

Representing the views of all who live in the historic Thames-side village of Strawberry Hill

No. 151 Spring 2013

Honey, they shrunk the neighbourhood

A meeting between SHRA and Richmond Council to resolve the controversial Strawberry Hill boundaries issues was imminent as this Bulletin went to press. With over 800 homes excluded from the area which SHRA defines as Strawberry Hill, Chairman Bruce Duff agreed to meet Richmond Council's Community Link Officer soon.

Flawed vision

Richmond Council's 'vision' for Strawberry Hill under the Richmond My Village Plans is proving to be a nightmare for hundreds of residents. The Council's definition of what constitutes Strawberry Hill ignores the boundaries on the SHRA map excludes 16 roads to the north and west of the village centre (see The Excluded Roads on page 2). Under the My Villages Plan the number of roads and homes considered to be in Strawberry Hill has been reduced by nearly 40%. The Council has included these roads into Twickenham Central Village.

Residents who have lived in Strawberry Hill for 30 years and more are dismayed by the decision. The Council vision for Central Twickenham is very different from the Council's description of the 'pleasant suburb' of Strawberry Hill. One resident in excluded Upper Grotto Road whose home dates from the 19th century said, "My house in Strawberry Hill was built in 1898 and has been spoken of, and been my emotional and geographical location, for more than 30 years. The plans from the 19th century state that my address is Strawberry Hill. I can only think that someone at the Council with no knowledge of this particular area has made an error which needs to be rectified."

Flawed poll

The origin of the redefined boundary may well lie somewhere in the Borough wide 'All-in-One' survey carried out in 2010. The Committee does not know when they decided to shrink Strawberry Hill and cannot recall any question in the survey asking with which village each of the Borough's households identified. We therefore assume it was an arbitrary decision by the Council.

AGM will hear the protests

We hope that by the time The Bulletin is distributed, the issues will have been resolved and the SHRA boundaries restored. Residents are invited to attend our Annual General Meeting at Strawberry Hill Golf Club, where the definition of Strawberry Hill's perimeter will be discussed and, hopefully, we shall be able to announce good news.



The AGM takes place at 7.30 p.m. on Monday 22nd April. After the meeting, you are invited to have a complimentary glass of wine and to chat to other residents and the Committee.

In the meantime, residents should consult the SHRA website for updates (www.shra.org.uk where there is a now a special page about the Village Plans) or the SHRA noticeboard at the station.

What to do

You may consider that your daily lives are centered on Strawberry Hill, its shops, railway station, pub, churches, friends, craftsmen, public gardens. Not least, you may wish to benefit from the Council's vision of the 'pleasant suburb'. You can make your views known by writing to:

SHRA: www.shra.org.uk/Contact.html

Your local Councillors for South Twickenham Ward:

Clare Head: Cllr.CHead@richmond.gov.uk

David Marlow: Cllr.DMarlow@richmond.gov.uk

David Porter: Cllr.DPorter@richmond.gov.uk

Or to the Council's Community link official:

John Addington: John.addington@richmond.org.uk

Upper Grotto Road Restored

Residents of Upper Grotto Road have succeeded in getting Richmond-upon-Thames Council to restore their road to within the SHRA definition of Strawberry Hill following a concerted campaign of e-mails to the three councillors for South Ward and the Community Link Officer.

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Resolutely defended by SHRA

Michael Allsop, SHRA Committee member for planning developments, writes:

Last year, Richmond Council produced its vision in the form of a Village Plan for each of the areas in the borough, including one for Strawberry Hill. Unfortunately, despite protestations from SHRA, it has unaccountably defined our area too narrowly, lopping off all our streets to the north of Pope's Grove and to the west of Spencer Road, treating them as falling within the Twickenham 'Village'. Rest assured, if you live in any of the excluded streets, they remain fundamental parts of Strawberry Hill and will be resolutely defended by SHRA.

The village plans draw on the 'All-In-One' survey of residents carried out by the Council in late 2010.

Attractive area

The Strawberry Hill plan envisages the area continuing as an attractive residential area with no major new developments, with the shops and open spaces maintained and enhanced, improvements made to the station, and the pressures on parking, particularly

from the users of the University College, the station and the schools, managed in the interests of residents.

Of particular note are the following Council policies for the area designed to deliver the plan:

1. New developments will be expected to be well designed, appropriate in terms of scale and materials, with priority to traditional design, and providing sufficient car parking.
2. Ensuring local character and historic buildings and features are retained and enhanced.
3. Securing additional tree planting in areas of deficiency, such as around Bonser Road.
4. Ensuring grass verges, street trees and other vegetation are retained and that front garden parking is limited.
5. Rationalising the cycle lanes and on-street parking in Cross Deep, and making the lanes more user-friendly.

The council also is considering a proposal to construct a pontoon at Radnor Gardens to provide a river access to the Gardens.

The future of policing in Richmond

On 27 February Charles Owens, the chair of the South Twickenham Police Liaison Group (PLG) and a member of our Committee, attended a presentation by the Deputy Mayor of London for Policing and senior Metropolitan Police officers at York House, Twickenham.

Key issues identified at the meeting were that the number of constables and community support officers (CSOs) dedicated to each ward would be reduced to one from two and one from three respectively, but that the number of constables on the borough would be increased by 15 before 2015 and the number on an extended safer neighbourhoods team (SNT) increased by 42, in order to provide a flexible tasking capability to deal with community issues, including those identified as priorities by PLGs. It is proposed that the remaining warranted constable and CSO will not be taken away from the ward duties for any but the most pressing reasons.

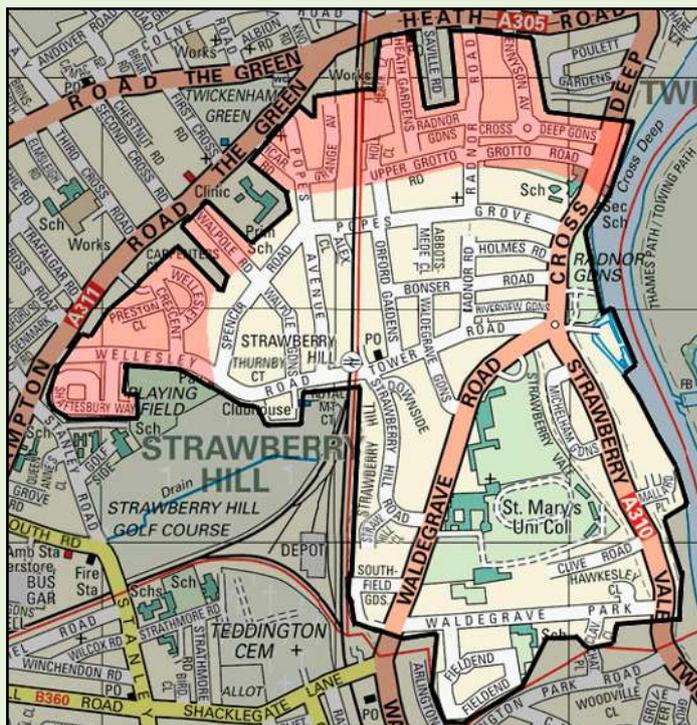
In response to Charles's questions, the Deputy Mayor asserted that the number of sergeants to SNTs would be increased in order that there is always one dedicated sergeant to each ward (we currently share a sergeant with West Twickenham) and that three inspectors will remain in place to cover the Twickenham, Teddington and Richmond SNT clusters. The extra 27 warranted constables for SNTs on this borough and increases elsewhere would be achieved by converting 500 CSOs (across London) into warranted constables and reducing the number of senior staff and specialist officers. The strapline for the Deputy Mayor was that the public wanted more "bobbies on the beat" and that this plan was the way to provide them.

The next South Twickenham PLG meeting is at 7 p.m. on Thursday 21st March at the Salvation Army centre in May Road Twickenham and all South Twickenham Ward residents are welcome to attend.

The excluded roads

Is your road still in Strawberry Hill?

The SHRA map of Strawberry Hill includes 42 roads. The Council's Village Plan reduces the area to 26 roads by excluding these 16: Cross Deep (part), Cross Deep Gardens, Grange Avenue, Heath Gardens, Hollies Close, Popes Avenue (part), Preston Close, Radnor Gardens, Radnor Road (part), Shaftesbury Way, Tennyson Avenue, Upper Grotto Road, Vicarage Road, Walpole Road (part), Wellesley Crescent, Wellesley Road (part).



SHRA's definition of Strawberry Hill is outlined in black. The Council's Village Plan excludes all homes in the red area.



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Helen whips up a concert, with chocolate, for charity

Opera singer Helen Astrid is holding a free concert in her Upper Grotto Road home to support the bereavement charity Cruse. The concert will take place at 10.45 a.m. on 30th March. "The number of guests is limited to 12, so first come first served", says Helen. "Please call me on 07710 245904 to book."

The concert of popular classics and well-loved melodies from musicals will take place in the practice room of her house. Helen says the concert is in recognition of help she and friends have received from the charity. There will be an Easter treat in store too. After the concert, Helen invites the guests to tea and chocolate cake in her sitting room. "It's Delia's delicious recipe," says Helen.

While there is no charge of the concert, guests will be asked to make a donation for the charity. Later in the year Helen will take part in a concert for Richmond in Bloom. All the songs will be named after flowers. See:

www.harmonyworks.co.uk

The origins of Cruse

Set up in Richmond in 1959, the Scharity's name is derived from a passage in the Old Testament about a widow's cruse, or jar of oil, which never ran out, signifying that support would be given as long as it was needed. Cruse is a non-religious organisation.

www.crusebereavementcare.org.uk

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Kinnear Home seeks willing hands

We asked Vicky Greig, manager at Roy Kinnear House in Waldegrave Road, to tell us about this little-known charity in our midst

Many people living in the area may have met the eight residents who live in Waldegrave Road Roy Kinnear House. But for those who haven't met us, or don't know about us, the history is that Carmel Kinnear established a charity to provide a 'home for life' for young people with severe learning and physical disabilities.

After a huge fundraising campaign, the house opened in 2000. It was named after Carmel's husband, the late Roy Kinnear, and their daughter is one of the residents.

Because of the young people's complex needs, a large team of nurses and support workers is employed. The aim is to give the residents the best possible care and quality of life and this means getting out and about in the community and doing all the usual things 20- and 30-somethings are into!



Residents and staff at Roy Kinnear House

Challenging times

As for all public sector services at the moment, these are challenging times for us. Fees for our services are reducing but our costs going up. So for 2013 we are establishing a new Fundraising Committee to help us raise much needed money to enhance the quality of life of our residents. We plan to organise local events, participate in summer fairs and sponsor sports

events so if there is anyone living in Strawberry Hill who would like to join our little committee, we'd love to hear from you.

We promise it won't be bureaucratic, we'll keep it light and fun - and you'll be doing something really worthwhile.

If you are interested, please contact me, the Manager of the home, Vicky Greig on Vicky@roykinnearhouse.co.uk or 020 8892 4049.

SHRA makes an annual donation to the Roy Kinnear House from funds raised at the Christmas Carol concert and tree unveiling.

Mother to lost Tiggywinkles

Living with 35 prickly creatures would be a challenge for most people. But the remarkable Sue Kidger is 'mother' to injured, orphaned and sick hoglets and hedgehogs at her home in Shaftesbury Way. Sue has been looking after the Tiggywinkles for 13 years, housing them in impeccably-kept, purpose-built hutches. She is helped mightily by her local vet, Christabel Mosely, at Twickenham Veterinary Surgery.

Sue's Hedgehog Rescue is a 24-hour, hands-on labour of love. "When they are very young, the hoglets bond with me; and they all have completely different personalities," says Sue as she strokes Roland, a mature hedgehog brought to her in 2011. Most hedgehogs are released into the wild when they are old enough.

"Roland will stay with me. He was injured and can't roll into a ball, so he is vulnerable to attack from animals like foxes." Roland clearly feels very safe in Sue's arms, as he does not raise his defensive prickles when stroked.

Hedgehogs arrive in many states of health and injury. Some are blind -

probably the result of in-breeding, says Sue - some have been abandoned by their mothers; others have been injured by foxes. Those foxes again - Sue urges residents not to feed them as it brings them into gardens.

Hog streets

Sue would like to see the creation of 'hog streets' between homes by leaving a small hole in fences so the hedgehogs can move between gardens. "Hedgehogs are the gardener's friend." But changing habitat, fewer gardens, use of toxic slug pellets - "fatal to hedgehogs"

- and loss of wild land is endangering their existence. "In the 1950s there were estimated to be 36 million hedgehogs in Britain. Now it is thought there are under one million."

Sue supports her Hedgehog Rescue Centre from her own funds and by fees from lectures. Residents wishing to support the Centre can send donations to Sue at:



Sue with Roland: "the hoglets bond with me"

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Bread ... and more bread

Bread in more ways than one is now available at the Post Office. As Aparna Patel shows in our picture, a wide range of fresh breads is now sold at the Post Office, provided by a fine baker in Isleworth. The Post Office stepped in to fill the breach left by the closure of McDowell's, the grocery store.



Aparna with an array of her fresh bread

Now, to add to the usefulness of the village Post Office, a no-charge cash machine has also been installed inside the shop.

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Radnor House School

Radnor House School has recently submitted two planning applications. The first relates to the half of the former playing field on the south side of Grotto Road, at the Radnor Road end. The site, which is currently semi-derelict, is an important one as it was part of 'Pope's Garden' and includes the remains of an arched entrance to a passage under Radnor Road which is Grade II listed. The proposal is to create a sports court on part of the site, surface the existing car park and landscape

the rest with shrub beds and a grass area. The second application is to increase the permitted number of pupils at the school from 320 to 440.

Serious concerns have been expressed by local residents about traffic and parking implications, particularly with regard to the second application. A petition objecting to then has been signed by 46 residents of Cross Deep Gardens and submitted to the Council. Both applications are currently under consideration by the Planning Department.

St Mary's University College

The application by the University College to create a new pedestrian access to the College to open up views of the College Chapel which was reported in our last bulletin has been rejected by the Council, primarily on the grounds of design and traffic issues. This is disappointing as it would have opened up an attractive view of the Chapel, and SHRA is hoping that the College will be able to resolve these issues and submit a revised proposal that the Council will find acceptable.

Other Applications

The applications by Strawberry Hill House and MKG 3000 reported in our last Bulletin have been approved by the Council.

The backbone of SHRA

Bruce Duff, Chairman of SHRA, writes:

Clare Phelps, for many years the backbone of SHRA, is resigning after 15 years of doggedly keeping the wheels of the the organisation turning. Clare joined SHRA in 1998 and subsequently took on the role of Secretary. She was instrumental in organising the Committee's involvement in the main projects which took place in Strawberry Hill, namely supplying and storing the strawberry stall for Fun Day and organising the setting up and lighting of the Christmas tree for the annual Christmas carol event.

But there was much more. Care of the planters on both sides of the station was a key concern and if they flourish today, it is because of Clare's efforts in watering, planting and findings volunteers to help her. Clare's common sense advice and participation on the committee of SHRA will be missed and we thank her for her sterling efforts.

Volunteers sought for planters

The planters which Clare organized and tended for so many years will still need looking after. Volunteers to step into this role are asked to contact Pam Crisp on 020 8898 1878.

Dates for your diary

There's a lot happening in Twickenham the next few months.

Here are a few local events for your diary:

Monday 1st April: Golf Club Open Day

Monday 22nd April: SHRA AGM - see page 1

Monday 27th May: HANDS Charity Fair on Twickenham Green

Saturdays 8th and 15th June: Pope's Grotto Visits

Saturday 15th June: Radnor Gardens Family Fun Day

Friday 28th June: Strawberry Hill Summer Ball

Sunday 7th July: Strawberry Hill Music and Fun Day

Sunday 7th July: Friends of Twickenham Green Fair

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John Armstrong: valued the things he loved

John Armstrong, SHRA Committee member for more than 15 years, died peacefully on 10th February. A resident from boyhood, John and his wife Rosamond were deeply involved in village life. John's membership of the Committee was only one part of a life crammed with local activities, from his leadership of Richmond Orchestra to his involvement with Twickenham Town Centre Management Inward Investment Committee.

The marks of his commitment resonate not only in Strawberry Hill, but elsewhere in Twickenham. Hammerton's Ferry, for example, was designed and built by John. He and Ros were stalwarts of the York House Society, and not least, its memorable Twelfth Night dinners. John was partly responsible for Laverstoke Park Farm



John and Ros Armstrong

butcher coming to the town centre. In the weeks before his death, John had campaigned in support of Reuben's Bakery in Heath Road.

On the SHRA Committee his enthusiasm, combativeness and drive were apparent whether he was lobbying Richmond Council about parking restrictions or seeking out local wrongs to right. He twice stood for election as an independent councillor for South Twickenham Ward.

His service to our community was remarkable. At his memorial service at St Mary's Church on 4th March, an old friend summed up this dedication thus: "He valued the things he loved, and because he valued them he wanted them to be the best they could be."

Jewellery thefts

A series of linked burglaries in Twickenham by offenders looking for jewellery may be coming to an end with the arrest of two men in February.

They were most active on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays between 14.00 and 18.00, entering via side doors, forcing windows or doors, or on terraced properties, forcing the front door. Untidy searches have been carried out concentrating on the bedrooms looking for jewellery although on some occasions laptops have been taken.

Charles Owens, who represents SHRA on the Police Liaison Committee, says: "Burglaries of this kind are often opportunistic, so it is always wise to ensure doors and windows are locked when leaving your home. A vigilant Neighbourhood Watch Scheme is also valuable in deterring and apprehending criminals. We urge you to consider joining your local Neighbourhood Watch."

April screening for film festival

Teresa Read, one of Strawberry Hill's movers and shakers behind the Twickenham Alive Film Festival, extends a welcome to residents to the Festival awards. They will take place at the Live Room at Twickenham Stadium on 26th April from 7.00 p.m.

Teresa says: "The prizes will be presented by Maria Walker, the Chief Operating Officer of Twickenham Film Studios. Anyone who would like to attend this event can register online at the Twickenham Film Festival website:

www.twickenhamfilmfestival.com

There is an exciting line up of short films lasting around one and a half hours. There are a number of awards for people from the borough: Borough Animation, Borough Community, Borough Documentary and Borough Attraction. There will be 10 awards altogether and others

include National Student, National Drama, International Winner and overall Festival Winner."

Second Festival

The second Twickenham Film Festival will be launched on the awards night.

"We hope that the Borough will start to buzz with potential Attenboroughs producing their films for the second Twickenham Alive Film Festival which will be an annual event," adds Teresa.

The film festival is supported by the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames, the Rugby Football Union, Twickenham Film Studios and the Best of Richmond.



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Anthony and Robin keep family tradition motoring

Anthony and Robin Rees are at the head of the all-family affair that is probably Strawberry Hill's oldest business. The family connection with what is now Mercury Motors in Strawberry Vale began in 1941 when their mother Margaret (known to all as Meg) responded to a friend's appeal for help in running a part-petrol part-engineering business by Swan Island.

Seventy years later, and with some changes in direction, the business thrives and the third generation of the family, Anthony's son Simon, is now involved in the company as well. What is more, Simon's young sons promise a fourth generation working at Mercury Motors. "It is all down to our mother," says Anthony. "She was a strong-minded woman," agrees Robin. "She knew how to run a garage." In recognition, Meg's photograph hangs in reception.



Robin and Anthony dispensing petrol at 74p per gallon

With 12 employees working in the Service, Parts and MOT departments, Mercury Motors, handles about 5,000 cars a year. "We expect the service side to continue to grow," says Anthony. "We are cheaper than the main dealers and we can service all makes of cars including Audi, BMW and Mercedes." And at that moment, to prove the point, a customer

arrives with an Aston Martin DB7. "Modern cars are too complicated to service at home now, though I can remember the days when we would have long queues of DIYers on a Sunday buying bits for their cars."

A former Ford dealership - that stopped in the 1970s - it retains a huge Ford parts store providing components for other garages in the area, as well as an advanced digital diagnostics

facility, run by Simon. Electronic diagnostics are also carried out for local garages which do not have the technology. Although they stopped selling petrol in the 1980s, some of the old pumps are kept in the workshop as a memory of times - and prices - past. On one of the pumps is displayed the price of a gallon of petrol - 4.5 litres. The price is 74p per gallon or 16p per litre!

Also kept in a dusty corner is a rather elegant Ford Anglia from the 1950s. It was left to Robin by an elderly lady customer because he had looked after it so well.

Having lived and worked here all their lives, Anthony and Robin's memories of Strawberry Hill as far back as the 1950s are acute. But, they say, it has changed little. "We are very fortunate to be located here, still a very pleasant place to live and work, and we have a lovely clientele," they say.



THE COMMITTEE

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