

MARCH 2022

Friends of Richmond Green

# NEWSLETTER

JOIN US TO CELEBRATE THE QUEEN'S PLATINUM JUBILEE



Friends of Richmond Green would like to invite you to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee with us – on The Green on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> June, between 12 and 4pm – **BRING YOUR OWN FOOD & DRINK** and join us for a social, fun-filled, picnic lunch and some **LIVE JAZZ**. If you're interested to join in the great occasion, please email Gemma directly on [Gemma@care4free.net](mailto:Gemma@care4free.net)

## DRINKING FOUNTAIN RESTORED & OPENED

September 2021 saw the **official opening** of the Victorian Drinking Fountain on the corner of The Green by the Cricketers pub. This project was undertaken in conjunction with the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames and was made possible by generous donations from FoRG, Richmond Council's Civic Pride Fund, the Heritage of London Trust, the family of Councillor John Ormiston, The Drinking Fountain Association and the Baroness van Dedem. The feature was last restored as a drinking fountain in 1977. And so, 44 years on, we were delighted to ask Her Worship the Deputy Mayor of the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames – Councillor **Suzette Nicholson** and her Consort – to declare the restored fountain open.



## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2022

Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> April at 7.30pm

- Hear what's happening around The Green
- Have your say on local issues
- Wine will be served

**Where?** The Cricketers pub (upstairs), Richmond Green

**Please come and join us**

## FORG's WHATSAPP

Friends of Richmond Green's **WhatsApp group** connects residents living in the vicinity of The Green, The Little Green and the surrounding areas. Its primary purpose is to keep residents **up to date** about local activities and developments that may be of interest, such as our planned **Big Jubilee picnic lunch on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> June**. To join the FoRG WhatsApp group, please visit our website [www.forg.org.uk](http://www.forg.org.uk) and download the application form, rules of engagement and data protection information.



**Benches:** we're funding improvements to the benches around The Green, specifically tackling bare, muddy patches in front of them. This involves extending the stone plinths and re-turfing the surrounding areas. The work is being done by Continental Landscapes, managed by the Council Parks & Open Spaces department.

## SAVING THE KIOSKS

FoRG is striving to preserve the two iconic red K6 telephone kiosks near Paved Court. Designed by **Sir Giles Scott** and **Grade II listed**, they were released by BT's 'Adopt a Kiosk' scheme some years ago. One was acquired by a local resident, and FoRG is in discussion about acquiring the other from the Council. FoRG



believes one or both could benefit the community through non-commercial use (eg. housing a defibrillator, as an information point or involving sculpture). FoRG maintains that these kiosks and their location are not fit for commercial use (eg. coffee retail). Consideration is now being given to including other kiosks in the project – eg. those on The Vineyard, one next to St Matthias Church and another close to Richmond Bridge (there are 5 in all).

## FoRG's ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

FoRG accounts for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021 will be shown at our forthcoming AGM. In summary, we recorded a total income for the year of **£9,450** (cf. 2020: £8,205), with a surplus for the year of **£5,890**. Total reserves at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021 amounted to **£19,119** (cf. 2020: £13,228).

In 2021, the restoration of the Drinking Fountain on The Green was completed and FoRG's final payment of £3,336 afforded a commemorative plaque on site. Filming activities resumed during 2021, and included productions of *Ted Lasso*, *Killing Eve* and *Call My Agent*. We do hope these filming activities did not cause residents too much inconvenience. The production companies do try hard to minimise local disruption and to follow the filming guidelines shaped by FoRG.

**We continue to actively seek practical suggestions from residents for how best to use FoRG's cash surplus; ideas about future projects and good uses of funds are always welcome – so, if you have any, please contact us.**

## PROJECTS in OLD DEER PARK (ODP)

The Old Deer Park Working Group (ODPWG), chaired by Peter Willan, comprises representatives of FoRG and other local amenity groups. It aims to make ODP **better appreciated** for outdoor sports and recreation, with better access while sustaining ODP's historic significance and parkland qualities.

**Path to the Thames:** a project to access the Thames and Park from the heart of Richmond involves creating a **new path** leading from the A316 car park to the river, featuring a boardwalk over boggy ground at the riverside end. It's taking time to obtain Crown Estate consent but hopefully work can commence soon. The Council's efforts in progressing this joint effort are much appreciated.

**Telephone masts:** ODPWG and FoRG objected, with support from many residents, to three planning applications for a tall telecomms mast just south of the A316 car park, sited between railway and road. Two further applications for a mast alongside the A316, immediately south-east of Twickenham Bridge were also opposed. All five applications have been **refused**.

**Wilding Arcadia:** the Thames Landscape Strategy (TLS) has successfully raised funds for 'Wilding Arcadia', involving ODP and other areas. Current plans include opening up vistas to the Kings Observatory and obelisks. An essential hydrological study of parts of ODP's riverside should be completed by Sept'22 and there's to be a consultation on a sustainable future for the ODP flood plain. The ODPWG is pleased to work with TLS and co-ordinator **Jason Debney** and his team on 'Wilding Arcadia' plans.

**Local Plan:** ODPWG recently raised concerns in response to the Council's new 15-year draft Local Plan. Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) status and boundary anomalies remain. ODPWG seeks designation of a parcel of land at the north-western end of Old Deer Park Gardens as part of the **Conservation Area**; a recent decision (granting planning permission for a house to be built there) failed to recognise this case. ODPWG continues its efforts to get the Council to amend and adopt a 'Statement of Significance' for Pools-on-the-Park and its landscape setting, an essential step to protect the complex.

**Volunteering:** we're keen to encourage volunteer help with, for example, tree-planting over the coming months. A walk, probably in May, is to be arranged for people keen to **learn more** about the park and current projects. More details to follow.



## Friends of Richmond Green website

Our thanks to **Habitats & Heritage** for maintaining our website. If you have time and skills to help us with it, we would love to hear from you... please email us on: [mail@FoRG.org.uk](mailto:mail@FoRG.org.uk)



## HEATHROW: THERE'S STILL MUCH TO DO...



For many years now **Richmond Heathrow Campaign (RHC)** has acted on behalf of FoRG and the Richmond and Kew Societies to highlight the environmental impact of Heathrow on community health and well-being (for details, please visit [www.richmondheathrowcampaign.org](http://www.richmondheathrowcampaign.org)).

**Heathrow Expansion:** this scheme may be on pause, but Heathrow undoubtedly retains its long-term ambition for a 3rd runway, and RHC has long argued that expansion makes **no sense** against the aim of achieving Net Zero carbon for aviation.

**Airspace Modernisation:** Heathrow and the industry claim there's a pressing need for improved punctuality, resilience and airspace capacity. But evidence suggests this 'need' is **overstated** against the importance of improving the environment through reduced CO2 emissions, lower noise and air pollution. In February, Heathrow submitted to the CAA a set of design principles to establish flight-path options over the next 2 years. RHC co-ordinated responses from over 15 community groups, objecting to the lack of proper engagement by Heathrow and rejecting the **bias** towards concentrating flight-paths rather than dispersing them, meaning more noise.

**Carbon Emissions:** ahead of COP26 last autumn, RHC researched emissions from aviation and in particular from Heathrow and concluded that industry and government are **over-optimistic** about replacing fossil fuels with bio-fuels. Timely Net Zero requires 'demand management', with the full cost of carbon emissions included in passenger ticket prices. The industry is wholly opposed to this, but 2022 will be important as the UN decides how best to achieve aviation Net Zero, on which subject RHC has submitted a paper to the UN.

**Night Flights:** last year Govt renewed Heathrow's existing night-noise management until 2025, ignoring consultation responses from community groups who'd sought to reduce aviation noise at night. RHC's aim is to **ban all night flights** between 11pm and 7am, by folding them into daytime hours. RHC is gathering evidence that shows there is no economic cost from deferring night flights to the daytime, while revealing the substantial harm to people's health resulting from the noise of night-flights.

**Aviation Taxation:** air tickets include Air Passenger Duty (APD) which, for the UK, was £3.6 billion a year (2019). RHC has always argued that UK aviation is substantially **under-taxed** compared to other sectors of the economy, and estimates the shortfall to be as much as £12 billion and is in the process of confirming its evidence.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

**Old Palace Yard:** At last some encouraging progress after years of waiting... the Crown agents Savills have received confirmation from the Crown Estate that much needed resurfacing of the road in Old Palace Yard can proceed on the basis of a new tender. Savills will now issue revised costs for each leaseholder, and it is hoped that resurfacing will now go ahead later this year so this long-running saga can be concluded.



**Loos on The Green:** from March to Sept 2021, temporary toilets appeared on the Duke Street corner of The Green. There's now talk of using this site for a permanent facility. FoRG hasn't yet been consulted, but we'll strongly oppose it as we think there are more suitable, lower cost solutions. As the consultation hasn't yet begun, a new permanent facility is unlikely to be ready by Spring, and we've asked the Council if temporary loos are likely to re-appear.

## TOWN CENTRE – PLANNING, LICENSING AND TRAFFIC ISSUES

**The Local Plan:** a response to the Council's new draft 'Local Plan' (replacing that of 2020) was led by residents **Peter Willan, Laurence Bain** and **Paul Velluet**, focusing on the Conservation Areas for Richmond Town Centre, The Green, the Riverside and Richmond Hill. The character of these areas is very different, and it's their diversity in a relatively small area that's so valuable. The response noted that the Plan predicts little population growth in the borough to 2039, and an actual decline in Richmond. The disconnect between this and an indicated need for more housing, retail, offices and leisure facilities requires challenge. Objections were made to the Plan's support for the Night-Time economy, a stance at odds with FoRG's campaign to welcome a family-based Evening economy while discouraging a late-night alcohol-fuelled visitor attraction. The undervaluing by consultants of The Green as a heritage asset was rejected. Objections were also raised to an emphasis on high-rise development (above 5 stories), and to a Richmond Station redevelopment that would move the town's centre of gravity away from George, Red Lion, King & Hill Streets and the lanes. Plans for House of Fraser are now in doubt with the site having been put up for sale.

**Richmond Town Enhancement:** a **Town Centre Group** (incl. Peter Willan of FoRG, Laurence Bain, Paul Velluet) works with the Council to develop proposals to enhance the town. Issues include the reduction of through traffic with the introduction of a Clean Air Zone; cycle routes and parking; de-cluttering signage; art works and other enhancements. The Council proposes improvements to the Friars Lane carpark and has introduced a pedestrian crossing in Parkshot and on Richmond Bridge. Car clubs are now allowed additional parking around The Green where demand for space is high. Also of concern is the poor condition of roads around The Green, and the risk to pedestrian safety from misuse of scooters and cycles. 'Be Richmond' has a renewed tenure for another 5 years and it's important that while promoting businesses it fully recognizes the interests of residents and respects the town's essential character – eg. by avoiding commercialization of The Green and the Riverside.

**Planning and Licensing Applications:** the town is **exposed to significant alteration** owing to 'changes of use' being granted or sought – eg. residential use above the former Top Shop and other George St buildings; the redevelopment of House of Fraser; and the proposed use of Pizza Express in Red Lion St as a bar. Last year saw few applications for new or varied alcohol licences, and it's a relief that the licensing Cumulative Impact Zone and Policy (CIP) for Richmond Town has been renewed. By keeping alcohol provision in balance, the CIP has for 15 years protected the town, Green and Riverside from alcohol-related ASB and crime. FoRG continues its involvement with planning, licensing, traffic and the local Police Liaison Group.

# Friends of Richmond Green

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> April 2022 at 7:30pm

(The Cricketers pub, Richmond Green)

Minutes of last year's AGM (14<sup>th</sup> April 2021) are available on FoRG's website: [www.forg.org.uk](http://www.forg.org.uk)

Your current FoRG Executive Committee: Vivien Harris (Chair); Diana Billingham (Treasurer); Peter Willan; Peter Griffiths; Anna Newton Dunn; David MacKenzie; Gemma Warrilow

Contact FoRG's Chair – telephone: 020 8948 3384

**FoRG Committee:** if you have the time and the interest to join our Committee, to assist with FoRG activities, we're always keen to hear from residents who would like to offer help. Email us at: [mail@FoRG.org.uk](mailto:mail@FoRG.org.uk)

### RICHMOND GREEN WORKING GROUP

In August 2020 the **Richmond Green Working Group (RGWG)**, including three FoRG Committee Members, was set up by **South Richmond Police Liaison Group** to investigate the unacceptably high levels of anti-social behaviour (ASB) and serious crime on The Green.

**ASB and crime:** A big piece of work was carried out by the Council, the police and the RGWG for the **Richmond Green & Riverside Action Plan** between April and September 2021, to try and avoid a repetition of the spike in ASB and certain crimes of the type seen on The Green & Riverside in the spring & summer months of 2020. Measures included temporary toilets on The Green & Riverside, additional uniformed presence and resources, more use of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN), and better communication and information sharing initiatives such as the operational officers information sharing group, Richmond Green & Riverside Newsletters, the Link Residents' initiative, and more active local Neighbourhood Watch groups.

Crime levels fell in 2021 and we sincerely hope this fall will be repeated in 2022. If not, we hope that the Council will agree to commit more Park Guard resources, and that the Met Police will at least match 2021 levels – ideally with a major blitz / police presence from the outset of any reports of trouble. But despite there being overwhelming support from local residents for more police presence around The Green and in the town, we're told that Met Police funding is simply not available for a Richmond Town Centre police facility or a dedicated team.

**Graffiti:** sadly, it's definitely on the increase, and Continental Landscapes are regularly asked to remove and/or paint over graffiti. Recently we even reported some on one of the trees on the Pembroke Villas side of The Green – graffiti which is a challenge to remove. If you see instances of graffiti, then please report it to one of our Councillors or online at:-

[https://www.richmond.gov.uk/services/environment/street\\_cleaning/graffiti\\_removal](https://www.richmond.gov.uk/services/environment/street_cleaning/graffiti_removal)

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We hope as many of you as possible can join us for our 2022 AGM on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> April at 7.30pm.

Vivien Harris  
Chair, FoRG