

Battersea Matters

the newsletter of the Battersea Society SPRING 2017



Heathrow: more noise and pollution?

John Stewart outlines what Heathrow's expansion would mean for Battersea

A third runway would have a significant impact on Battersea. Although the flight path to the new runway would be north of the river – over Hammersmith and Chiswick – the number of flights over Battersea would increase as planes flew across the area to join the new flight path. Heathrow expects a quarter of a million aircraft to use the third runway each year. Not all of these will fly over Battersea but it will not escape an increase in aircraft numbers.

At present the Department for Transport is consulting on its proposals for the new runway.

Vote

The consultation ends on 25 May. If, after considering the consultation responses, the Government decides it wants to proceed with the third runway, it will have a vote in Parliament, probably towards the end of this year.

If Parliament gives the new runway its backing, Heathrow Airport would draw up detailed plans for it. These would be put out to consultation next year and go to a Planning Inquiry in 2019. The earliest a new runway could open would be 2024.

The proposal has divided west London. The polls show there is some support for it but it is also meeting considerable opposition. Noise is the main worry of local people. There are also concerns about air pollution – already areas around Heathrow exceed the legal limit – as well as the extra traffic it might generate on London's roads. And, of course, thousands of people will lose their homes to make way for



Some of the planes that fly over Vauxhall in a single hour. © Phil Weedon

the new runway.

Most local authorities in west London are opposed to it and five of them, including Wandsworth Council, are expected to mount a legal challenge if Parliament gives it the go-ahead.

Of course, we have been here before. Ten years ago the last Labour Government agreed to a third runway at Heathrow only for the Coalition Government to cancel it in 2010.

This time round the Government is talking up what would be on offer to residents if a third runway was built. Night flights have long been an issue in Battersea. The first plane, arriving at 4.30am, acts as the unwanted alarm clock for many people. Heathrow is saying that, if

a third runway is built, there will be no scheduled flights between 11pm and 5.30am. That is seen, however, as simply a minor concession. Most people in Battersea don't plan on starting their day at 5.30!

The Government argues that a new runway at Heathrow offers most for the economy. It also looked at the option of an Estuary Airport but rejected it on a number of grounds, including cost. It has said it regards a second runway at Gatwick as a credible option. Wandsworth Council backs Gatwick. It argues that with Gatwick being little more than half an hour from Clapham Junction by fast train, a second runway could increase both employment and travel opportunities for Wandsworth residents.

Gatwick would certainly have fewer local impacts than a third runway at Heathrow. At present over 725,000 people are impacted by noise from Heathrow. At Gatwick it is less than 12,000, rising to 37,000 with a second runway. Gatwick has neither the air pollution nor traffic problems associated with Heathrow.

Connectivity

At present, though, the Government seems set on expanding Heathrow. It believes it has a majority in Parliament to get it through. It says that a third runway is needed to increase our connectivity to the rest of the world and particularly to emerging nations such as China and India. It argues that, unless we build a new runway, we are in danger of being overtaken by rival European airports such as Frankfurt or Charles de Gaulle as, on current projections, all the runways in London and the

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Don't forget to visit our website: batterseasociety.org.uk for regular updates on Battersea Society news, events and planning matters

From the editor



What is neighbourliness? Do you feel your neighbourhood is neighbourly? Can you give your house

keys to someone, or ask them to feed your cat, or pop round for a cuppa if you're feeling a bit fed up? Or at least say hello when you see them in the street? As more of life is conducted online, especially but not exclusively for the young, there is more need for personal contact – we are highly social animals after all. I think this is a role that the Battersea Society can help to fill. We tell people about what is going on locally, where you can go

to have fun with others or how to help other people. Our talks and outings are a way of engaging residents. We encourage them to get involved.

My own experience of Battersea is of an area full of neighbourliness and a strong sense of community. However the rapid turnover of the population makes this more and more difficult to maintain. The exorbitant price of houses and flats means that many people rent, often for short periods, so they are unlikely to develop much emotional commitment to the area and have little incentive to make friends locally.

Mostly these are things that we can't do much about individually. But we can pass a few words on the street or the communal staircase and, if the neighbour is a longer term resident, perhaps we can encourage them to join the Battersea Society.

Individual high street shops are often considered to be a guarantor of neighbourliness. But chain stores can provide that too. I had a mildly risqué conversation with a member of staff at B&Q recently that set me up with a smile all day.

Another reason to smile is the weather, and the wonderful spring we are having. Temperatures like July and a mass of glorious blossom – better this year than ever, I think. The cemetery on Bolingbroke Grove/Battersea Rise was awash with primroses and bluebells and whitebells and alive with birdsong. And the winter garden in Battersea Park was a joy.

newsletter@batterseasociety.org.uk
020 7350 2749

Man on the Battersea Bus

Mike Roden looks at family history, and takes a trip on a slow boat to Greenwich.

'Reveal where your ancestors came from' is the call to action from ancestry.co.uk, promising you that the results of their DNA testing will give you 'a breakdown of your ethnicity, revealing your ethnic mix from the past 500 – 1000 years.' As a Christmas present to ourselves (more exciting than socks or chocolates!) we both gave it a go in the spirit of discovery.

It's a pity that the actor John Hurt didn't try this before agreeing to appear on the TV programme *Who Do You Think You Are?* The show forensically demolished his fervent belief in his Irish ancestry, and his relationship to the Marquis of Sligo – a history which had been entirely invented by his great grandfather.

When the results of our tests arrived by email there were few surprises. Angela knows that her family travelled from Ireland to Manchester in the early 20th century, and she's 95% Irish. Her late mother would have denied this, unlike John Hurt always insisting that she was English.

My own forebears were clay pipe manufacturers in Shropshire in the mid 1750s with all the signs

that they'd been in that area on the English/Welsh border for a very long time and the test declared me to be 84% British and 5% Irish. Unfortunately the test doesn't distinguish between England, Wales or Scotland so I can't claim to be a quintessential Englishman, though of course I am.

Muttered

I did try to maintain my English stiff upper lip a few weeks ago as we stood in a long queue to buy tickets for a boat to Greenwich. Of course there was nothing stoical about the way I muttered intolerantly about the customers in front of me who clearly did not have English as their first language and would cause us to miss the boat. In fact, the ticket office coped perfectly well and we made it in time and I felt duly chastened about my attitude to the foreign visitors.

I was reminded of this incident when I read these words the other day:

'With hundreds of new people ... arriving in London every day and the population complaining about overcrowding and crime, immigration

was a controversial political issue. Since factories, sweatshops and building sites depended on low paid labour from out of town the government could not ban immigrants. Instead ministers attempted to assuage the fears of the public by claiming to get tough on the criminals and work-dodgers – which meant locking up large numbers of innocents. Officers scanned the new arrivals ... and arrested those they thought looked drunk, work-shy or even slightly untidy.'

The year in question was 1777 and the people were arriving not from overseas but from all over England. The paragraph is taken from Kate Williams's 2006 biography *England's Mistress*, the compelling story of the rise and fall of Emma Hamilton a woman who was so much more than simply Nelson's mistress.

Plus ça change. Makes you think, doesn't it? Mind how you go, and see you next time.



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South East will be full by 2040 at the latest.

Few would deny that aviation is important to maintaining and increasing our trade links with the rest of the world. Historically, trade has increased growth and prosperity. But politicians of all parties continue to express doubts whether expansion at Heathrow is necessary for that to happen. In fact, a number of senior politicians such as former aviation minister Theresa Villiers believe that the choice of Heathrow might set

back getting these better links to the rest of the world for years as a third runway will face so many obstacles and so much opposition that it may never be built.

Nervousness

Certainly there will be nervousness in Battersea about what a new runway will mean for the area. Already aircraft noise is the dominant sound in green spaces such as Battersea Park or Clapham Common. A walk by the river is inevitably accompanied by the roar of aircraft. Heathrow is

promising quieter planes and steeper approaches to cut the noise. These will be welcomed but, for most residents, it is the sheer volume of aircraft passing overhead that is the real problem. The worry is that the extra runway will simply add to the number of planes in the sky and lead to a deterioration in the quality of life for many people.

John Stewart is chair of HACAN www.gov.uk/government/news/major-step-forward-in-building-a-global-britain-as-public-has-its-say-on-airport-expansion.

Richworth or Wandsworth? The two councils to share staff

David Lewis looks at the implications of Wandsworth and Richmond's joint staffing arrangements

These boroughs are the outcome of a 1965 reorganisation which created 32 boroughs in London, swallowing up Battersea in the process. Some people have begun to think there are still too many London boroughs, they cost too much, and they sometimes have difficulty in retaining all the expertise they need to perform their functions efficiently. Another wholesale reorganisation is not an attractive prospect, but there have been various forms of co-operation between individual boroughs, some of which have not lasted. Cuts in grant from central government, and the further cuts now looming, have sharpened minds.

The radical solution Wandsworth and Richmond have devised is to have a shared staff under a single chief executive (Wandsworth's Paul Martin) and a single set of five chief officers. The two boroughs will remain independent. Ravi Govindia remains the Leader of Wandsworth Council, and Wandsworth councillors will continue to apply their own policies and scrutinise the performance of services in their area.

Both boroughs are Conservative-controlled but they differ in many ways. Wandsworth has been part of London for more than a century; Richmond was part of Surrey until 1965. Labour councillors provide the opposition in Wandsworth but in Richmond it's the Liberal Democrats (who controlled the council from 2006 to 2010). Richmond has fewer people from ethnic minorities (14%



against 29%) and fewer people under 21 and over 65. Richmond has a Council for Voluntary Service and the borough council has put more emphasis on using the voluntary sector. Wandsworth has more council housing and continues to manage it, while Richmond has followed many other authorities and hived off its council housing.

Redundancies

The combined staff will be the largest in London and count as the 8th largest local authority in Britain. It has become possible to remove 400 posts in Wandsworth (though with only 50 compulsory redundancies). Each authority will save £10 million a year. Most staff in Wandsworth will continue to serve Wandsworth and be located here, but some joint units are being formed to serve both boroughs. As far as possible the same systems and procedures will apply in both

authorities. There will be opportunities to reduce overheads and rationalise contracts.

The Battersea Society has most contacts with the planning department. Tim Cronin from Wandsworth has become Assistant Director Planning and Transport. Among other familiar faces John Stone is Head of Planning and Transport Strategies and Mark Hunter will handle large projects in both boroughs. Open Spaces come under David Allister, Head of Culture; some services in Wandsworth will continue to be provided by Enable, the staff-based mutual. Air quality is another key issue for us and we are encouraged that Houda al-Sharifi will remain as Director of Public Health for both boroughs, and will be part of a small Chief Executive's Group.

The Battersea Society will be keeping a close watch on how the new arrangements work in practice. Assurances have been given that there will not be any cross subsidy from one borough to the other. There is no obvious basis for fears that tall residential towers will spread from Battersea to Richmond or that council tax in Wandsworth will rise toward the much higher figure in Richmond!

We were grateful to be invited to attend a meeting held by the Putney Society in January at which representatives of Wandsworth Council explained the new arrangements.

Further details can be found through the Putney Society's website

Welcome to Wandsworth, new citizens!

Jenny Sheridan attends a citizenship ceremony

'I'm a Londoner first and foremost,' says Ennio Calzone, as he waits in Wandsworth Town Hall before the UK citizenship ceremony. 'I wanted to become a British citizen – I've lived in the UK for ten years, I've worked and paid my taxes here and last year I bought a flat here in Wandsworth. It formalises becoming part of the community; I want to be an active citizen.'

The citizenship ceremony is a small one this week. Just ten people, six men and four women, will be given their naturalisation certificate. 'Most weeks, we have thirty or forty people,' says registrar Sarah Taylor. 'They come from all over the world. The majority come from South Africa, India, the USA, the Philippines, and we have a surprising number from Mongolia. And then there are refugees who have struggled to get here, such as Afghans and Somalis.'

The ceremony on 7 March 2017 introduces new citizens from South Africa, the Philippines, Turkey, Somalia, Canada, Ghana, Singapore, Italy and Lebanon. Sylvia, from Lebanon, has lived in Wandsworth for six years and works in the pharmaceutical industry after coming to the UK to study. Being British will make life, and especially travel, easier, and shows commitment to the UK, she says. She looks excited and pleased, chatting with the two friends who have accompanied her, bringing a gift of David Starkey's life of Queen Elizabeth I.

'It's quite a daunting procedure to go through', says Sarah Taylor. 'There is a huge amount of documentation, including a 30 page form where you have to list in detail every single absence from the UK over the last five years (three years if you are married to a UK citizen). It can be quite nerve-racking. For £50 we offer a nationality checking service to help people make sure they have filled out the form correctly and to photocopy and certify passports and birth certificates.' The Home Office charge for naturalisation is £1,236.

'You meet such a huge variety of people in this job,' says Sarah Taylor.

'I like hearing about where they have come from. People often want to tell you the good things about their country – how beautiful it is and how good the food is. So if it's somewhere like Afghanistan or Somalia and all you ever hear about it is war and famine, you learn about the things that people love and miss.'

In order to qualify for British citizenship a person has to have lived here for five years (three if married to a British citizen), be of good character and not bankrupt, with an adequate grasp of English. There are restrictions on the amount of time they can have spent outside the UK. They have to pass the Life in the UK test, which includes questions on the British constitution, the Commonwealth and – ironically – the EU. Multiple choice questions may include the population of the countries of the UK, saints' days or the role of the Parliamentary opposition.

Oath

If they satisfy the Home Office that they qualify for citizenship, and pass the test, they are expected to attend a ceremony. It is not until they have spoken the oath of allegiance that they can call themselves British citizens. After that they can apply for a British passport.

I ask Sarah Taylor if there has been an increase in demand for citizenship since the EU referendum. She replies that it has not yet reached Wandsworth, but the Home Office has seen significantly more enquiries, especially from people from countries that joined the EU in 2004, including Hungary and Poland. 'Long-term residents are starting to think they should either get a visa or become a British citizen.'

Many Europeans living here fear that they will have to leave the country and reapply for residence, forced to leave their families, homes and jobs. Chatting before the ceremony, Ennio Calzone tells me he has two sides to his personality – 'I'm Britalian!' he says. A small boy, waiting for his Canadian father to join him, conducts

himself singing *God Save the Queen*.

We are shown into the Grand Chamber, with its art deco glass roof and grand chandelier. The Mayor, Richard Field,

in his scarlet robes and chain of office, is preceded by an official carrying the mace. It's impressive. Sarah Taylor tells the four women and six men that it is a pleasure to welcome them to citizenship. The Mayor's speech emphasises the importance Wandsworth places on tolerance and respect. He says we value people for who they are and what they contribute, not their background. We value diversity and are enriched by many cultures. He cites John Archer, London's first black mayor, Battersea MP Shapurji Saklatvala, Irish Charlotte Despard and the family of Wandsworth Council's leader Ravi Govindia. 'I welcome you to the Wandsworth community', he says.

The candidates then read the oath of allegiance, five of them choosing to swear by God, five by affirming. The Mayor presents each with a naturalisation certificate and each has his or her photograph taken with the Mayor. A woman from Ghana brings her husband and two smartly dressed little boys into the photo. A young woman from the Philippines has her parents stand with her. They look thrilled.

The Mayor processes out of the chamber and Sarah Taylor wraps up by saying, 'May you find your life enriched, and may you enrich the lives of others.'

There is a no more than usually ragged singing of the National Anthem and we all leave. The new citizens queue to pick up their photos. I take the bus to go to the Wandsworth Gardening Group meeting, a very British affair.

On the wall of a corridor in the registry office, there is a Union Jack clock, printed with the words 'God save the Queen and Wandsworth Borough, the brightest city in the world'. 'It was given us by a lady who had had her citizenship ceremony here,' says Sarah Taylor.



Planning Matters: Those tall building proposals just keep coming

Developers are reaching for the sky: can the infrastructure cope, asks Monica Tross

TALL BUILDINGS

York Road and Wandsworth Town seem all set to be a new Nine Elms. There are further proposals in for a 25 storey building behind the Candle Factory, 2017/0745, added height to buildings at Plantation Wharf, 2016/5644 and a new scheme for the Homebase site at Swandon Way, 2016/7356. Further east there is a vast proposal for Palmerston Court, opposite the Dogs and Cats Home. This could result in the loss of Flanagans Public House, much to the dismay of many locals, including ourselves, 2016/5422.

Take a look at the Townscape document on the Candle Factory application website and you will see diagrams of the existing consented developments along the river including the focal point of the Barratt tower in Lombard Road. There will be yet more development in relation to renewal of the Winstanley Estate and, while we welcome improved housing for existing residents, we continue to be fearful of the cumulative impact of the proposed density. Our comments on the Candle Factory development will be on the Society's website in due course and our views on the others can be seen there now.

CLAPHAM JUNCTION

Capacity at Clapham Junction is a perennial problem. Each planning application along York Road puts forward the accessibility of Clapham Junction in support of their proposals. Each time we comment that the station is already over-busy at peak hours. Increased capacity on Network Rail and the London Overground will help but commuters and other travellers still have to get into the station and on to the trains. Apparently the large Earls Court development is also offering West Brompton as a transport benefit, as no doubt is Imperial Wharf included in support of proposals for development at Chelsea Wharf. I guess Battersea residents will at least have the benefit of getting on the Overground at the start. Each development includes vast storage capacity for cycles – so



A view of a zinc extension from Frere Street

providing you are fit and active and are not worried by traffic pollution that is one way round the problem.

Cremorne Bridge is being supported as a way of spreading the load as residents can walk across the river and pick up the train at Imperial Wharf. Work is continuing on plans for this bridge. Currently the council is tendering for consultants to undertake specialist surveys and assessments of the riverbed, including soil surveys, the railway bridge piers and ordnance investigation.

EXTENSION

Is zinc part of Battersea's streetscape? That is what one developer thinks, despite neighbours of 313 Battersea Park Road, 2016/5617 and of 1 – 5 Gowrie Road, 2017/0631 disagreeing. A member in Atherton Street sent us this picture of one development so you can judge for yourself.

NORTHCOTE LIBRARY

As those of you live in the immediate area will know, the Council has been consulting on plans to demolish the existing library and Chatham Hall across the road and rebuild as a linked scheme for market housing, a library and community facilities. We have welcomed further investment in

library facilities but have reservations about the detail of the proposals put forward. Again, you can see our comments at www.batterseasociety.org.uk. Follow the link to planning consultations.

VAUXHALL BUS STATION

Vauxhall Cross and bus station: a reminder that you can find details of TfL's proposals at tfl.gov.uk/roads/vauxhall-cross.

CONSERVATION AREAS

We want to celebrate the 50th birthday of conservation areas. Do you live in one of Battersea's eleven conservation areas? Check out the details on the council's website where you will find maps of the Battersea Park, Battersea Square, Clapham Common, Clapham Junction, Latchmere, St. John's Hill Grove, Park Town, Shaftesbury Park, Three Sisters, Town Hall Road and Wandsworth Common conservation areas. We would like to celebrate our conservation areas 50 years after Stamford, the first to be designated, started this protection for historic areas.

If you live in one of these areas and could help, contact me at planning@batterseasociety.org.uk. I do hope to hear from you, on this, on Vauxhall or on any other planning matter.

From trout stream to sewer and back again

Ian Bull explores the many successes of the Wandle

Battersea's rivers were culverted in the 19th century, their fate sealed by the Metropolitan Commissioners for Sewers, yet to our immediate west is a highly visible river with a proud past and a bright future.

Once rising near Crawley, the ancient Wandle flowed across a broad plain to the Rhine's then tributary, the Thames. Over many millennia forces in the Earth's crust caused that plain's underlying chalk strata to rise, eventually forming the North Downs. The early Wandle initially eroded a deepening valley through the rising hills but the inexorable uplift overcame the river's erosive powers and the headwaters were cut off from the course. The dry valley of the former river across the Downs is now known as the Merstham Gap.

Despite having lost its original headwaters the river north of the Downs flourished as the rising, porous chalk provided a vast and growing reservoir. Supply became ever more copious and as the land rose, the flow ever faster. The 'new' Wandle was becoming an especially vigorous river. The river's significant catchment area is demonstrated by the numerous valleys that reach south of Croydon up into the Downs, a myriad of feeders.

Fishing

No doubt the first human usage of the Wandle would have been fishing, for it had become a fine example of a chalk stream, a perfect piscine environment. The most famous angler of all, Izaak Walton, 1594 – 1683, waxed lyrical of the Wandle in his *Compleat Angler* as well he might, for it was one of the finest trout fisheries in the world. As Izaak perused the river he would have noticed a human contribution to the banks: watermills.

The volume and steep descent of the Wandle gave the river considerable kinetic energy which could be harnessed through

watermills to provide mechanical power. More power than horse or ox could generate, more reliable than the wind and if the mill-owner was fortunate, at little cost. The watermill is an ancient invention and the Domesday Book of 1086 records eight on the Wandle, all of them remaining as industrial sites into the late 20th century.

Profit

Today we think of the watermill as a charmingly bucolic addition to the landscape. But until steam engines became more affordable in the early 19th century they were vital organs of industry and far from bucolic. By 1600 the eight mills had grown to at least 18 and some accounts state that by the mid 19th century there were 100. This is unlikely but 60 to 70 is probable and the Wandle became known as the hardest worked river in England for no other could sustain so many mills per mile.

Prior to 1600 the mills would have generally ground corn, but trade and a growing economy saw considerable diversification. The purpose of a mill would change depending on what task offered the best profit but textiles became predominant, particularly after the repeal of a cotton tax in 1774. During an operational life of over 900 years a mill in Wandsworth's Garratt Lane dealt with corn, iron and paper before producing gas mantles and finally electrical wiring for aircraft.

The extant Carshalton Lower Mill handled corn, copper, paper, corn (again), flax and linoleum before becoming part of a chemical refinery during its 760-odd industrial years. Many of the mills were among the largest factories in the country and their transport requirements led to the construction along the valley floor of the pioneering Surrey Iron Railway in 1802/3.

Industrial

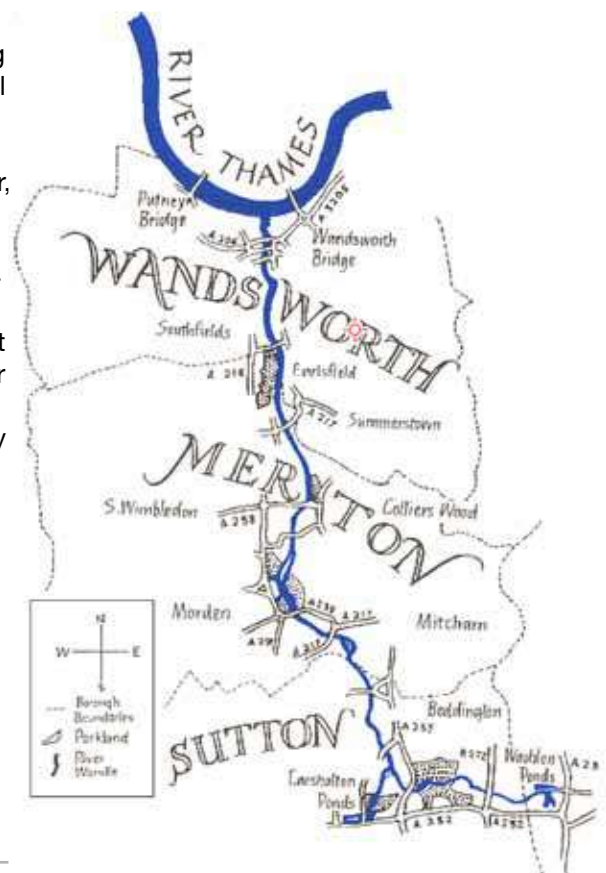
Established as an industrial corridor, the early 20th century saw provision of high-tension electrical supply in the valley. Firms specialising in electrical products included major concerns such as The Gramophone Company



in Wandsworth and Mullards at Hackbridge which employed some 5,500 people.

Noxious

The Wandle had given life to industry but in return industry killed the Wandle. Noxious residues poured out of dyeworks, leather works and a host of others from the 18th century to the late 1970s. Classified as an open sewer, by 1960 all life had gone from its stinking waters. The riparian boroughs and concerned local bodies began to act from the early 1980s





Left: Fishing in the Wandle; above: A group of walkers enjoying the Wandle Trail

and in barely 35 years two centuries of pollution have been reversed. The Environment Agency considers the Wandle to be the most improved urban river in the UK.

A most attractive walk, the Wandle Trail, has been devised to follow the river's entire course. It forms the backbone of the nascent Wandle Valley Regional Park. Sign-posting is poor but a good map can be downloaded from Merton Council. Walkers will realise that the upper reaches consist of two branches converging at Hackbridge and that the walk cleverly manages to combine both. They may also wonder how so many mills were viable given today's amount of flow. It isn't what it was even in the 1990s, due to abstraction of drinking water from the river's aquifers. The remaining flow is sparklingly clear though, a true chalk stream. Izaak Walton would approve, as once again it teems with trout.

A map of the trail is also available from Sustrans.



What next for EU citizens in Wandsworth?

Post-referendum, local resident James Williamson and his wife face uncertainty and anxiety

I am English. My wife is Irish. We met in London at a time when our freedom to live and work and study in each other's country could be taken for granted. I had previously studied and then worked in Germany. She had been working in London for years. But the moment we awoke on the morning after the 2016 EU referendum, when no-one knew what the vote meant for Europeans in Britain, these freedoms were cast into doubt.

Unresolved

The Brexit referendum result left a huge mound of issues unresolved, issues that in other circumstances and at calmer times, would have received the meticulous scrutiny that they deserved. They would have been discussed with a detailed plan laid out and agreed before the vote but instead they were debated endlessly, but without any conclusion offered by the two sides. Unfortunately, referendums have no manifestos.

The issue that sits on the top of this mound is the right of the three million EU citizens who were lawfully resident before Brexit, to stay in

the UK once Britain leaves the EU. There are at least 24,000 EU citizens in Wandsworth Borough. These people are our family, colleagues, neighbours and friends. They are people just like us.

This shouldn't even be a problem. The moment that Theresa May became Prime Minister she could have guaranteed EU citizens rights because it was the right thing to do. If we had voted to leave the European Union, the least Britain could do was offer security to its inhabitants. Instead, the Government has ordered its MPs in three votes to deny us that guarantee. In the final vote on a House of Lords amendment in early March, The3million, a group lobbying to keep EU citizens in the UK, called the amendment a 'last chance' for EU nationals to be 'treated like human beings'. The consequences are clear: at best we are goods to be bartered; at worst, we will see families ripped apart.

Politics

For me and my wife, politics leapt uninvited into our personal and private lives on 24 June 2016. We

had done nothing wrong, but we were forced to worry about our right in the future to live together as a couple in the country we call home. We ask ourselves the same ordinary questions about the future that any young(ish) couple asks themselves – except they all become linked to nagging worries about our rights. 'Should I apply for a new job?' became 'How will my application be treated as a non-citizen who may or may not have the right to live here permanently?' 'Should we move temporarily closer to her parents if we have children?' became 'Will that hurt a claim of continued residence in the UK?'

We do have an option. EU citizens who have exercised free movement treaty rights (eg self employment, employment, studying, self-sufficiency) for more than five years can apply for permanent residence. However, acquiring this piece of paper is mired in bureaucracy. In the last six months 135,000 applications have been made for permanent residence, but figures suggest that approximately a quarter are being refused. Those refusals (often because of minor paperwork issues) have meant applicants have been asked by the Home Office to make preparations to leave. I am not keen to take the risk.

Great Bus Journeys of the World No 19

Mike Roden takes the scenic route to the City on the number 11.



Back in 1906 when route no 11 was introduced it ran from Victoria to Hammersmith via Chelsea. Nowadays it sets off from Fulham Town Hall and arrives at Liverpool Street station taking in some of the most historic sites in the City. You'll have to imagine the first part of its meanderings via New Kings Road, as I join it at the Beaufort Street stop in Chelsea.

Kings Road has been covered comprehensively in other bus journeys (go to batterseasociety.org.uk) so forgive me if I shut my eyes during this part of journey and open them again as the bus arrives at Sloane Square. This is dominated by the Peter Jones store which started life here in 1877, originally occupying just three properties, eventually expanding to cover most of the block. The current building dates from the 1930s.

Mozart

Heading down Lower Sloane Street the bus turns onto Pimlico Road which is now overshadowed by the towers of the Chelsea Barracks development. A bronze statue of Mozart aged eight stands in the centre of Orange Square, marking the prodigy's stay in a house in nearby Ebury Street in 1764.

And so we trundle onto Buckingham Palace Road towards Victoria Station. There are signs that the manic home improvements which have been taking place for ever are coming to an end and a sparkling new ticket hall opened on Bressenden Place in January. By this time next year there will apparently be step free access throughout the station. This will afford some relief to

those tourists who insist on bringing suitcases the size of small wardrobes.

The bus weaves its way to Victoria Street. Rather like the station the interior of Westminster Cathedral is still not quite finished, but it's been in that state for rather longer having been consecrated in 1910. For a modest fee you can take the lift up the cathedral bell tower and enjoy tremendous views over London and beyond.

There is a brief hiatus during the winter when tourism slows to a trickle, but the floodgates have opened again and the visitors have returned to Parliament Square staring in wonder, or bewilderment or possibly both at the Mother of Parliaments while taking selfies with Big Ben behind them.

Parliament Street becomes Whitehall, and the Cenotaph approaches. I told the story of how in 1920 this 'empty tomb' became the focus of remembrance for the all the unknown warriors of the great war in my account of the 87 bus journey (*Battersea Matters* Spring 2013).

Steely-eyed armed police keep an eye on the cluster of tourists gathered outside the gates of Downing Street. There are lots of interesting things I could tell you about number 10, but instead I'll pass on the information that the house's last private inhabitant was called Mr Chicken. Frustratingly we know nothing else about him.

Scaffold

However, we do know that the Banqueting House, just up the road, is all that remains of the Palace of Whitehall. In January 1649 Charles I stepped out of a window onto a

hastily built scaffold to meet the axeman. These days visitors can lie back on giant bean bags and stare up at the magnificent Rubens ceiling.

The bus moves swiftly past Trafalgar Square and we enter theatreland. First up is the Adelphi. Since it opened in November 1806 it has operated under no fewer than seven different names and from four different buildings on the site.

Luxury

Further along is the Savoy Theatre built by Richard D'Oyly Carte on the site of the old Savoy Palace as a showcase for the work of Gilbert and Sullivan. The profits from their comic operas enabled D'Oyly Carte to finance the building of London's first luxury hotel, unsurprisingly named the Savoy. Afternoon tea there will set you back anything from £52 upwards, with not a Marmite sandwich in sight.

The Lyceum Theatre has been showing *The Lion King* since 1999, which makes you wonder whether there's anyone left who hasn't seen it. The theatre itself arrived here in 1765. In its early days it hosted a variety of entertainments including Madame Tussaud's first London exhibition. At the end of the nineteenth century Henry Irving and Ellen Terry made frequent appearances here.

Now we take a short detour along Aldwych. In Anglo-Saxon times there was a village here called Lundenwic (London trading centre) probably using the mouth of the Fleet river as a harbour. Abandoned by the time of Alfred the Great it became known as Ealdwic (old trading town) and by 1211 its name was recorded as Aldewich.

Left to right: A statue of young Mozart, Orange Square; the face of Big Ben's clock; the Savoy Hotel; El Vino's, Fleet Street; statue of Queen Anne outside St Paul's (photo Colin Smith), St Bride's (photo John Salmon)



Leaving Aldwych, we pass the Victorian Gothic hulk of the Royal Courts of Justice on one side and St Clement Danes on the other. One of Wren's post Great Fire churches, it was severely damaged during the Blitz. After restoration in 1958 it was adopted as the central church of the RAF.

We're now entering the city at Temple Bar where the Strand becomes Fleet Street. A stone gateway designed by Christopher Wren stood here until 1878 when – to ease traffic congestion – it was replaced with the current winged dragon memorial. On the right is Inner Temple Lane leading down to Temple church, and the Inner and Middle Temple Inns of Court. Wren's original arch can now be seen in Paternoster Square next to St Paul's.

The church of St Dunstan-in-the-West is famed for its chiming clock, with figures of two giants, perhaps representing Gog and Magog, who strike the bells with their clubs. In 1828, when the old church was demolished, the clock was sold to the Marquess of Hertford who installed it at his house in Regent's Park. It was returned to the church by press baron Lord Rothermere in 1935.

El Vino's

And there is our first mention of Fleet Street's long association with newspapers. Strange how little is left of that era. But there's El Vino's wine bar (no longer refusing to serve women at the bar) and Ye Olde Cheshire Cheese pub to remind us of the legendary liquid lunches that journalists enjoyed before dashing back to yell 'Hold the front page'.

You can hardly miss the art deco magnificence of the *Daily Express* building, which opened in 1932. Opposite that building is St Bride's Avenue leading to the church of the same name. During restoration following Blitz damage it was found to stand on a site which had been home to at least six other churches. It's been dubbed the journalists' cathedral.

Replica

Onto Ludgate Hill we approach St Paul's. Wren's masterpiece was not completed until 1712, during Queen Anne's reign, and a statue of the monarch was erected at that time. The original statue deteriorated so much that in 1886 the Corporation of London stumped up the cash to commission a replica, and that's what we see now. You can attend Sunday service or choral evensong here without paying, but they discourage sightseeing so you'll have to stay in your seat.

The bus stop near St Paul's is a good place to break your journey if you want to visit Tate Modern, as you can walk down to the river and cross the Millennium Bridge. On the way you'll pass the Firefighters' Memorial which records the names of over 1000 men and women who have died on duty in the fire service.

The Bank of England has had its home on Threadneedle Street since 1734. I've learned that term 'Old Lady of Threadneedle Street' may refer to a real person called Sarah Whitehead. Her brother Philip who worked for the bank was executed for forgery in 1811. Sarah became 'unhinged' with grief and every day for the next 25

years she went to the Bank asking for her brother. When she died she was buried in the old churchyard that became the Bank's garden, and according to legend her ghost has often been seen here. Nothing wrong with a good legend, I say.

Onto Broad Street now and we're near journey's end. It's taken well over an hour, and there's not much more to report, apart from a glimpse of the former Natwest Tower, now known somewhat boringly as Tower 42.

And so we reach the rather shabby back door of Liverpool Street Station. Time for a coffee before heading back to Battersea.

The Battersea Society

Chair Sara Milne

chair@batterseasociety.org.uk

Secretary Harvey Heath

secretary@batterseasociety.org.uk

Committee Chairs

Planning Liz Walton

planning@batterseasociety.org.uk

Open Spaces openspaces@

batterseasociety.org.uk

Events Sara Milne

events@batterseasociety.org.uk

General enquiries

information@batterseasociety.org.uk

Website

batterseasociety.org.uk

Registered charity no.1103560

Founded, lost and reborn

Sue Demont uncovers the story of north Battersea's churches

Anglicans and atheists alike will be familiar with Battersea's landmark churches – historic St Mary's on the river, St Mark's, Battersea Rise with its commanding 'candle snuffer' spire, the copper-topped campanile of St Luke's, Thurleigh Road, perhaps the hefty red brick Ascension, Lavender Hill. But in 1900 there were no fewer than fifteen Anglican churches between Lavender Hill and the river alone – my latest quest was to find out what happened to them.

St Mary's was always the 'mother church,' being by far the oldest Church of England establishment in the ancient parish of Battersea. Its energetic vicar of 1872 – 1909, Canon John Erskine Clarke, is rightly credited with initiating the explosion of church building in Battersea between 1872 and 1900. Not for nothing was his family motto *Fortiter ubique* (Bravery everywhere); his mission was to establish new parishes all over Battersea and his memorial duly records him as 'builder of many churches'.

800 worshippers

But even before Clarke's day Battersea had a significant second church, St George's in Nine Elms Lane, designed by renowned architect Edward Blore and opened in 1828. It stood on the exact site of New Covent Garden between now vanished Ceylon Street and Haines Street. Its burial ground was closed after just 30 years, though astonishingly some of the monuments survived until 1974.

The original 'neat building' was constructed on the meeting house model, but under Canon Clarke's influence St George's was enlarged by two additional aisles to accommodate 800 worshippers. Already the second largest in Battersea, the parish continued to expand so rapidly that Clarke supported calls for an additional church; and thus was constructed St Andrew's, Stockdale Road (now Patmore Street). Initially housed in a temporary iron building, the new church opened in 1886, built in



13th century style with what was described unflatteringly as a stump of a tower.

St Andrew's operated as a separate parish for the next 70 years, but both churches suffered badly during the Second World War. Worship continued at St George's despite bomb damage until 1953, but after being closed and leased to a theatrical agency, the church was destroyed by fire in 1960. One contemporary noted that 'the district had become hopelessly dreary, and the church was not needed.'

Land mine

However a latter day Canon Clarke thought otherwise, though it was the site of the more severely damaged St Andrew's (hit by a land mine in 1940 and demolished in 1953) at the heart of the new Patmore Estate which was chosen for the erection of a replacement church in 1955. In acknowledgement of its history, the new church was dedicated to 'St George with St Andrew', and its most distinctive feature, a soaring tower with copper covered spire, housed the 1913 bell from St George's.

In contrast to its predecessors, the new church lasted just 40 years; rebuilding a congregation in post-war Battersea was not easy, and there was no resident vicar after 1974. In 1994 the second St George's was declared redundant and demolished – but rather appropriately, it has risen again. The diocese managed to retain the tower and spire whilst incorporating a new smaller church within its 1990s housing scheme, meaning that St George's, Battersea is now in its 190th year of worship. Probably Battersea's 'most lost' C



of E church was its fourth oldest – St John's, Usk Road, built in 1863. Its first vicar was so determined to ensure that the local workforce had access to worship that he conducted services in Price's Candle Factory; though interestingly he had the vicarage built in the more salubrious neighbourhood of Wandsworth Common! The poverty of the York Road area was reflected in the 'remarkably inexpensive' building, although it could still seat 750.

Cheap

This was probably optimistic, as St John's Parish was subsumed into St Paul's, St John's Hill, as long ago as the 1930s and after severe bomb damage the 'cheap brick church' was demolished around 1950 and replaced by housing. Today not a trace of St John's remains – even the name has gone as the parish was renamed St Paul's – though it is just possible that the two clumps of relatively mature trees on the site once framed the church...

By contrast the nearby lost church of St Peter's, Plough Road, was positively lavish; a 'beautiful Gothic structure ... with lofty tower and spire pointing like a finger to the sky' and a spacious interior with rich carving,



Far left: St Bartholomew's, Wycliffe Road; above left: St Mary Le Park today; below left: the original St Mary Le Park; above: St George's

a tessellated pavement and an alabaster font. Consecrated just 13 years after St John's, St Peter's cost more than three times as much – one reason being that it was designed by eminent High Victorian architect,

William White, one of his five commissions in Battersea. St Peter's building has also had a chequered post-war history; the church was largely destroyed by fire in 1970 and a meagre replacement was built adjacent to White's original church hall, whilst the tower and spire, having survived the fire, were removed as unsafe in 1994. In 2014 both church and hall were demolished for redevelopment, but the congregation continues to meet for regular worship and the developers have promised a new church; like St George's, St Peter's should rise again.

Impressive

The most striking architectural loss was another White church, St Mary Le Park on the corner of Albert Bridge and Parkgate Roads, described as having an 'impressive interior' although White's design was never fully realised – a common occurrence among late Victorian churches. Conceived as a chapel of ease to the parish church, St Mary Le Park became a parish in its own right, but

despite the eminence of its architect, the church was demolished in 1966 and replaced by a namesake tower block. The only trace of White's church footprint is a fragment of churchyard wall adjacent to the flats.

The smaller but not unattractive replacement church from 1970 was itself declared redundant in 1991 but has not been lost to worship; it is now the Philippino Iglesia ni Cristo. Such transformations have saved several of Battersea's Victorian churches from demolition, including St Stephen's, Battersea Park Road (another White church) – now the Assembly of the First Born; St Bartholomew's, Wycliffe Road (which John Betjeman campaigned to save), now Greek Orthodox, and St Philip, Queenstown Road, now Ethiopian, while seven of the original 1900 churches remain in Anglican use. 50 years ago the future of many of these buildings looked bleak; today in a fast changing physical environment, Battersea's churches represent an encouraging journey of survival, adaptation and renewal.

New society launches at the Picturehouse

Nicola Brine introduces The Arts Society Clapham Common (formerly NADFAS)

The new Clapham Common branch of The Arts Society welcomed a throng of new members to our inaugural meeting on 15 March. The group's venue for its lectures is to be the Clapham Picturehouse. The organisation's national chairman June Robinson swore in the first chairman of the local Art Society, in the presence of the Mayor of Wandsworth.

Antony Penrose provided a very entertaining lecture with fabulous photographs of himself and Picasso in the Penrose family home at Farley House, East Sussex.

We already have almost 150 members and would welcome more. We are experiencing teething problems with our website so if you have difficulty accessing it, please apply for membership

via the email address below.

Our next lectures are:

19 April

Linda Smith: Great Tarts in Art: High culture and the oldest profession.

17 May

Peter Medhurst: Vivaldi in Venice.

Later in the year we plan to organise cultural trips and study groups.

TheArtsSociety.org/ClaphamCommon
or email: *ClaphamCommon@TheArtsSociety.org*



THIRD GENERATION BUTCHER SELLS UP

One of the oldest shops in Battersea has closed. Dove and Son Butchers in Northcote Road closed its doors on 26 March after 128 years.

The shop has existed on the corner of Mallinson Road since 1889, when current owner Bob Dove's grandfather opened it. Bob Dove described his grandfather as 'a tough old seafarer originally. He sailed round Cape Horn on a clipper.'

Bob bought the building 30 years ago and has lived over the shop ever since. It was known for the quality of its meat and butchery skills and for Jo Dove's excellent pies and ice creams, as well as for Bob's acerbic style of customer service.

'It's the business rates that have done for us,' said Bob Dove.

The Battersea Summer Scheme: we're here for the kids

Sue Demont meets the chair of the BSS, Henrietta Croker Poole MBE

SD: I understand that the Summer Scheme is one of the projects run by the Battersea Crime Prevention Panel (BCPP), of which you are a trustee. How did it all start back in 1992?

HCP: It began when I met a local police constable, John Johnson, following a spate of break-ins in my area of Battersea. I became the Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator and was invited down to the police station to meet his inspector. It transpired that some of the young people on the Ethelburga estate had nothing to do and were becoming involved in antisocial behaviour and/or criminal activity. It struck me that this was something that ought to be tackled, so I went to meet the local youth club leader – whose club was not being well used at the time – and asked him what would make a difference. He said 'a bus!' I approached the Council to see if they could make a school bus available to take some young people down to the New Forest.

Although this particular initiative didn't get off the ground, I persisted. I organised a day out on the Sir Walter St John's Sports Ground, eliciting food contributions so the young people could stay all day, and thus the future Battersea Summer Scheme Sport in the Park Week

was born. Of course we now do a lot more than just that one event.

SD: So you were instrumental in setting up the scheme?

HCP: The important thing in the early stages was to have a 'can do' approach. Plans could easily get bogged down in trying to work out who would do what on which premises. I've even cleaned the loos on occasion!

SD: How important was the police input in getting the scheme started?

HCP: PC Johnson and Inspector Gary Kitchen were very supportive. Initially it was John Johnson who identified the young people who might benefit from the scheme – he really knew the young people on his patch – whilst Gary Kitchen assigned some of his officers to take part.

SD: The Scheme seeks to involve young people in positive and enriching activities to try and divert them from drifting into criminal behaviour or from becoming victims of crime. What's the profile of the young people you support?

HCP: We work primarily with 8 – 16 year olds, boys and girls. Most live on the high rise estates and essentially their profile matches that of their

community. For example, we are developing links with the Somali Youth Club whose leader is doing a good job in working with whole families from whom he can then identify young people to participate in the Scheme's activities.

SD: It feels as though the co-operation of other agencies is critical to the success of the Scheme.

HCP: Yes. The BCPP tries to engage with local schools; for example, they've had a highly successful partnership with Falconbrook Primary for the last three years. It's harder to build contacts with the secondary schools, and we would love to get more from schools generally. We still work closely with the police through the BCPP, although the identification role subsequently moved from police officers to the Council's outreach workers – an excellent service which has unfortunately been scaled right back.

We are now largely reliant on youth workers, though not all the estates have a youth club. I am working to secure support from the Battersea Power Station Foundation at Nine Elms, who are required to engage with local community projects 'in kind' ie by providing staff, time and access.



SD: How is the Scheme funded and staffed?

HCP: You can't get away from the fact that we rely on fund raising and donations. We don't get sponsorship. The police are not allowed to fund raise for crime prevention themselves so it's a big part of the BCPP's work.

We employ temporary staff on a 'needs' basis but we also have a lot of volunteers. For our away trips we buy a package which includes the staffing for all the specialist activities such as rock climbing, kayaking etc but we have to provide supervisory staff for the evenings. The volunteers can get a lot out of the Scheme themselves; one teacher said he'd learnt things about young people from spending a week away with them that he would never have found out in the classroom. And our younger volunteers get the opportunity to develop and demonstrate qualities like trustworthiness, reliability and leadership which can be cited in job references.

SD: How do you evaluate the success of the Scheme?

HCP: It tends to be a verbal rather than a statistical process; we listen to the feedback from our staff and volunteers each year. For example, after Sport in the Park both volunteers and parents remark that the children come back talking completely differently. They are more confident because they've achieved and succeeded in activities they have never done before. Recently I met up with a young man who had gone on from Sport in the Park to join the Cadets and who now works for Jamie Oliver.

SD: What would make the biggest single difference to the effectiveness of the Scheme? I suspect I know the answer...

HCP: Yes, it is money. Put simply, with more money we can put on more activities, make the youth clubs more attractive and increase their footfall; it then becomes easier to signpost the right young people towards participation in the activities which work for them. We try not to beg or badger too much, and we operate

as economically as possible. For example we still hand deliver 90% of our post to save money.

SD: I'll end with a personal observation if I may. The Scheme feels very much like your baby and you've given it an impressive 25 years of your time and energy. And despite all the liaising with other agencies, you seem to do an awful lot yourself!

HCP: I must emphasise that I have people around me all the time to help, and I like to think I listen to them. I haven't undertaken any long term succession planning; we are always looking a year ahead, but not much beyond that. Obviously at some stage a younger trustee will need to take the Scheme on, and then there will be changes – but that's not a bad thing!

For more information, including an excellent video of the Scheme's activities and how to support them, log onto <http://www.batterseasummerscheme.org.uk> The Battersea Summer Scheme is a registered charity in England and Wales no. 1076855

Battersea Society AGM 2017

The Society's AGM was held at St Mary's Church on 9 March. Fifty-seven members attended.

Sara Milne, the chair, announced that two trustees were retiring: Wendy Deakins and Peter Warburton. Sara thanked them for their work, especially Wendy who was a founder member and a long-term trustee. She will remain on the events committee. Sue Marshall was elected as a trustee.

Sara thanked the executive committee and offered special thanks to the hard-working and effective planning committee, to Mike Roden for his work on the website and updating our systems, and to Suzanne Perkins and Jenny Sheridan for *Battersea Matters*.

The Society now has almost 400 members and a membership group is working to recruit more. Sara said that our open spaces were ever more important and urged any member with an interest to join a working group.

The speaker was David Jubb, artistic director of Battersea Arts Centre. He gave a well-received talk on the aftermath of the fire in the Grand Hall and the creative responses to it. David also spoke about BAC's projects such as The Agency on the Winstanley Estate and the Moving Museum.

David Jubb



CONGRATULATIONS to the Wandsworth Girls Cricket team, who were champions in the London Youth Games on 26 February, at Lords. The girls, all aged under 14, train at St John Bosco College in Battersea. They won by 143 runs to 91 against last year's winners, Hammersmith & Fulham. The medals were presented by former England cricket captain Mike Gatting. Wandsworth's deputy mayor, Cllr Wendy Speck, congratulated the girls on their victory.

Coach Mark Costin said 'The girls played absolutely fantastically It was a real team effort. Some of these girls are certainly good enough to go on to play for the country.' According to Matt Doherty, sports development officer for Enable, cricket is 'growing massively with girls. Most of these girls play at Spencer Cricket club, off Garratt Lane. A generation ago you wouldn't have seen these girls playing, particularly not to this standard.' It's not just in Ambridge that girls play cricket!



Living on a barge led to the Booker Prize

Janice Morphet explores the life and writings of Penelope Fitzgerald

When Penelope Fitzgerald won the Booker Prize in 1979 for her novel *Offshore*, about life aboard a Thames barge moored by Battersea Bridge, few readers appreciated how closely this was drawn from her own experience of living with her family on Grace between 1960 and 1962. The barge eventually sank, with all their possessions and papers in it. The novel was written nearly twenty years later, following her husband's death in 1976 when she was living with her daughter and son-in-law in Almeric Road. It recalled the lowest point in her life.

Penelope was born in 1913 into the Knox family and her aunts and uncles had distinguished careers including as a Bletchley Park codebreaker, a novelist and a theologian. Her father was editor of *Punch*. Penelope, known as Mops in her family, was the brightest child at school and after Oxford worked in the Ministry of Food and then of Information during the war. In 1942 she married Desmond Fitzgerald, whom she had met at university and shortly after this, he went to war, winning a military cross for his bravery. But when he came back he was an alcoholic and this was an issue that she contended with for the rest of his life, although without complaining or requesting help. Desmond was a barrister but was struck off when he was caught stealing client cheques.

Houseboat

There then followed a period in the 1950s and early sixties when the family was very short of money. Their time on the houseboat reflected the cheapest and most central home she could find. After the boat sank, they were taken into temporary accommodation, eventually living in a council house in Poynders Road in Clapham for 11 years. During this time, Penelope worked at the Italia Conti Stage School in Clapham, the Queen's Gate School in Kensington, where her pupils included the



Duchess of Cornwall, and at Westminster Tutors, where she met Antonia (A S) Byatt and taught Helena Bonham Carter amongst others.

Penelope started writing biographies before novels – of Burne Jones in 1975 and then her own family, the Knox Brothers (1977). Her first novel, *The Bookshop* (1978), was set in 1959, written about the time that she was living with her family in Southwold, and then came *Offshore* (1979). Her next two novels were also autobiographical – drawing on her time at the BBC, *Human Voices*, (1980) and at the Italia Conti School, *At Freddie's* (1982). Her later novels were more historical and philosophical including *The Blue Flower* (1995).

What did Penelope think about her time in Battersea Reach? The first draft of *Offshore* used the names of her own children and reflected on their lives there including being mudlarks, finding William de Morgan tiles and selling them in the Kings Road. We first learn about Nenna and her family through one of the neighbouring barge owners. He reflects that she seems to have little or no contact with her husband and had little post. Nenna's children had to fend for themselves and 'the

crucial moment when children realise that their parents are younger than they are had long since been passed by Martha'. For the children, this was also the waterside of Turner and Whistler, and on seeing their pictures in the Tate, their questions about them were about practical rather than artistic matters.

The move to Almeric Road after Desmond's death enabled Penelope to have more time to write and she reduced her teaching to two days a week, although she taught until she was 70. She was also researching a biography of L P Hartley and made friends with Francis King, an authority on him as well as being an author and publisher. In June 1978, she invited Francis to visit her in Battersea, sending directions by letter beforehand: 'the 49 stops at Arding

and Hobbs, the Mecca of South London, and if you get out at the next request stop, quite soon after, in St John's Road, walk on a bit, then turn left up Battersea Rise, and Almeric Road is first on right – at the bottom is a notice board of the Tulipean Brethren, a religious sect – don't go in there – we are 25 with a laurel hedge'.

In 1980, Penelope moved to live in Hampstead with her other daughter. While *Offshore* brought her fame and some financial stability, it had a mixed reception following the prize, not least from television pundits like Robert Robinson who would have preferred a more well-known author to interview. Nevertheless, Penelope demonstrated that *Offshore* was not a one-off achievement and confounded these judgements in the end.

Penelope Fitzgerald: A Life Hermione Lee, *London, Vintage 2014*
So I have thought of you: The letters of Penelope Fitzgerald, ed. Terence Dooley, *London: Fourth Estate 2008*



A concrete example

Antonia de Lima is blown away by the Winstanley Estate murals

The concrete wall murals on Thomas Baines Road, Winstanley Road and Fowler Close have been admired by residents and visitors to the Winstanley estate over the past five decades, but few know the background to these rare works of art.

The development of this part of the Winstanley Estate was cited in the 1960s as an example of progressive council development – using industrialised building methods and achieving a speed record for building in London. The commissioning of work of a decorative nature on an estate and the creation of these particular murals resulted from similar visionary approaches, as revealed by the sculptor, William Mitchell.

Vision

In an interview with the regeneration team, Mr Mitchell explained his philosophy – to create artwork on the estate from the material used to construct the buildings. His vision for the murals consisted of two parts: to expose the constituent parts of the concrete walls – sand, cement, and stones; and to achieve a natural colour. He did this using innovative techniques, such as aiming a compressed air tube to ‘blow away’ parts of the concrete. The abstract designs of the murals arose from Mr Mitchell’s desire to reveal to residents what they would find if they peeled back the layers of the walls where they lived. He found that he could better showcase the materials of the buildings through shapes, rather than through images of objects or people.

Mr Mitchell overcame several challenges when constructing the Winstanley murals. He needed to foster a good relationship with the contractor who had been appointed to build the estate. In this way, he could ensure that the concrete was of good quality, and that he could continue to use the contractor’s yard as his studio, despite the large number of visitors who came from around the world to witness this unique project.

Clarke Lawrence Court was the first block to be built on this part of



Striking sculptures on walls and entrances on the Winstanley estate, showcasing the materials used to build the estate in the 1960s

the Winstanley development in the 1960s. It still, to this day, houses one of Mr Mitchell’s unique internal sculptures in its entrance hall. Another two internal murals can be found in the foyers to Shaw Court and Sendall Court, and his external

wall sculptures can be admired whilst walking the streets on the west side of the Winstanley Estate.

Antonia De Lima is the Winstanley and York Road Regeneration Project Assistant

War Comes Home

Did you live in Battersea during the war? Or do you know or remember someone who lived through those times?

If so you may be interested in a new project that aims to celebrate and recall the approximately 500 local civilians who lost their lives during the bombing in 1940 – 45.

The project will aim to identify the individuals who died, through research and through recorded interviews with living people. We

hope to produce a leaflet, at least one talk and perhaps a theatrical performance in 2018. Local schools will be invited to be involved. We will start on 18 June this year with a tea party in Christchurch Gardens on Battersea Park Road, home to a memorial to those killed in the raids.

The tea party is sponsored by the Battersea Society.

If you would like to know more or to get involved, email warcomeshome@mailwise.co.uk

Dance for all: from tiny tots to silver swans

Battersea has been home to The Royal Academy of Dance for 45 years. Aiden Truss describes its role



left: The future RAD on York Road;
above: Silver Swans at the barre

The forerunner of the Royal Academy of Dance was founded in 1920 with the ambition of raising standards for the art form in the UK. It received its Royal Charter from King George V in 1936. Its association with Battersea goes back to 1972 when it moved here from Knightsbridge. The current site is a former warehouse on Vicarage Crescent, previously known as Hall's Granary and built in the late 19th century. The RAD's then President, Dame Margot Fonteyn, welcomed Her Majesty the Queen (the RAD's patron) to officially open the revamped building with its eight purpose-built studios in 1974, and the RAD has been here ever since.

All ages

As well as offering its own internationally recognised examinations, the RAD now encompasses a Faculty of Education offering teacher training from certificate through to Master's level. We also house the Philip Richardson Library, one of the largest specialist dance collections in the UK. Our dance school teaches hundreds of students each week from age 2½ to over-60s in everything from ballet to musical theatre and fitness. On top of that we administer a global membership of over 14,000. The RAD is also something of a tourist attraction, with regular guided tours taking place for dance enthusiasts from all over the world.

The RAD has, however, been outgrowing its facilities for some time. There is only a limited amount that can be done within the confines of the old building and no space to

expand. We have had to look for a new home. Despite looking at several sites across London, it was important to everyone concerned to attempt to stay in the Borough of Wandsworth, and if possible within Battersea, the RAD's long-time home.

This ambition was made reality after a deal was struck with developers to swap the Battersea Square building for space within a new development on York Road, just a mile away. With residential space above, the new RAD headquarters will occupy the ground and part of the first floor of a building with brand new studios, offices, a café and a dedicated performance space. All of this will look out onto the local area through a mainly glass frontage.

That locality is essential to the RAD's aim of being an advocate for the benefits of dance to the wider community. Part of the arrangement with Wandsworth Council is that local community dance groups should be given the chance to use the new facilities. The RAD fully embraces this opportunity to play its part in getting more local people involved in dance.

Among our current projects are Step into Dance, the UK's largest fully inclusive secondary school dance programme. Since 2007 it has given over 22,000 young people the opportunity to dance, with regular classes and the chance to perform at big events. 25% of the schools participating cater for children with Special Educational Needs, a fact of which we are very proud.

In 2016, the RAD attracted funding for another SEN initiative, RADiate, which provides subsidised dance

classes to children on the autistic spectrum, including those with moderate to severe and complex learning difficulties. These are delivered by a small team of highly experienced teachers on a weekly basis at primary schools in south-west London.

The RAD's other big recent success has been 'Silver Swans' classes, specially designed for older learners. Free of charge, these help to improve mobility, posture and co-ordination and have grown hugely in popularity. Currently running only in Wandsworth, the RAD is now looking to expand the classes nationwide.

Our new building will offer greater possibilities to expand on these existing community projects as well as opening up spaces for new ideas in the future.

Celebrities

The move is scheduled to take place in 2020, in time for the RAD's centenary celebrations. In many ways it will be sad to leave a building that has been the backdrop to so many great occasions: graduations, royal visits, celebrities rehearsing for *Strictly Come Dancing*, not to mention the myriad smaller, though no less important personal victories of young dancers passing their Solo Seal, or Silver Swans returning to ballet for the first time in decades to find that they still have perfect turnout. The old building means so much to so many, and it will be a wrench to leave. But this is tempered with a great optimism for the next chapter in the story of the RAD and our community in Battersea.