

# Battersea Matters

the newsletter of the Battersea Society SUMMER 2013



## Battersea and Stepney: a life in art

Suzanne Perkins talks to artist and Battersea resident, Albert Irvin

**A**lbert Irvin OBE, RA is considered one of Britain's finest artists. Bert and his wife, Betty have been my friends and neighbours since I moved to south London in the 70s.

Albert Irvin was made a Royal Academician in 1998. He is a prolific painter and printmaker. His output is massive, both in the breathtaking size and energy of the larger



paintings, and the continuous flow of smaller paintings, screenprints and monoprints. Represented for many years by Gimpel Fils, he is exhibited in major

galleries all over the world, and is the subject of *Albert Irvin, Life to Painting* by Paul Moorhouse and *Albert Irvin, The Complete Prints* by Mary Rose Beaumont. He has also taught at Goldsmiths, and many other colleges all over Britain.

We met last month in his recently renovated home studio.

*How long have you lived in Battersea?*

A kind patron in Chelsea lent us money and Betty and I moved to this house in 1957 and have lived here ever since.

*What did you like about the area when you moved here?*

It was quiet and cheap! (*ironic smile*). There was the Common, Northcote Road street market, and it all made for a very acceptable area to settle into. Our two daughters, Priscilla and Celia were brought up here.

*Where is your studio?*

I used the upstairs front room here as a studio from 1957 – 1968. This floor used to be crusted with paint. I soon needed a much bigger studio



space, and a group of us artists, including Bridget Riley and Peter Sedgely got together and used buildings waiting for development or demolition as short-life studios. Legalised squatting, really!

### Chucked out

At first we were in St Katharine Dock, but got chucked out when Taylor Woodrow built a hideous hotel. The GLC approved our use of the empty Jewish School in Stepney. It too was threatened with demolition, but then it was Grade 2 listed, and six of us managed to buy it. I've got two huge classrooms with 15ft ceilings.

It's a long journey to work. Until recently, I always used public transport, (walking to Clapham South, then taking the tube). It's a guilt-free time to read.

My work is abstract (whatever that means). It's urban. The journey

*above Ely, 1995, in the Stepney studio.*  
Photo: Lloyd Blair

through the making of the painting is a metaphor for my journey through the world. The street names of many of my works are attached afterwards.

*Have you been an artist all your life?*

In the war my school was evacuated. I got a scholarship to art school, and went to the local one, Northampton, which is where I met an art student from Clapham, Betty, who became my wife. At 18, I was hooked out of art school, kicking and screaming, into the RAF. (You could fight and die, but you couldn't vote!)

After the war I finished my scholarship at Goldsmiths, and tried to scrape together a language to paint in, and a living.

Times were extremely hard and I had several jobs including digging

*continued on p3*



**Don't forget to visit our website: [batterseasociety.org.uk](http://batterseasociety.org.uk) for regular updates on Battersea Society news, events and planning matters**

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## From the editor



I'm sure everyone in Battersea has an opinion on the power station and the developments going on

around it. Many views were aired at the Battersea Society's meeting on 8 May (page 5). The area will be transformed both architecturally and socially. It's hardly beautiful at present, apart from Gilbert Scott's magnificent building itself but, as Simon Jenkins, chair of the National Trust, pointed out, the riverside 'will be a wall of glass from Bermondsey to Battersea' – a prospect he says would never happen in Rome or Paris.

Perhaps more worrying than the aesthetics is the anticipated social mix, or rather the lack of it. There will be hardly any social housing and despite the protestations of the

developers, most of the buyers are likely to be from overseas. Nothing wrong with that, so long as they live or at least spend much of the year here.

The mega-rich often don't even see the properties they purchase, they delegate viewing and buying to minions, according to Peter York in his entertaining mini-book, *The Blue Riband* (warmly recommended). The most expensive of these apartments may never be homes, they'll just be assets or bolt-holes. Can such an area become a community where people want to live, work and bring up their families, or visit for pleasure, culture and relaxation? Perhaps the government should bring in a tax on second homes. New York has one, and it doesn't seem to deter wealthy buyers. It could pay for a lot of affordable housing.

Speaking of taxes, on page 6 Carol Rahn clarifies the complex issue of business rates. It's the

remorseless rise in these that many retailers blame for the toothless gaps in our high streets. As Carol points out, if we want to keep our streets as sociable highways where people can stroll, window-shop and chat, we need to support our local shops with our purchases.

There are several articles about gardens in this issue, despite the weather (chilly and windy on this mid-June day). But our weather has always been unreliable – after all back in Shakespeare's time rough winds were shaking the darling buds of May.

Let's hope that by the time of the Society's summer garden party (11 July) we will be able to enjoy a balmy evening. I look forward to seeing many of you there, and at our stall at the Northcote Road Fete on 7 July.

Jenny Sheridan  
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## The Man with the Battersea Sword

Mike Roden reflects on the heritage industry

The other day the *Wandsworth Guardian* imagined Battersea Power Station without its iconic chimneys. There's yet another argument brewing about this local landmark. Once more its future seems to be (as Churchill might have said) a riddle, wrapped in a mystery, inside an enigma. Ironic that most of those so anxious to preserve Giles Gilbert Scott's building would probably have joined the (unsuccessful) 1927 protests at the plan to locate such a massive source of pollution on the banks of the Thames.

### Battersea Stink

Nostalgia's a funny thing, isn't it? We wouldn't want those chimneys pumping smoke all over us, however picturesque it looks in old photographs. Nor would we want to bring back the smell from the Gartons Glucose factory (aka the Battersea Stink), yet for some those memories become part of a yearning for simpler times, when you played in the street

until dark, or went to the park by yourself, summers lasted for ever and it always snowed at Christmas.

### Leeches

Then of course there's Heritage. On a recent family outing to Hampton Court my grandchildren were less impressed by my in-depth knowledge of the Tudors than by meeting some blood sucking leeches as part of a display of sixteenth century medical technique. We missed out on a demonstration of amputation, and their parents drew the line at having them made up to look like smallpox victims.

Everyone was having great fun though. When will they introduce the Black Death Experience, with everyone shrieking as they're hurled into plague pits? Since the London Dungeon entertains visitors by pretending to torture them, that can't be far off in coming.

I like my history lessons to be more sedate. We recently took a spur



of the moment trip to Oxford which was heaving with glum tourists wandering in the rain. But in the Ashmolean Museum all was peace, and we made an interesting discovery. Nestling almost shyly in a display of Viking artefacts was the Battersea Sword which was rescued from the Thames in the 1860s. Perhaps this is our Elgin marbles. Let's march on Oxford and demand the sword's return – to Wandsworth Museum of course, not the river...

Mind how you go.



out spent zinc ashes in a chromium plating factory and I travelled in ladies' 12-button doeskin gloves in the City. I wasn't really the foot-in-the-door type, but another fellow and I worked together, and I just took down the orders!

During our bad period, financially, I taught at Spencer Park School, Wandsworth Prison and Battersea Adult Institute. Betty worked in a drawing office.

*You are essentially a painter. When did you become involved in printmaking?*

I studied printmaking at art college, mostly linocut, and was commissioned to do a lithograph for a German dealer in the 70s.



**Bert and Betty celebrating their birthdays last year**

In the 1980s I was approached by Chris Betambeau, of Advanced Graphics, about working with them, but was not sure that screen process was right for me. Eventually I realised that I could work very freely, and that the marks could be interpreted.

This brought new challenges and opportunities. Painting is in itself essentially layering, and working in print influenced my painting, fed back into it.

*Tell me about your family.*

We've got two daughters, three grandchildren and two great-grandchildren, both of whom are infant actors in *The Archers*! Last year both Betty and Bert celebrated their 90th birthdays with family parties, receptions and an exhibition at Gimpel Fils, Albert Irvin, a Retrospective at 90.

**STOP PRESS: Bert Irvin has been awarded an OBE in the Queen's birthday honours.**

## Renewal for the Battersea Society website

Communications officer Mike Roden outlines plans for the future

I'm sure that most of you will have visited the Battersea Society website at some time during the five years since it was launched into cyberspace. We now get more than 70,000 visitors a year, and though many of these come from far beyond Battersea I know from numerous emails that local people find it useful and interesting.

### Keeping up

Much has changed in five years: the majority of members have access to a computer, and most of them have a broadband connection. Many also go online via their mobile phones or tablets. We have done our best to keep up with internet developments, and the Society now has a presence on Facebook, on Twitter, and we regularly advertise details of forthcoming events on Streetlife.

Behind the scenes the website itself is currently undergoing a complete refurbishment. The site will look a little different, but not (I hope) excessively so, and it should be easier to navigate your way through to what you're looking for.

There will be an opportunity for members to communicate with each other and with the Executive Committee via a dedicated password protected area on the site.

### Makeover

The monthly email newsletter has already had its makeover, and I'm pleased that many of you find it both readable and useful. Around two-thirds of Society members are currently signed up to the email newsletter, and I hope that we can increase that number considerably.

Sometimes there are last-minute

events, or important news items which it would be time-consuming and expensive to advertise by letter. I can assure you that if you do sign up you will not be bombarded with emails from the Society or from anyone else. We do not share members' details with other organisations.

### Updates

But just occasionally it makes sense to send out an email in addition to the monthly newsletter. The more members signed up, the wider we can spread important information.

So if you do not currently receive the Battersea Update email newsletter every month simply send an email (from your usual address) to [update@batterseasociety.org.uk](mailto:update@batterseasociety.org.uk) and include your name and the names of any other members at your address in the body of the email. You'll be added to the mailing list and will get an acknowledgement from me within twenty-four hours

I look forward to hearing from you.

## The bottom line

The Battersea Society's treasurer, Chris Savory, gives an update on our finances

The Society's income arises from our annual subscriptions and a surplus on events. It has never exceeded £5,000 per annum. Recent large increases in postage plus the cost of printing *Battersea Matters* are our

major outgoings.

We incurred a deficit of £845 in 2012 compared with a deficit of £1754 in 2011. However the figure for 2012 was after crediting £991 from deferred income for life membership subscriptions as the cash had been received some time ago. Adjusting for this figure means that the underlying deficit for £2012 was £1836. Other things being equal I expect a similar deficit for 2013.

At the end of 2012 the Society

had reserves of £7750 which is more than adequate to cover deficits at this level for over four years.

As the Society employs no staff and has no lease obligations or other financial commitments, there is no immediate urgency either to increase subscriptions or reduce expenditure.

The Executive Committee will be considering these matters during 2013, however and members will be kept informed.

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## Planning Matters: The big issues

Where is Battersea in the Nine Elms Vauxhall Partnership, asks Monica Tross

### WHAT NEXT FOR NINE ELMS?

As Jenny Sheridan says (p.5) not all the questions about the future were answered at the power station meeting on 8 May. But at least those who came learnt a bit more about the radical transformation this formerly somewhat neglected part of Battersea is undergoing. The presentations made can be seen on the Battersea Society's website. One sad thing we learnt is that the old acronym, VNEB, Vauxhall, Nine Elms Battersea, has been replaced by NEVP – not only harder to say but where is Battersea within the Nine Elms Vauxhall Partnership? The SW11tch Back to Battersea campaign may have a view on that!

There will be two open days on Nine Elms, also to be held at The View, on 2 and 3 July. Details on [www.nineelmslondon.com](http://www.nineelmslondon.com).

### RAM BREWERY SITE

This site in the centre of Wandsworth is the former Young's brewery. The revised application, 2012/5286 would, if agreed, be both hugely visible from many parts of Battersea and have considerable implications for transport used by Battersea residents. We think that Wandsworth Council see this application solely within the narrow focus of Wandsworth Town Centre rather than for its wider impact. Our full letter, raising transport and other issues of concern, can be seen on the Wandsworth Planning Website for this application. When I last looked, English Heritage's objections to the scheme headed the (long) list of objections, not least from the Wandsworth Society who are working tirelessly to oppose this application.

### CLAPHAM JUNCTION TOWN CENTRE

Delancey, the owners of the Clapham Junction station Stop Shop site, have commissioned an architectural practice, AHMM, to look at potential development options both in terms of minimal improvement and wider redevelopment of the site. This work has been completed, and Delancey

Developers' vision of the Ram Brewery site, and the River Wandle



have decided to take no further action for the time being. They are committed to involving the Battersea Society should their plans change. We will keep you informed.

Other work is going ahead, led by Wandsworth Council. A meeting of the Clapham Junction, Battersea, Town Centre Partnership Board has been convened as part of work to develop a long term vision for the town centre. We are participating and we hope to have fuller details for the autumn issue of *Battersea Matters*.

Many of you will be aware of continued work in St John's Road and the changes to the bus routes in the area. This appears to be phased over some months but we hope that traffic flow will return to normal quite soon. One welcome change is the proposal that a 20 mph limit be imposed on all vehicles in St. John's Road.

### PLANNING UPDATES

The application by the Falcon Road Mosque to increase the size of their planned extension (2012/3747) has been refused. Our main concern was that the further extension was architecturally unsound and would detract from the streetscape and we objected on these grounds.

The owners of Trade Tower, at Plantation Wharf, have now applied for there to be no affordable housing within their development (2012/5386). They were originally granted planning permission for a

development with just 12 affordable homes. We had objected to the development because of the adverse impact on the streetscape and have objected to this attempt to deprive the borough of even this modest amount of affordable housing.

Most applications for cycle docking stations have been approved but after considerable local effort councillors have been turned down a site west of 2 Lavender Gardens (2012/5954) despite officer recommendation for approval.

### MEDIA SNIPPETS

I heard with rueful sadness a comment from a planner in a recent documentary (The Planners, BBC2). 'We used to say "Is it good enough to approve?" Now we say "Is it bad enough to refuse?"'

Advice in the *Evening Standard* to property owners is to apply for planning permission for loft or other extensions in advance of selling because it adds far more to the selling price than the cost of the plans. The *Standard* article related this to the experience of (presumably former) Battersea residents. But perhaps they did stay in Battersea and called in builders such as those whom I saw proudly stating on a hoarding around a building that 'We are currently helping this client realise their property dreams'.  
*Any comments or queries to [planning@batterseasociety.org.uk](mailto:planning@batterseasociety.org.uk)*

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## More questions than answers?

Jenny Sheridan reports on an important meeting about the power station re-development

Picture Hyde Park, then add in half of Kensington Gardens. That is the size of the huge re-development site now known as Nine Elms on the South Bank. Reaching from Chelsea Bridge to Lambeth Bridge, it will include not only Battersea Power Station and Covent Garden Market but the American Embassy. The part of it in and around the power station was the topic of a public meeting organised by the Battersea Society on Wednesday 8 May. Over 100 local people attended to hear from some of the main development partners and to pose questions.

The meeting was held in the View, a temporary building on the power station site, so the audience was treated to dramatic views of the famous chimneys outlined against a stormy sunset sky. Inside the venue, a large architectural model illustrated the size and visual impact of the development.

### Better links

Helen Fisher, from the Nine Elms Strategy Board, described the existing areas as being dominated by transport (the Vauxhall bus interchange) but with poor external and internal links. The new development will have better links via the Northern Line Extension (NLE) (though not, of course, extending to Clapham Junction). It will generate 'up to' 25,000 new jobs, many of which could go to local people. Ms Fisher said apprenticeship schemes for the construction industry have already been set up.

The 16,000 new flats (10,000 of them in Battersea) will house 30,000 or 40,000 new residents (currently there are 10,000 households in and directly around the area). All of the housing will be in slab or tower blocks, plus a few in the power station itself. There will eventually be at least one primary school, said Ms Fisher, and space has been earmarked for health centres. The first residents in Riverlight, the Thames-side blocks designed by Rogers Stirk Harbour, designers of One Hyde Park, will move in next year.

David Twohig, representing the Battersea Power Station Development Company, acknowledged that most people present had lived through far too many failed promises of development. This one, he said, was different. Unlike previous developers, the new site owners, a Malaysian consortium, had bought the site with existing planning permission. They see the power station as both the town centre of the development and its flagship. Half the development will be commercial and half residential. The power station itself will house a conference centre and possibly cinemas, restaurants and creative studios. Above these will be offices and housing. Mr Twohig said the company was committed to building 'a real place – not one of those riverside developments with a Tesco Express and a little-used modern pub'.

Most of the apartments in the first phase had been sold within the first month, such was the local and global interest.

### Food market

Covent Garden Market is the greatest source of employment, with 200 companies employing 2,500 people. Helen Evans, from the Covent Garden Market Authority, said that the infrastructure was outdated and they needed to re-develop. They are therefore selling part of their site and will rebuild on the rest. Their plans include developing a retail food market.

Robin Buckle, head of urban design for Transport for London, arrived on a bike. Clearly interested in cycling, he described his vision of Nine Elms Lane as 'green and boulevardry, like Southwark Street'. There will be trees, wide pavements, bus and cycle lanes and a central planted island between the carriageways.

The Battersea Society's David



**Different this time? Campaigners and concerned citizens listen to presentations of the new plans.**

Lewis, chairing the meeting, opened it to questions. The speakers had not seen these in advance, with the organisers aiming for an 'Any Questions' format for the evening.

Few solid facts emerged from the answers, perhaps because the development covers many different developers and sites, and plans are at an early stage. But some issues emerged that the Battersea Society and individual members may wish to follow up. Air pollution and the needs of pedestrians, both pertinent issues, received extremely vague answers.

### Worries

Other potential worries were the apparent lack of community facilities and the very small proportion of affordable housing. Mr Twohig said that there were 517 affordable units in the power station development (out of 3,400). According to the *Daily Mail*, prices range from £338,000 for a studio flat to £6million for a penthouse.

What is being done to ensure the properties will actually be lived in? The response was that the problem of absentee owners is largely confined to Belgravia and Mayfair, and in the case of the power station the sales were launched in London, before the far east. Even if bought by overseas purchasers they would be rented out to present or potential Londoners.

*continued overleaf*

Was there a lack of architectural cohesion? Ms Fisher said that a variety of well-designed buildings by well-known architects could produce more interesting townscapes.

A questioner was concerned about the possible use of biofuels as an energy source. Energy provision will be put out to tender.

Some in the audience appeared to find these responses unconvincing.

In contrast, definite responses clarified several issues. Yes, both the new tube stations, at Nine Elms/Wandsworth Road and at the power station, will open at the same time. No, council tax will not increase to fund the NLE. Yes, the river will be used to transport waste and construction materials. The linear park will grow incrementally over 10 years, starting in 2015. Yes, the

power station's chimneys will be replaced not repaired. Yes, much of the iconic view of the power station from the railway line out of Victoria will be lost but as much as possible has been preserved.

### Model

Another issue for the Society's planning committee (and Wandsworth's planners) to keep their eyes on will be the height of the buildings between the power station and Battersea Bridge Road. The developers' architectural model clearly shows them as being taller than the base of the chimneys, while my understanding is that planning permission was granted for below this height.

This is the third public meeting that the Battersea Society has held on

this area. In 2010 we heard from the architects for the US Embassy and in 2011 there was a meeting with Wandsworth Borough Council. It is clearly an important issue for the Society and for Battersea as a whole, as it will change the area fundamentally. The speakers at this event saw it as a new extension of central London, making little reference to its heritage or particular character.

At the end of this invaluable meeting we were left with some new and updated information, some questions answered and much to think about.

[www.nineelmslondon.com](http://www.nineelmslondon.com)  
[www.batterseapowerstation.co.uk](http://www.batterseapowerstation.co.uk)  
[www.batterseapowerstation.org.uk](http://www.batterseapowerstation.org.uk)

## Business rates: why should we care?

Carol Rahn sheds light on a taxation issue that affects us all – particularly if we love small shops

If we are not businesspeople or shop managers, should we care about the business rates? Yes we should. In this article I hope to show how these taxes have a major effect on our high streets. I will take Northcote Road as an example, but it is relevant to many other high streets.

In the liveliest and most successful local shopping areas – places like Northcote Road – business rates have shot up recently. They will rise further as new rates based on a boom-time re-valuation continue to be phased in. The small shops along Northcote Road are now paying £10,000, £20,000, even £30,000 or more each year in business rates, making this a major expenditure. And on top of this, of course, they face high and ever-escalating rents.

What are business rates? They are the local taxes paid by retailers but they are not set locally, like the council tax.<sup>1</sup>

### Services

They provide part of the money that is spent on local services, but they don't go directly to the local council, nor do they pay for things such as refuse collection, for example. Local businesses have to arrange and pay for that separately.

### Increases in Zone A rateable value per metre<sup>2</sup>, 2005 – 2010

Source: Valuation Office Agency website

NORTHCOTE ROAD	KING'S ROAD	ST JOHN'S ROAD
Harry's 85%	L.K. Bennett 28%	Waterstones 67%
JoJo Maman Bébé 82%	Muji 25%	Jamie's Recipease 30%
Tony's Café 82%	Starbucks 10%	M&S 12%
Bolingbroke Books 75%		Blacks 19%
Starbucks 67%		Giftland 25%
All Good Gifts 73%		
Brew 67%		

Business rates are set by a complicated formula. Every five years, the Valuation Office Agency (VOA, part of HMRC) determines the rateable value of each shop. This is based on the fair market rental value of the shop at the time of the valuation (and may be very different to the actual rent that the retailer is paying).

The most recent valuation was made in April 2008, largely before the impact of the financial crisis, and came into effect in 2010, as the UK continued to struggle with recession.

Each year, central government sets the business rate multiplier, also known as the Universal Business Rate (UBR) that is applied to the rateable value. For 2012/13, the multiplier is 45.8. This means that

if the rateable value of a shop is £40,000 (about average on Northcote Road), business rates for that shop for 2012/13 are £40,000 x .458 or £18,320<sup>2</sup>. In other words, business rates are nearly half of 'market' rental rates and so represent a significant expenditure for a retailer.

What's interesting is that businesses everywhere are not feeling the same pain. As the table above shows, rateable values per square metre have skyrocketed on Northcote Road. Rates on King's Road have been high for a long time but have not seen large recent increases. Even St. John's Road, the continuation of Northcote Road towards Clapham Junction, doesn't carry the same cachet and so most shops there have



Small businesses in Battersea are struggling due to the rise in business rates

not been hit by massive increases in rates. On Battersea High Street, rates have not gone up at all. The table uses what are known as 'Zone A' rates: Zone A is the prime retail space in each shop: the area close to the window. Using Zone A eliminates vagaries due to different sizes or configurations.

Retailers can and do appeal the valuation. As a group, a number of shopkeepers on Northcote Road appealed and the figures in the table above incorporate the 8% – 10% reduction they secured, a reduction that was undoubtedly welcome but small compared to the original increase.

Each time rateable values are assessed, there is a transition period so that changes in business rates, whether increases or decreases, are phased in. Even so, rates can go up by 20% – 25% each year.

There is also 'small business relief' but this has nothing to do with the size of the business. Limited to businesses with a rateable value below £25,000, there are no shops on Northcote Road, for example, that would qualify.

### Short term

Local councils are able to grant 'hardship relief' which might help a retailer get through a difficult few weeks or possibly months, but it is

only short term and does not change the business rates.

Councils can and typically do grant rate relief of up to 80% to shops used for charitable purposes by charitable organisations. On paper, the Localism Act gives local councils more general powers to grant rate relief. However the financial pressure on councils, and the cap on council tax rises, makes this discretion over business rates more theoretical than real.

### Complex

Until this year local councils have not been able to make use of the money raised by the business rates. It has all gone to central government. Councils only calculate the rates and bill their local retailers. Money then comes back to local councils based on a dismayingly complex formula. From April 2013, local councils will keep part of the business rates collected (under a different but no less impenetrable formula) and in future will be able to keep about half of any growth in business rates collected.

It's a different story for large shops. While overall rateable value per square metre on Northcote Road ranges from £300 – £700, Marks and Spencer on St John's Road has a rateable value of only £94 per square metre. Even after an 83% jump from

the 2005 valuation, rateable value for Waitrose on St John's Road is still only £185 per square metre. The different treatment applied to large shops also suggests that the explosion of out-of-town shopping, so devastating to neighbourhoods, has not happened only because we like car parks and extended opening hours. Whatever the differences in overheads, space for staff lunchrooms or stock storage, these large shops have a fundamentally easier task to generate the gross margin needed to cover their rates.

### Skyrocketed

Business rates thus represent a significant outlay for smaller retailers and in places like Northcote Road they have skyrocketed just at the time that customers are watching their pennies more carefully than ever before.

What's to be done?

The levers for business rates are under the control of Westminster, so it is to Westminster that demands for a more sensible system need to be addressed. Why not base business rates on turnover? This would help much-loved but less lucrative shops survive and encourage diversity on our shopping streets. Even more fundamentally, why not put the rates and the revenue raised back under the control of local councils, as is the case for residential council tax?

In the absence of national reform, local businesspeople know there is only one way to counter these rising costs and that is with rising turnover. To that end, the Northcote Business Network are organising a Summer Fête on 7 July. Matt Shearing, co-chair of the Northcote Business Network, sees events like this, as well as the local street market, as vital to restoring the buzz, especially after such a dreadful spring. Here the council can play a supportive role, and as always there are pleas for a more forgiving approach to parking.

But more than ever, local shops need us to shop locally.

1 Business rates are charged on most non-residential properties (eg pubs, offices, warehouses). This article only discusses retail shops.

2 In addition, Greater London adds a 0.02% levy on all properties with rateable value above £55,000 to help pay for Crossrail.

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# Great Bus Journeys of the World No 7

Mike Roden takes a trip from south to north on the 295



My starting point today is the bus stop on Falcon Road just before the railway bridge. This shabby gateway to Clapham Junction still needs a lot of work to make it look welcoming. Anyway, off we go, turning up St Johns Hill. On one side there's the mock Tudor frontage of the Windsor Castle pub which dates from 1890 and on the other is the Grand which opened as a music hall in 1900, and has since served as a cinema, bingo hall, and nightclub. It has now been fully refurbished and (in PR speak) 'is again poised to retake its place as a jewel in the crown of music venues'.

## Chad Varah

The bus turns down Plough Road, dominated by the Winstanley Estate. The row of run down houses next to St Peter's Church has recently been demolished and the vicarage with its splendid display of wisteria is no longer hidden. Chad Varah, founder of the Samaritans was vicar of St Peter's during the 1950s.

After heading left down York Road the bus is soon circling the Wandsworth Gyration roundabout and crossing the river via Wandsworth Bridge it heads into Hammersmith and Fulham. In 879 Danish invaders, sailing up the Thames, wintered near here. During the 18th century this part of Fulham had a reputation for debauchery, and its gambling haunts and brothels were a magnet for the dissolute wealthy of London. The Wandsworth Bridge Tavern was built long after that in 1881, and is now confusingly called the Hurlingham – the upmarket club of the same name is more than half a mile away – and I'm pretty sure they

don't play polo in the pub garden.

The trees along Wandsworth Bridge Road have been comprehensively pruned and look very skeletal against a grey and forbidding sky. Here on the edge of Chelsea many of the shops are a little more upmarket, with a fair number of furniture, kitchen, bathroom and fabric stores. As the bus approaches the New Kings Road the road becomes more residential. Ahead is the edge of Eel Brook Common named after the brook which ran through it. A quick right and left, and we're on our way up Harwood Road to Fulham Broadway.

Slowing to a halt at this busy crossroads, we stop near Fulham Old Town Hall, opened in 1890 and now a shadow of its former self. This Grade II listed building has been on the market for a very long time.

## Emporium?

A year ago the building was set to be transformed into a 'quintessentially British' lifestyle emporium when the council agreed to sell to an American company best known for making McLaren baby buggies. At the moment it still looks like a quintessentially British abandoned building needing an awful lot of TLC.

On we trundle along Dawes Road, another mainly residential street. Just after the Mitre pub the bus stops at Shorrolds Road. It was on Monday 28 July 1986 that estate agent Suzy Lamplugh went missing after meeting a client named in her diary as 'Mr Kipper' at a property on this road. Her body has never been found nor her killer convicted.

We pass Charing Cross

## Sights to see:

**The Grand, Clapham Junction;  
Fulham Old Town Hall;  
Albert Chevalier, music hall star**

Hospital which moved from near Charing Cross in 1973 when a new building was opened on the site of the former Fulham Hospital.

## Holst

The bus heads under the Hammersmith Flyover, and into the bus station. After a very short wait, we're out again into the traffic passing the Hammersmith Apollo, opened in 1932 as the Gaumont Palace cinema, and undergoing many changes of name and use since. On Shepherds Bush Road we pass the imposing frontage of the Grade II listed Hammersmith library, built in 1905 and now about to receive a £2million revamp to enable the borough's scattered archives to be stored in one place.

We're in a slightly more affluent neighbourhood now as we come into Brook Green. Gustav Holst taught at the nearby St Paul's Girls School and wrote the well-known 'Brook Green Suite' for strings for its junior orchestra.

A map of 1841 shows that this area was largely undeveloped, with much open farmland. The name Shepherds Bush may have originated from the use of common land here as a resting point for shepherds on their way to Smithfield Market. As in so much of London residential development began inexorably in the late nineteenth century, as London's population expanded.

Now this is the home of the O2 Shepherds Bush Empire and the



award-winning Bush Theatre. The area has changed enormously in the last few years of course, with the building of the Westfield shopping centre, and for years was in traffic chaos. Everything is much more organised now, and the bus turns swiftly away from Westfield, past the very posh residences on Royal Crescent and onto St Anns Road.

### Blue plaque

On the wall of 17 St Anns Villas there's the first blue plaque I've spotted on the journey. It commemorates music hall star Albert Chevalier (1861-1923) whose most famous song was 'My Old Dutch', about a couple who've been married for forty years, and (as performed by him on stage) are about to be separated for ever as they're sent into segregated dormitories in

the workhouse. Not a dry eye in the house! 'Dutch' of course is rhyming slang for Duchess of Fife – wife.

We're nearly at our destination now, past Latimer Road station, under Westway, and along almost entirely residential streets until we reach Ladbroke Grove named after James Weller Ladbroke, who developed this then rural area in the mid nineteenth century. It's just over an hour since I left Clapham Junction and the bus reaches its final stop, the Ladbroke Grove Sainsbury's superstore, situated on a prime site between the canal and the railway.

It was here that the Ladbroke Grove rail crash between a commuter train and an express occurred on 5 October 1999, killing 31 people and injuring more than 520. The inexperienced commuter train driver

had accelerated through a red signal which, an inquiry later ruled, was hard to see and had been 'passed at danger' seven times before. Major changes in the formal responsibilities for management and regulation of safety of UK rail transport ensued. A memorial garden, partially overlooking the site, is accessible from the adjacent Sainsburys car park.

### Overground

It is now ridiculously cold for the middle of May, and it is raining, and after a brief call to inspect the plumbing facilities inside the store, I consult the various buses on offer to me, and step onto the next 295 bus to go back to Shepherds Bush and catch the Overground swiftly back to Clapham Junction.

## Give a helping hand to the birds and the bees

You can be a wildlife saviour on your balcony, says Jenny Sheridan

I don't want to depress you, but the country's wildlife is in decline. The recent report *State of Nature* paints a sad picture of species dying off, ranging from skylarks to hedgehogs. In London, the loss of birds and the invertebrates on which they feed is caused by the reduction in wild spaces, due to the building boom and to house-owners concreting or decking over their gardens.

But all is not lost. All of us can do something to keep our capital green and biodiverse. In this article I will focus on how you can make a difference if you have a tiny garden or just a balcony.

### Buzzing

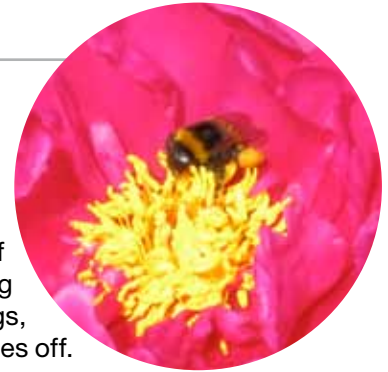
The first thing to do is use your eyes constructively. The Thrive garden and the Old English Garden in Battersea Park are good places to spot bees and other insects, as well as being blissfully relaxing places to sit or wander. Stop and look at the shrubs and flowers; which ones are buzzing with bees? Are there butterflies fluttering nearby? Make a note of their names (the flowers, not the butterflies) or ask one of the Thrive volunteer gardeners. Then beetle off to Homebase to pick up a packet of seeds or a plant.

If you have space for one or two shrubs then try to mimic a natural hedge. Birds love to hop among the twigs of hazel, cotoneaster or berberis, all of them attractive shrubs. Hang a bird feeder among them, so that birds feel safe from predators as they approach their food. Sparrows, which are in decline generally, seem to flourish in some parts of Battersea. Blue tits, great tits and dunnocks and, if you're lucky, greenfinches will also come to a feeder.

Buddleia is well known for attracting butterflies. While the common kind is too large for a balcony – unless it's growing out of the brickwork – you can now buy patio plants. A smaller butterfly plant is the sedum, which flowers late in the summer or even autumn, when there are few nectar-bearing flowers around. 'Autumn Joy' and 'Xenox' are two attractive varieties. If you have a shady wall, covering it with ivy gives shelter to insects, nectar for butterflies and winter shelter and food for birds.

Ponds are great for birds to drink and bathe in. Not so easy on a balcony, you might think. But an old casserole can make a birdbath, and it's fun to see a young blackbird step in and shake itself vigorously,

droplets of water flying off its wings, before it flies off.



### Nourishment

It is quite hard to have a succession of flowers throughout the year in a small space, without spending a great deal. However, try to have something in flower both early and late. Pulmonarias (lungwort) are trouble-free, flower February to March and provide nourishment to early-flying bumblebees. Herbs are as useful to insects as they are in the kitchen, especially rosemary, thyme and hyssop. Lavender also attracts insects and needs little looking after, though you need to cut it back carefully after flowering. Watching a bumblebee disappearing into a foxglove is a rural joy perfectly accessible to Londoners.

One plus point of balcony gardening is the lack of one species of wildlife: slugs and snails are less likely to make it to higher levels. *Wandsworth Council has an Eco fund [www.wandsworth.gov.uk/ecofund](http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/ecofund). Grants are available to groups or individuals who have a project to improve the local environment. Deadline 31 July 2013.*

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## The gym or the park? No contest!

Hannah Pemberton describes her role in developing our open spaces for pleasure and fitness

Wandsworth Council's Parks Service manages 31 parks and open spaces across the borough, 15 of them in Battersea. In my role as parks fund-raising and development officer, I work with several community groups to help them make best use of their local open spaces. This includes helping the groups become more formalised, identifying funding and supporting them through the process. With a background in the voluntary/community sector I am keen on working from grassroots up – literally!

Of course, one of the uses of open spaces is exercise, whether it's a brisk walk or something a little more strenuous.

### Free fitness

Shillington Gardens (part of Banana Park), Heathbrook Park (near Wandsworth Road station) and York Gardens (off York Road) all have free outdoor gyms. The equipment is equivalent to general gym equipment such as a rowing machine, treadmill, bench press, cross trainer and much more. These were funded by the Marathon Trust and the Western Riverside Environmental Trust in partnership with the Battersea Crime Prevention Panel. Open all year come



A gruelling outdoor keep-fit session on Wandsworth Common

rain or shine, these provide a free way to get fit as well as offering a fantastic view.

Another way of getting fit for free locally is the wooden outdoor 'trim trails' in Battersea Park and Wandsworth Common. These consist of pull-up bars, abs bench, balancing bars and more. We are currently looking at upgrading these, aiming to keep the rustic wooden feel, quite different in tone from the outdoor gyms.

There are three 'Friends of' groups in the Battersea area. These are the Friends of Battersea Park, the Friends of Fred Wells Gardens and the Friends of Heathbrook Park. The groups vary in what they want to achieve, but they all share a love for their local open space. Part of my role is to send out emails about relevant funding bids and to offer to look through and advise on applications.

A good example is the Friends of Fred Wells Gardens who, by working in partnership with us and Katherine Low Settlement, were successful in receiving a grant to create a community flower bed.

### Relief

As part of the Mayor's London's Great Outdoors we will be looking to apply for the pocket park programme this year. Pocket parks are small (up to 0.4 hectares or half a football pitch) areas of public space, providing relief from the hustle and bustle of the city. The project is in early stages at the moment, so watch this space.

We are currently working very closely with the Friends of Heathbrook Park to try and create a space that the local community find inviting. There have been many improvements to the park already but the group are looking for new members, so if you live near by and would like to get involved, please get in touch.

If you are interested in forming your own Friends group, have any questions about outdoor gyms/trim trails, or would like to devise a project for your local space, please don't hesitate to contact me.

[hpemberton@wandsworth.gov.uk](mailto:hpemberton@wandsworth.gov.uk)

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## Big Local comes to Latchmere

Jenny Sheridan gives an update

What would you do with £1million over ten years? Not for you personally, but to improve your neighbourhood. That's the challenge for people who live and/or work in part of Latchmere ward, between the railway line in the south and Battersea Park Road in the north, with Wandsworth roundabout at the west end and Culvert Road in the north.

The funding will come from The Big Lottery, as outlined in Cllr Tony Belton's article in *Battersea Matters* Summer 2012.

Since last summer, two groups have been set up to drive forward the organisation. A core planning

group of about 15 local residents and workers, chaired by Robert Musgrave of Providence House youth club, is the driving force. A 40-strong stakeholders consultation group representing the wider local community (including the Battersea Society) offers ideas and opinions.

The idea behind the Big Local is that the community is intimately involved and takes genuine ownership of the projects to be set up with the funding. The first task of the planning groups was to reach as many people of all ages as possible. Since the start of the year they have organised four events in different part of the

target area to enable local people to get together, have fun and explore ways of developing their ideas. Other events have been focused on specific groups, including schoolchildren and elderly or disabled people in sheltered housing. The aim is to come up with plans over the summer for submission to the Big Local Fund in the autumn.

Already some 'quick win' projects have been awarded funding by the group. These include an anti-dog mess campaign, a keep-fit group for women in Banana Park, mobile skateboarding ramps for a sports club and intergenerational coffee mornings.

We will follow this exciting project as it develops.

[www.biglocalsw11.co.uk](http://www.biglocalsw11.co.uk)



Chosen so far:  
Vivienne Westwood,  
Pluto, the BAC cat  
Emmeline Pankhurst

## Where the suffragette meets the BAC moggy

Both are members of the Great Hundred. Jenny Sheridan explains

We'll start with a riddle. When is 100 not one hundred? When it's a Great Hundred. Before the 18th century a 'great hundred' meant 120, and 100 was referred to as a 'small hundred'.

Battersea Arts Centre is based in Battersea Old Town Hall, which is 120 years old. BAC is celebrating its birthday by honouring 120 people (and one cat) who have played a part in the building's proud history. BAC staff have started to research names of the great, the good, the radical and the furry by hunting through the archives both of the former town hall and of the arts centre over the last 33 years. The names will be displayed in an artwork in the Arts Centre foyer.

### Part of the family

The chosen few so far include well-known names from the past, such as Emmeline Pankhurst, who addressed suffragette meetings here, as well as the less famous such as CWMS Freeman, a 19th century town clerk. Modern names include fashion designer and BAC honorary patron Vivienne Westwood and Pluto the cat, who starred in *The Masque of the Red Death* and has become part of the BAC family.

And now it's over to us locals. Battersea Arts Centre is inviting

nominations from the local community. Who do you think should be in The Great Hundred? They can be living or dead, male or female, so long as they have some connection with the building.

As well as celebrating its past, BAC is fund-raising for its future. It is in the process of repairing, restoring and re-imagining its building. While most of the funding comes from the Arts Council and the Big Lottery Fund, it is also inviting 120 people to join The Great Hundred Club. For £84 per month for three years, members will:

- Be invited to talks and debates with leading cultural figures
- Form part of a new art work in the BAC foyer, linking their name with their nominated figure from The Great Hundred.
- Be invited to an opening night extravaganza when the re-building is complete.

It will be possible to join as a syndicate of up to four people.

*To learn more about membership of the Great Hundred Club, or to suggest a name, contact Fezzan Ahmed, development manager 020 7326 8234 ext 234 fezzana@bac.org.uk*

## Sunshine for the Northcote Festival?

The Northcote Road Festival is back! The 2013 event will be held on Sunday 7 July, from 11 am to 5pm. The road will be closed to traffic and parking all day.

There will be a children's parade, live music, many stalls, plenty of food and drink and lots of entertainment. Table tennis tables will be set up and there will be plenty of fun for both children and adults, says the Northcote Business Network. A large screen will show the Wimbledon Men's Final.

The last festival, in 2011, featured non-stop sunshine and a

large and good-humoured crowd from all over south London. Join us on the Battersea Society's stall.

## Museum news

### Wandsworth Museum

*Home: My Place in the World:* an international photography exhibition. To 14 September 2013. Note: the museum now has copies of Patrick Loobey's book of historic photos: *Battersea & Clapham: the second selection*, reprinted after many years. £9.99.

De Morgan Centre  
*Hidden Heritage: Old Battersea House, Mrs Stirling and the De Morgan Collection*  
To 29 June 2013.



Mrs Stirling, who used to own Old Battersea House.

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## Battersea: A vision of Venice?

Penelope J Corfield profiles an eccentric local writer

'Battersea must be a vision of Venice.' These were the unlikely words of one of the most eccentric individuals ever to perambulate regularly up and down Prince of Wales Drive. He was very tall, in an era when most men weren't. He was also very rotund, cloaking his girth in a huge cape. He wore a dashing sombrero and carried a swordstick in his right hand. A cigar continually dangled from his lips. He often travelled in a state of abstraction. He once telegraphed to his wife to find out where he should be. ('Home!' she replied). Who was he? Of course, he was the prolific author G K Chesterton (1874-1936). He lived at 60 Overstrand Mansions, Prince of Wales Drive, Battersea, for seven years between 1903 and 1910; and his local connection is commemorated in the name of Chesterton Primary School in nearby Dagnall Street.

One of Chesterton's characteristics was his capacity to spot the unusual within the outwardly normal. For example, his classic detective, Father Brown, realises that an ordinary hammer, if dropped from the height of a church spire, is actually a lethal weapon. That capacity to rethink the world kept Chesterton amused as he waited for trains at Battersea's busy railway station. 'Many of the most purple hours of my



Self portrait by G.K. Chesterton

life have been passed at Clapham Junction', he wrote. 'I have been there in many moods so fixed and mystical that [flood-]water might well have come up to my waist before I noticed it particularly'.

### Comic

He gave this tribute to watery Battersea in a charming essay entitled 'On Running after One's Hat' (1908). It argues optimistically that people should try to find good in life's inconveniences and minor disasters. Running after one's silk top-hat in a gale is annoying to the runner. But he

should be glad that the comic chase gives innocent pleasure to onlookers.

### Floodplain

Chesterton wrote this essay after hearing that heavy rainfall had caused floods, particularly in 'my own Battersea'. He envisaged its transformation. 'Great sheets of water' had spread everywhere. Road traffic was now moved by boat. 'The greengrocer who brought cabbages to the corner of the Latchmere Road must have leant upon the oar with the unearthly grace of the gondolier'. It was a fine tribute to marshy Battersea, where everything north of Lavender Hill lies within the Thames floodplain. True, its residents are unlikely to be consoled if the place is seriously flooded. But minor annoyances, Chesterton urges, should spur people to view the everyday world differently.

His urban-aquatic comparison is not one that springs most readily to mind. Yet it shows that Chesterton had unfettered his imagination, as he wished others to do. So he wrote dreamily: 'Battersea must be a vision of Venice'.

Penelope J Corfield is a freelance historian, and author/co-director of the DVD *Red Battersea 1902 – 2008* (2008). [www.penelopejcorfield.co.uk](http://www.penelopejcorfield.co.uk)

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## Historic Battersea in the news

The spring 2013 issue of *The Wandsworth Historian* contains two articles of interest to Battersea-dwellers. An account of the lives of 19th century social realist novelist George Gissing and his wife, a former prostitute, gives a fascinating glimpse into genteel poverty. In one of Gissing's novels, *The Odd Women*, two sisters struggle to live in a bedroom off Lavender Hill on fourpence a day.

Like many other middle-class women of the period, they had no qualifications and few ways of earning a living. Their landlady, on the other

hand, probably did quite well.

Neil Robson reflects on *Our Lady of Batersey*, a parish history based on meticulous research and published in 1926. Its author was J G Taylor, headteacher of Sir Walter St John's School in Battersea High Street. The school, now Thomas's Prep School, was then popularly known as 'Sinjuns', the original pronunciation of St Johns.

Copies £3 + £1.50 p&p  
Contact Neil Robson  
[ngrobson@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:ngrobson@tiscali.co.uk)



left George Gissing  
below The former Sir  
Walter St John School



## Crowd-funding can be fun!

Mike Roden spends an exhilarating hour as money is raised for local charities

The Funding Network (TFN) was launched in 2002 by a group of friends who felt that giving money to good causes could be improved by making it a group, rather than a solitary activity. Thus crowd-funding was developed. This essentially involves a small group of selected charities making their case for funding in front of an audience who then make public pledges of the amount of money they will donate to those charities. Over the last ten years TFN groups have been founded across the country and have raised £5 million for over 670 diverse social change projects.

I actually didn't know most of this when I turned up at Battersea Arts Centre a couple of months ago for a 'Good Neighbour' event, billing itself as a 'Dragons Den' for charities. I did know a little of how the process is set in motion as my wife had been invited to join a TFN selection panel. Its role was to interview several local charities to determine which three should go forward to pitch their case to an audience of potential donors.

### Canapés

Each TFN event is hosted and sponsored by a local organisation, in this case BAC, supported by Currell's estate agency on Lavender Hill. Tickets are sold to help fund the event, so that all money raised goes to the charity.

Anyway, on arrival we joined the crowd eagerly networking round the bar and munching some tasty and unusual canapés – butternut squash gnocchi springs to mind – prepared by the in-house chef. And then it was down to business, with our own Jenny Sheridan introducing the event.

Each TFN event follows the same pattern. First a TFN member – in this case journalist Lesley Garner, gives a brief account of what first prompted them to give to charity, and why they still do. This is followed by a brief report from a project previously funded by TFN. Tonight two women from a New Cross community project gave a short, enthusiastic presentation.

Before each charity presents its case to the audience, their sponsor is allowed a minute to speak on why the project deserves support. The sponsor then puts in the first pledge of £250 of their own money as an assurance that they are confident the money will be spent wisely. Each charity is allowed just six minutes to present their case for funding, with another six minutes for questions from the audience.



A crowd-funding event at the GLA

In this case all the projects centred round work with young people. The Agency – supported by BAC – works on the Winstanley Estate. The Katherine Low Centre was seeking funding for the Wandsworth Young Carers' Project which helps children and young people who provide physical and/or emotional support to a family member. The Elays Network is a youth project working with the Somali community in Battersea.

Once the presentations have been made – and they all made their case in robust, sometimes moving fashion – the charities leave the room. The master of ceremonies TFN's chair Michael Maynard briefly explained that they would take pledges of £50 or over, and then the fun began.

It's like bidding at an auction, with people putting their hands up, naming their chosen charity and pledging how much they want to give. At the front of the room a 'totaliser' keeps track of how much is being raised for each project. It was amazing to watch the power of the peer effect, with people getting caught up in

the excitement. Michael Maynard did his best to boost the funds for each project by encouraging people to give a little more, and it worked. What it demonstrates is that feeling part of a combined effort empowers the donor to believe they can make a real difference, especially watching the pledged total rise.

### Worthwhile

It was fun for the audience, and it was very worthwhile for the charities. The Young Carers project came out ahead with a total of £7,862. But the other two projects could feel very satisfied with their pledge totals, with the Agency reaching £4,243 and the Elays Network £4,197. Of course these figures will be increased by Gift Aid. We were pleased that the Battersea Society supported all three.

A year after their donation, all donors receive an email update on the impact of the funds received, which is of course aimed at encouraging them to continue to give.

We went home reflecting that TFN seems to have hit on a winning formula to put the fun into fund-raising.

*Battersea Matters* will cover the work of the three projects in coming issues.

[www.thefundingnetwork.org.uk](http://www.thefundingnetwork.org.uk)

### The Battersea Society

**Chair** Tony Tuck  
tony@tonytuck.eu

**Secretary** Harvey Heath  
secretary@batterseasociety.org.uk

**Membership Sec** Maureen Larkin  
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#### Committee Chairs

**Community** Harvey Heath  
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**Planning** David Lewis and Liz Walton  
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**Open Spaces**  
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**General enquiries**  
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**Website**  
batterseasociety.org.uk

Registered charity no.1103560

## Waterers welcome!

Andrew Wills explains how we can all help our street trees



A *Prunus schmittii* in Honeywell Road

Wandsworth Council has planted a large number of new trees recently – see the table for the addresses and the varieties of trees. You may have one near you!

You can identify the new trees by the yellow-painted tops of their stakes. The council's tree contractors will be responsible for watering the trees during the summer, but if we have any particularly dry periods this may not be sufficient. So if any Battersea Society member sees any trees nearby which seem to be struggling, please give them a bucket or two of water. They should all be fitted with a plastic watering pipe to help with watering and it is also good if you can water at ground level and allow it to soak down.

Weeding around their bases will also help the trees get established although the wood mulch around their bases should keep the weeds under control.

The Wandsworth Tree Wardens are a voluntary local community group, independent of Wandsworth Council. Our aim is to promote public awareness of the benefits of trees in city environments and to help improve and protect the treescape in the borough through the planting, care, nurture, promotion and cultivation of trees.

[wandtreeward@aol.com](mailto:wandtreeward@aol.com)

## NEW STREET TREE PLANTINGS IN BATTERSEA 2012/13

Address	Ward	Tree
Brocklebank Rd 56	Wands Common	<i>Acer campestre</i>
Burcote Rd 17	Wands Common	<i>Acer campestre</i>
Burcote Rd 28	Wands Common	<i>Acer campestre</i>
Ellerton Rd 60	Wands Common	<i>Pyrus chanticleer</i>
Frewin Rd 39/41	Wands Common	<i>Sorbus aria</i>
Frewin Rd 50	Wands Common	<i>Sorbus aria</i>
Killarney Rd	Wands Common	S. Joseph Rock
Tilehurst Rd 49	Wands Common	<i>Acer plat CK</i>
Tilehurst Rd 111	Wands Common	<i>Acer campestre</i>
Trefoil Rd 22	Wands Common	<i>Malus tribolata</i>
Belleville Rd 14	Northcote	<i>Prunus schmittii</i>
Bennerley Rd 138	Northcote	<i>Sorbus aria</i>
Bowood Rd 1	Northcote	<i>Ginkgo biloba</i>
Bowood Rd f/o 110 CCWS	Northcote	<i>Ginkgo biloba</i>
Lavender sweep 65	Northcote	<i>Prunus yedoensis</i>
Honeywell Rd 101	Northcote	<i>Prunus schmittii</i>
Honeywell Rd 18	Northcote	<i>Prunus schmittii</i>
Mallinson Rd 29	Northcote	<i>Betula pendula</i>
Gayville Rd 19	Northcote	<i>Prunus schmittii</i>
Bramfield Rd 20	Northcote	<i>Prunus schmittii</i>
Severus Rd 6	Northcote	<i>Prunus yedoensis</i>
Severus Rd The Grand	Northcote	<i>Prunus yedoensis</i>
Severus Rd The Grand	Northcote	<i>Prunus yedoensis</i>
Wakehurst Rd 122	Northcote	<i>Corylus colurna</i>
Wakehurst Rd 140	Northcote	<i>Acer platanoides</i>
Bracken Ave 42	Balham	<i>Sorbus aria</i>
Nightingale Lane 24	Balham	<i>Acer campestre</i>
Nightingale Lane 26	Balham	<i>Acer campestre</i>
Nightingale Lane 36	Balham	<i>Acer campestre</i>
Nightingale Lane 123	Balham	<i>Acer campestre</i>
Nightingale Lane opp 123	Balham	<i>Acer campestre</i>
Nightingale Lane 131	Balham	<i>Acer campestre</i>
Nightingale Lane opp 131	Balham	<i>Acer campestre</i>
Roseneath Rd 80	Balham	<i>Corylus colurna</i>
Roseneath Rd 86	Balham	<i>Corylus colurna</i>
Wroughton Rd 49	Balham	<i>Betula fasciation</i>
Manchuria Rd 25	Balham	<i>Prunus schmittii</i>
Old Park Ave 17	Balham	<i>Pyrus chanticleer</i>
Sumburgh Rd 9	Balham	<i>Sorbus aria</i>
Airedale Rd 8	Nightingale	<i>Pyrus chanticleer</i>
Boundaries Rd 161	Nightingale	<i>Acer campestre</i>
Leacroft Rd 13	Nightingale	<i>Malus florebunda</i>
Ramsden Rd 28	Nightingale	<i>Corylus colurna</i>
Crockerton Rd		
f/o 125 Trinity Rd	Nightingale	<i>Platanus hispanica</i>
Plough Rd		
opp 15 Holliday Sq	Latchmere	<i>Tilia mongolica</i>
Shellwood Rd		
o/s open space	Latchmere	<i>Platanus hispanica</i>
Eversleigh Rd 71	Shaftesbury	<i>Tilia mongolica</i>
Lavernder Hill Arts Centre	Shaftesbury	<i>Acer campestre</i>
Parma Crescent 63	Shaftesbury	<i>Prunus yedoensis</i>
Sabine Rd df/o 2a Brassey Sq	Shaftesbury	<i>Platanus hispanica</i>
Tyneham Rd 160	Shaftesbury	<i>Tilia mongolica</i>
Emu Rd 31	Queenstown	<i>Prunus H Spire</i>
Emu Rd 32	Queenstown	<i>Prunus H Spire</i>

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## Urban gems

Two Wandsworth gardeners describe how they make the most of small spaces

Pamela Johnson

Last August, when I had to decide if I wanted to open our garden again the following year for the National Gardens Scheme, I thought all the planned repair work to our terrace house (the damage was caused by a leaking gutter) would be completed by March, and the garden would be largely unaffected. How wrong I was! The back garden is fine, growing away nicely now the scaffolding has gone, but we have not lived there for six months and the build is due to finish the week before we open!

We have been opening our small garden for over twenty years, with the only challenges being the weather and the demise of a large tree. This year, simply having a front door for visitors to pass through will be an achievement, but whatever state the house is in the garden will be lovely. The cold, miserable spring will be behind us and the seasons will have caught up with themselves.

Gauging which day would be best to open is never easy but I knew by mid July the *Hemerocallis*

'Bonanza' would be in flower, as too the *Hydrangea sargentiana* with its huge soft leaves and plates of lilac flowers. I also knew the whole garden would be full of colour and scent, with plants threatening to burst out of their corsetry. I have discovered that lilies do extremely well in the heavy clay soil, as of course do roses.

### Shape and colour

I grow trees, shrubs, perennials, ferns and grasses all together in the borders, but concentrate on shape and colour. This year I have deep pink rose 'Sophie's Choice' with pale pink spikes of *persicaria amplexicaulis* 'Rosea', *sanguisorbia officinalis* 'Pink Tanna' and *veronica spicata* 'Rotfuchs'. A whole range of pinks set off against the dark leaves of *physocarpus* 'Diabolo' with some white malva for good measure. (See [back page](#))

The shady side of the garden has mature ferns including the huge shuttlecocks of *matteuccia struthiopteris* and delicate



*polystichums*. The fences have far too many climbers including *trachelospermum*, honeysuckle, more roses and

various summer flowering clematis. This year the window boxes have been planted up with lavender rather than the usual petunias because we're not able to water every day, and I'm hoping the hostas can withstand the usual slug attack without me there to protect them.

So, whatever happens in the garden this year, the homemade cakes will still be delicious and the plant sale will be specialising in bee-friendly plants. Please, just don't look at the front garden on your way into the back!

20 Eatonville Road, SW17  
Garden open NGS  
Sunday 14 July 2pm – 6pm

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Georgina Ivor



In June 2010 I had the pleasure of welcoming 27 members of the Battersea Society for a private evening visit of my garden in aid of the

National Garden Scheme (NGS). A few months later Victoria Summerley, (Garden Media Guild's Journalist of the Year), in an article for the Wandsworth Gardening Group's blog wrote: 'I've visited Georgina's garden more than once, and each time it weaves the same spell. It's a small London garden, surrounded by high walls, especially at the rear. You enter the garden via a flight of steps down from the kitchen, which sounds pretty unremarkable until you stop to think about it: this is a garden which

has to look good from above, from ground level and also from below, as you look back up at the house and the surrounding walls. Looking down, a pear tree spreads itself invitingly over a bench on a decked area, as if to say, "Come and sit down! ..."

### Herbs

'It's a lovely outlook but you only become aware of how much there is in the garden once you're down at grass level. Everywhere you look, there is something of interest. A range of containers (where would London gardeners be without their pots?) enables Georgina to change the look with the season, while on the little deck outside the kitchen window, a miniature allotment burgeons with herbs, salad leaves and nasturtiums. You don't have to wait until you get to the back garden to see that Georgina is a Yellow Book garden owner. The front garden is a wonderful mix of

sophisticated slate grey and billowy, almost cottagey planting.'

This summer, for the eighth year running, I will be opening my garden twice for the NGS. On Sunday July 14 there will be an admission charge of £3 (children free) and tea with cucumber sandwiches and strawberries & cream will be available.

On Wednesday July 17 in the evening, the admission charge of £4 will include a glass of Pimms or Prosecco; the cost of every second (or third!) glass will be matched by Samuel Estates. The money raised will go to the NGS, who are the biggest ever donor to Macmillan, Marie Curie and a number of other healthcare charities, with a share to Trinity Hospice.

28 Old Devonshire Road  
Balham SW12 9 RB  
Sunday 14 July 2 – 5.30pm £3  
Wednesday 17 July 6 – 8.30. £4.



top Pamela Johnson's *Sanguisorbia obtusa* 'Alba' against *Physocarpus opulifolius* 'Diabolo'  
 right *Rhododendron* 'Golden Torch' with *Choisya ternata* 'Aztec Pearl' (Mexican Orange Blossom).  
 far right Georgina Ivor's *Clematis Montana* 'Freda'.



## Pelargonium paradise?

Following Suzanne Perkins' exposé of the range of coffee prices in *Battersea Matters* Spring 2013, Jenny Sheridan takes a seasonal look at plant prices.

For this exercise I looked at the variety of colours on offer and compared the prices of 1 litre pots of geraniums in full flower. Multi-packs were not included.

### Northcote Road stall

(outside Buona Sera restaurant)

9 varieties, £2.50

### Battersea Bridge Road stall

2 varieties, £3

### B&Q

6 varieties, £2.98

### Homebase

5 varieties, £3.50 or three for £9

### Neals

(near Wandsworth prison)

13 varieties, £3.99

### Battersea Flower Station

7 varieties, £2.95



## Party on...



A stunning window display recently in The Party Superstore at Clapham Junction, with a symbolic phoenix rising from paper flames. A flock of origami cranes fly in a starry sky. Photographs of the 2011 rioting and the broom army tell the story across the bottom. A strange echo of the historic fire in Arding and Hobbs in 1909.  
 Photo: Suzanne Perkins