



CARA

Canbury & Riverside Association

Working to protect and enhance our local amenities for everyone

Newsletter, Spring/Summer 2014

Whatever the weather...

As the photographs on the right show, we have had some fairly unusual and extreme weather recently: gales and floods, as well as dust and pollution clouds.

If you had water in your house or basement during the recent floods, whether from the river or because of raised ground-water levels, you may be eligible for a grant under the Government Flood Support Scheme, which started on 1 April and allows up to £5000 for future protection of your property. The grant will be paid by the Council, which in turn will claim it back from central government. The Council will also offer you Council Tax relief. Contact the Contingency Planning Department at Guildhall or go on-line to www.gov.uk/flood_support_schemes.

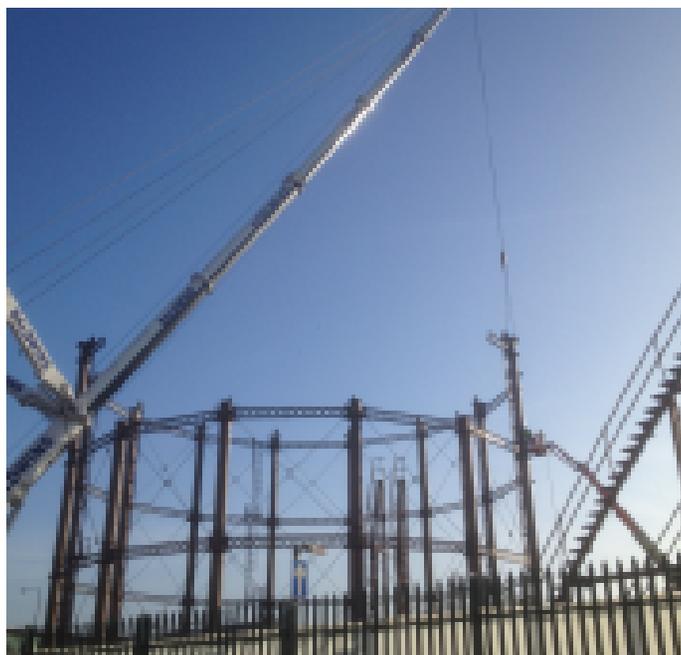
And should we have another heat-wave this summer, there is some useful advice from Kingston Voluntary Action on our website.



Canbury Gardens holly bush after a winter storm



River / road in January



Going, going... our local gas-holders. What takes their place is still very much up for discussion – see page 3.

**SEE PAGE 3 TO BOOK FOR
THIS SUMMER'S CARA BARBECUE.**

Is it a road or is it a river?

You may well have wondered this winter. Lower Ham Road apparently played a starring role in a 60s episode of the BBC comedy series *Misleading Cases*, based on A P Herbert's book *Uncommon Law*. The episode "Right of Way" hinges on who is in the right when a car collides with a dinghy on a flooded road. Cars drive on the left, but river and water-borne traffic on the right – so is a flooded road a road or a river? Although the cases in the book and series were all fictional, Herbert used them to show up many legal absurdities (as this one did). Thank you to Cllr Dennis Doe, who is about to take a well-deserved retirement from the Council, for telling us about it.

Cara newsletter, May 2014

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www.e-voice.org.uk/cara

Thames Landscape Strategy

A TLS general meeting in January showed off lots of good work going on along the Thames, including major flood mitigation works, and ongoing landscaping and greening projects by TLS and the London Green Grid. Interesting tidbits included the graph of water flow through the meter on the Canbury Gardens towpath, which showed startling extremes in recent years from droughts to floods, something that we may have to get used to. The recently restored sluices in Hampton Court Park, close to Kingston Bridge, have enabled that part of the park to flood as intended and help cope with the exceptional rainfall this winter.

TLS celebrates its 20th birthday this year with a series of projects, one in each borough: on our stretch this will be a information board about local links with aviation history, and in Richmond it will be a telescope that works at the top of Richmond Hill.

Spring litter-pick



Thank you to the select band, including Committee member Anneke and her grandchildren (*pictured above*), who turned out early in April to tidy the riverbank from Canbury Gardens to the Half Mile Tree. There was probably less litter than usual – the Council had done a good post-flood road sweep – but we still collected three sacks of recyclables and another three of landfill rubbish, plus assorted large items such as a traffic cone, the skeleton of a deckchair, a large hose-pipe, and a lot of wood. Probably the biggest item of litter on the riverside, the flooded car abandoned on the slipway in January (*see photo on front page*), was also cleared up on 5 April, though we can't take credit for that.

No longer the worst bus in London?

It seems quite a while since we had to wait 20 minutes or more for a 65 bus (or three) to turn up. Recently they seem to have been arriving along the Richmond Road every few minutes – so a provisional cheer for TfL!

Sury Basin

Have you ever wondered if this local street name is an archaic (or misspelt) version of "Surrey" or marks an old water-course under the road? There is a more mundane explanation: a competition was held to name the road when it was new, and this anagram of Sainsburys (try it) was the winner.

CARA nature watch

■ The Council will be planting **wild flowers** on selected verges around the borough this summer, and in future years will leave these sections to be colonised by local flora. So patches of wild flowers and unmown grass are not weeds or signs of neglect, but an attempt to increase Kingston's biodiversity by providing nectar for bees and butterflies, and seeds for birds and other wildlife. Roadside grass will be kept short to protect sightlines.

■ The growing clump of **Japanese Knotweed** (*illustrated on the right*) by the river reminds us that there is plenty of advice on the internet about how to deal with this invasive and destructive plant, for example on the Royal Horticultural Society, Environment Agency and Cornwall Knotweed Forum websites. It is difficult, though not impossible, to eradicate, but it has to be done very carefully and Knotweed fragments have to be disposed of responsibly, as even a tiny segment can produce a new plant in ten days, and can remain dormant in soil for twenty years before producing new plants. We are told that new shoots can be eaten and taste like rhubarb, but recommend trying this only if you are absolutely certain that they are clean and have not been sprayed.



■ At the TLS meeting in January we heard some depressing statistics about declining local **bat populations**, partly caused by light pollution from housing and street lights: apparently amber lights are the least disruptive for bats, and lights in tree canopies are particularly disturbing as this is where many species hunt for insects. Also in January, the European Environment Agency reported that measures for their protection had resulted in some bat species increasing by more than 40% between 1993 and 2011. However, this was after a steep decline during the second half of the 20th century, so current populations are likely to be smaller than they were before the decline, and 26% of bat species are still threatened with extinction. See <http://www.londonbats.org.uk> for more about our local bats.

■ One side of King's Walk now has twenty Sunset Boulevard **cherry trees**, and a similar number will be planted on the opposite side next winter, to replace most of the Chestnut trees along the path which were in a sorry, blighted state. In years to come, at blossom time in particular, they should make a delightful entrance to Canbury Gardens. We hope that the three or four trees in the Gardens (*one example pictured on our front page*) that were victims of the recent severe gales will also be replaced.

The river road trees put on a fine display of blossom this spring, though there are some significant gaps. In the past, neighbours have often shared the cost of new trees planted between their homes (the Council charges £208.65 for a tree in an existing pit and £267.50 for one in a new pit). If you would like further details, please contact Stuart Devall (see back page).

Planning matters

■ Residents to the south of the CARA area are objecting to the **proposed "mini-village" high-rise development on the Gas Board site** next to Sainsbury's. Though they and others in the neighbourhood are pleased that the derelict site and surrounding buildings are to be re-developed as apartments, student accommodation and a much needed new primary school, the planned 11- and 9-storey apartment blocks are considered too high for the area and a potential precedent for more high-rise blocks overlooking properties adjacent to Canbury Gardens. Residents are also concerned about the pressure the development will put on parking space in the area; for example, the 300 flats on the Gas Board site will only have 150 parking spaces. Details of the proposal can be found on the RBK website, and it will go to committee in July. There was a public meeting with local councillors to discuss the plans as this newsletter went to press.

■ The former **Regal Cinema / Gala Bingo Hall** on Richmond Road has also divided opinion: conservation groups oppose the developer's plans to subdivide the building into several sections, to include a boutique cinema, a restaurant, a bar, and a children's play area, and are campaigning for preservation of the 2,400-seater auditorium for entertainment purposes. We leave it to you to decide which would benefit the neighbourhood more.

■ Recent relaxations of planning regulations alongside local pressure on housing could see some of our **local shops** being redeveloped for residential use. In recent years we have lost local post offices, and now the Ham Parade Barclays Bank is closing – could we lose our butchers, bakers and greengrocers too?

■ The most recent planning application for the **Latchmere Prison development** is for 89 new

dwellings, including more affordable housing than in earlier proposals. Though it is beyond our area, the development will doubtless affect local facilities including libraries, post offices, buses, schools, and surgeries. Final plans go to the Council planning committee in May.

In brief

■ We hope to have a community pay-back team cleaning up **the bench round the Half Mile Tree** sometime soon.

■ **The new secondary school** has appointed a head teacher and is scheduled to open in September 2015. You can keep up-to-date on progress at <http://www.kingstone-educationaltrust.org/content/news.html>, where KET is also asking for your preferred name for the school out of a shortlist of four.

■ Residents of the relevant roads should have sent back responses to the second local **parking consultation** by now. The consultation arrived in April without a key to the map or much useful information, a situation remedied about a week later after complaints from residents.

CARA BARBECUE SUNDAY 6 JULY, 12.30

Come along to Canbury Gardens Pavilion (by the tennis courts in Canbury Gardens) in July to meet the neighbours and enjoy a leisurely afternoon of chatting, eating, drinking...
Barbecue lunch, provided by local butcher Bevan's, + accompaniments + dessert + your first drink, costs just £10, or £6 for children aged 6 to 14, and free for under-6s. Please use the form below to book your place(s).



CARA BARBECUE BOOKING FORM

Book and pay now to be sure of your place on the guest list (tickets for food and drink will be issued at the door).

Name:

Address:

Postcode

I am / am not a member of CARA* and would like to book:

places for adults including vegetarians @ £10 each (£9 for members*)

places for children aged 6 – 14, including vegetarians @ £6 each

free places for children under 6

TOTAL: £.....

Please send this form with a cheque, payable to CARA, to BBQ, 31 Chestnut Road, Kingston KT2 5AP.

* **PTO to join** for £5 per household to get the members' discount + membership till October 2015.

CARA COMMITTEE

Stuart Devall (street environment; trees), 21 Eastbury Road; stuart.devall@virginmedia.com; 020 8546 5778

Penny D'Souza (planning applications; liaison with Canbury Gardens Working Party; liaison with the Council), 14 Chestnut Road; 020 8549 533; pennydsouza@blueyonder.co.uk

Clare Francis (liaison with Conservation Area Advisory Committee; planning applications), 16 Chestnut Road; clarefrancis@gmail.com; 020 8549 4581

Anneke Ferrier (social events; Albany liaison), 1 York Court, The Albany, Albany Park Road, KT2 5ST; anneke.ferrier@gmail.com; 020 8274 0823

Marilyn Mason (CARA newsletter and communications; Town Centre Management liaison), 142 Lower Ham Road; marilyn.mason142@gmail.com; 020 8546 4086

Richard Mobbs (newsletter distribution; river and riverside, Thames Landscape Strategy liaison), Chestnut Road; richard@statacom.net; 07762 598 309

John Parrish (parking), 108 Lower Ham Road; john.parrish@zen.co.uk; 020 8546 1235

James Roy, 10 Avon House, Samuel Gray Gardens; 07951080 639; jwr2410@gmail.com

Trevor Willis (liaison with police and Neighbourhood Watch; Canbury Pavilion; anti-social behaviour, litter and graffiti), 7 Eastbury Road; 07889 731 264 or 020 8549 3076; trevorwillis77@gmail.com

Peter Wolf (treasurer; membership list), 126 Lower Ham Road; pgw_subs@yahoo.co.uk; 020 8541 3191

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

■ **Every Saturday, 9.45 – 10.45am, exercise group, Canbury Gardens:** sociable, informal, free. All welcome, meet by the children's playground.

■ **Sunday 6 July, 12.30pm, CARA Summer Barbecue,** Canbury Gardens Pavilion – see page 3 for details and to book.

■ **Sundays 20 July & 5 September, Dragon Boat Races**

■ **Sunday 10 August, RideLondon-Surrey 100**

■ **See www.kingstonfirst.co.uk** for other events happening on our doorstep in the town centre.

Keeping in touch with CARA

In our last newsletter we asked for volunteers to be "street contacts" between their immediate neighbours and CARA. Two people came forward, one for Grosvenor Gardens and the other for Montague Place in Albany Park Road, so a big thank you to both.

We could still do with contacts for Richmond Road (any section), Bank Lane, Woodside Road, Lower Ham Road (the Canbury Gardens end), Lower Kings Road, and the main section of Albany Park Road. If you live on one of these roads we would be delighted if you could consider representing it – please email jennylangridge@yahoo.co.uk if you would like to discuss the idea further or contact a street rep.

Meanwhile, if you have local concerns please talk to your nearest Committee member or the Committee member responsible for your area of concern (see the list on the left), or use the "Contact the CARA Committee" form on the CARA website.

CARA MEMBERSHIP, Spring 2014 – October 2014

Name:

Address:

Postcode:

Telephone:

Email:

I / we would like to join / renew my household's subscription to CARA. *(Please email Peter Wolf – contact details above – if you don't know whether you are a paid-up member)*

I have set up a standing order* for a payment of £5 now and thereafter annually on 1 September to CARA, Barclays Kingston, sort code 20-46-73, account number 53451518, using my house/flat number and street/block as a reference.

OR

I enclose cash / cheque for £..... payable to "CARA" to cover (please delete/tick as appropriate):

£5 for 1-year membership £10 for 2-year membership £15 for 3-year membership

an additional donation towards the running of the association of £..... I require a receipt.

Signed:

Date:

Please send the completed form to CARA Treasurer, c/o 31 Chestnut Road, Kingston, KT2 5AP.

*You can arrange a standing order from your bank account, either on-line, by letter or in branch.