba	9 Pembroke Villas

**Election of other Members of the Executive** – those standing are:-

Peter Willan	7 The Green
Martin Anderson	3 Maids of Honour Row
Peter Griffiths	26 The Retreat
Graham Walker	10 The Green
Anna Newton Dunn	29 Old Palace Lane

**Any Other Business**