

Wandsworth Living Streets Newsletter No. 3, December 2015

Dear Wandsworth Living Streets Supporter

Welcome to this Newsletter No. 3, December 2015. I apologise that, despite occasional *Newsflashes*, you have not had a proper Newsletter for many months. So much has been going on that this failure to keep you up-to-date is all the more lamentable.

Anyway, here goes with some not-so-light relief in the run-up to the holiday season!

Speaking of which, may I wish each of you a Happy Holiday Season and New Year.

And may our needs and concerns when on foot – whether commuting, shopping, or for any other reason, or walking just for the pleasure of it – always be in the minds of Wandsworth Council and Transport for London when they bring forward proposals for improving our streets.

Yours as always

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Wandsworth Living Streets

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What's in this December 2015 Newsletter

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What will be in the February 2016 Newsletter

- **The 20mph Borough-wide Consultation, Spring 2016 – Dates and Details**

- **Tooting Pedestrian Town Centre Project**
- **Mayoral & London Assembly elections in May 2016 and Hustings dates.**
- **Our Borough's new green space – Springfield Park**
- **'Bring Fronts Back' – What you can do if you have a front garden – by Terry Brown.**

Crossrail 2 – latest developments and the current consultation

Crossrail 2, as most of you will know, is the proposal from Transport for London (TfL) to follow in the footsteps of Crossrail 1 and build a new railway to transport people living in the southwestern and northeastern parts of London into the city, and to relieve the huge pressure on parts of the Tube network. It will involve a 37 kilometre tunnel and 200-metre-long trains running every 2 minutes. Nothing is yet decided. Funding is not yet in place. But already the recently announced changes to the route through our borough is causing worry and controversy.

Why the controversy? It is focussed on one particular issue. Originally, TfL was proposing two new stations in the borough – at Tooting Broadway and Clapham Junction. Now they are proposing that Crossrail 2 should link with the Northern Line at Balham, not Tooting Broadway. The reason is that geological exploration of ground conditions at Tooting Broadway have revealed that, below the London clay, are unstable wet sand conditions, as well as 3 fault lines in the vicinity. Building a station there will cost some £500 million more; take several years longer; and involve a much larger and intrusive ground level site at Tooting Broadway during the construction period.

This is bad news because the case for a station at Tooting Broadway was a powerful one. It would boost regeneration of the town centre. It would provide for a rapid link to Clapham Junction, and from there to Victoria and southwards via Network Rail to other parts of London. A Crossrail 2 Station at Tooting Broadway would also give staff and patients a new way of getting to St George's Hospital. It is these considerations that led Wandsworth Council to support the new station at Tooting Broadway.

At a recent consultation meeting organised by TfL in the Wandsworth Civic Suite on 23 November, most of the 150 or more people who attended were, however, not concerned with these important considerations. Instead, most of those who spoke raised concerns, entirely understandable, about one specific issue – the proposed location of one of the evacuation shafts on the amended route on the edge of Wandsworth Common adjacent to Bolingbroke Grove.

Your opportunity to find out more and respond to the current Crossrail 2 Consultation: Right now TfL is conducting a consultation on its amended route proposals for Crossrail 2 across the whole of London. The proposed re-location of its station from Tooting Broadway to Balham, and consequent re-siting of two evacuation shafts – the one at Wandsworth Common that is causing so much

residents' concern and the other in the about to be re-developed Springfield Hospital site – is part of this wider consultation.

Drop-in Sessions: There is still an opportunity to attend one of these and talk to staff there. These are taking place at:

Battersea area

York Gardens Library and Community Centre, Lavender Road, London SW11 2UG
 Wednesday 9 December, 12 noon – 8pm
 Thursday 10 December, 12 noon – 8pm

Wandsworth Common area

Outside 7-9 Bellevue Road, London, SW17 7EG
 Saturday 12 December, 11am - 4pm

Central London Golf Centre, Burntwood Lane, SW17 0AT

Monday 14 December, 12 noon – 8pm

You can respond to the consultation by going to <https://consultations.tfl.gov.uk/crossrail/2> It closes on 8 January 2016.

Wandsworth Living Streets and Crossrail 2: Wandsworth Living Streets has been active in the current consultation. We have not expressed a view on the proposed change of Crossrail 2's link to the Northern Line from Tooting Broadway to Balham, or the knock-on consequences for the siting of the ventilation shafts – except to urge TfL not to locate the Springfield shaft in a location that would impact the proposed new Springfield Park.

WLS concerns relate to, as you would expect:

1. **The impact of Crossrail 2 on all of us when we are on foot during the construction period.** This will last several years, and serious attention must be paid to minimising the inconvenience and danger to pedestrians during that time. This will not just be in the immediate vicinity of the two new Crossrail stations, but also of the ventilation and emergency evacuation shafts between stations.
2. **The shafts will have a permanent above ground presence some 25 by 25 metres and the height of a two-storey building.** We are concerned with their impact on the public realm.
3. **There will also be an increase in HGV (Heavy Goods Vehicle) traffic more widely in the borough during the years of construction.** HGVs are often a lethal danger to both cyclists and pedestrians. One only has to go along Nine Elms Lane towards Vauxhall to see how bad is the impact on pedestrians of a large number of heavy lorry movements.
4. In the longer term, Wandsworth Living Streets is concerned that **each Crossrail 2 station must pay careful attention to joining up the different modes of transport.** For example, at Clapham Junction, we want to see improved high quality access for pedestrians moving between the numerous bus routes and the Crossrail 2 platforms. And free access through the station for local residents in order to end the present severance between north and south Battersea that the station, with its ticket barriers, imposes. It is not acceptable that

the only way for residents to walk (or cycle) between these two parts of Battersea is via the dirty, noisy and heavily polluted Falcon Road underpass.

Transforming Wandsworth Town Centre (and removal of the Gyratory)

The Problem: For longer than most of us can remember, Wandsworth Town Centre has been desecrated by the multi-lane, one-way road system round the Town Hall and associated buildings. When in June this year Wandsworth Living Streets took the Editor of *Transportation Professional* around the Gyratory, as it is often known, he was appalled by the noise, pollution, thundering lorries and sheer number of vehicles that have blighted the area for years. Little wonder that pedestrians avoid it if they can, and the Town Centre has several boarded up premises.

The contrast with the huge investment in the Southside Shopping Centre and related developments on Garratt Lane is stark. And the long delayed redevelopment of the Ram Brewery site to the north of Wandsworth High Street is now under way. This has made restoring an attractive local town centre with the River Wandle as an important feature all the more urgent.



How local people responded to the proposals last year: Transport for London and Wandsworth Council put in place last year (2014) a commitment and the finance needed to do this, including removing the gyratory. They conducted a thorough consultation. 1,882 responses were received. Some 70% of people felt that the current traffic system performs badly and 61% felt that removal of the gyratory would improve things. Encouraged by this, TfL has now refined its detailed proposals, taking into account some of the suggestions and objections respondents submitted.

The Key Aims TfL's Proposals hope to achieve:

1. **Traffic – Reducing the volume of traffic through Wandsworth Town Centre:** One section of Wandsworth High Street will be for buses and cycles only; another for buses, cycles, service vehicles and access only. In both cases, pedestrians and South Thames College students will encounter a much quieter street environment, and the road will be much safer to cross and there will be much less air pollution.
2. **Buses – Better location of bus stops and improved Interchanges between bus routes:** In particular, the main bus-stop (in both directions) for the 37, 337, 39, 87, 170 and 485 will be in one place on Wandsworth High Street near the Southside Shopping Centre and the Ram Brewery site. Passengers will be waiting in a much quieter & less polluted environment.
3. **Severance – reduction of:** Southside and the Ram Brewery development will be separated from each other by a stretch of Wandsworth High Street where only buses and cycles are allowed. **But there is a new risk of new severance along Armoury Way and part of Swandon Way.** Increasingly, Armoury Way is becoming residential on both sides of the road. Wandsworth Living Streets is pressing for a 20mph speed limit in order to reduce vehicle noise for residents and as a signal to drivers they are in an essentially residential area where people are living.
4. **Cycling:** Wandsworth High Street from Garratt Lane to Broomhill Road will be only for buses, cycles and local access vehicles – which will mean a shorter, safer, quieter route for cyclists.
5. **Pedestrians:** The aim is to enhance their safety, reduce exposure to vehicle noise and pollution, widen crossings and make bigger, more attractive public realm areas (notably towards the top of East Hill and around the Southside Shopping Centre).
6. **Greening of the Town Centre:** Quite a lot of trees are to be planted.

Wandsworth Living Streets has been in intensive interaction with the TfL team in the past two years. We welcome the proposals generally, but are pressing for further improvements.

The present consultation:

Drop-in Sessions: There are still some drop-in sessions where you can see the detailed Proposals and talk to TfL Officers:

- **Wednesday, 9 December: 6pm to 8pm:** Civic Centre Robing Room, Wandsworth High Street, London SW18 2PU.
- **Saturday, 12 December: 11 am to 3pm:** Wandsworth Town Library, 11 Garratt Lane, London SW18 4AQ.

Responding to the Consultation: You can see the proposals, and respond to them, at <https://consultations.tfl.gov.uk/roads/wandsworth-town-centre>

Consultation ends on Sunday 17 January 2016.

Upcoming borough-wide Consultation on 20mph on all residential streets – Spring 2016

We are on the threshold of a huge change on our streets. In June this year, the Council accepted 11 (out of 12) petitions for 20mph to become the speed limit in various parts of the borough. These included two large areas – the whole of Thamesfield Ward in Putney and the Girdwood area of Southfields. 20mph has now been implemented in both these areas with all the necessary signage in place.



The Council's big decision on 20mph: Three months later, on 22 September, the Council's Community Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee took a much more strategic decision. In recognition of the fact that local residents in all parts of the borough had over many years of petitioning demonstrated how much they wanted safer streets with vehicles driving at more appropriate lower speeds, **Councillors decided "to undertake a Borough-wide consultation for having a blanket 20mph restriction on all residential roads in the Borough, but not main traffic routes, and implement as soon as practicable"**. This decision was taken unanimously by Councillors from both the majority Conservative and opposition Labour Parties. At both OSC meetings, Wandsworth Living Streets (WLS) was given the opportunity to present to the Committee the evidence and arguments that we have constantly put forward during the past five years.

The big task for all of us in Wandsworth Living Streets in Spring 2016: The consultation will take place in the Spring. Details of how it will be conducted and the precise dates are due in the week of 15 February. We will send them to you. We already know however that, because of the huge scale of a borough-wide consultation, it will be **an on-line process only**. This means that the Council will not be delivering leaflets to the 130,000 homes in the borough.

All of us in Wandsworth Living Streets will therefore have a big job to do, in a short period of time, letting as many people as possible know about the consultation and urging them to respond. We also need to make available information about why 20mph will improve people's lives and answer any questions or worries residents may have. Your Committee will be doing the following things:

1. Putting on the WLS website two documents: *20mph – Why we need it* and *20mph – Your Questions answered and Worries addressed*.
2. We are also preparing a leaflet, *20mph Speed Limit on the street where you live?* We hope as many of you as possible will be prepared to hand it out to neighbours in your street and elsewhere.
3. We are already talking to various organizations in the Borough in order to solicit their help with this task of letting people know about the consultation and how to respond on-line.
4. And of course, we will be in touch with the local media.

One piece of good news is that the Council is already investigating the possibility of obtaining funding from TfL to implement a borough-wide residential road 20mph limit in one go (so far as the logistics of rolling out signage allows). So, if there is a 'Yes to 20mph' majority in the Consultation, implementation ought to be relatively speedy.

But 20mph on all residential roads is not the end of the story: Roughly half of all collisions and injuries on our roads take place on the tiny minority of very big, busy roads that Transport for London manage. Equally important are those roads in the borough, managed by Wandsworth Council, which have a mix of residential, shopping and other uses. These roads have particularly large numbers of people on foot because there are residents, shoppers and others walking there. They need the protection of lower speeds like everyone else. Wandsworth Living Streets has made these points repeatedly and we will increase our efforts during the 2nd half of next year.

Proposed Pedestrian and Cyclist Bridge from Nine Elms to Pimlico

The proposal for this bridge is part of the huge Nine Elms on the South Bank scheme which, as you will have seen from the train into Waterloo, is being constructed at almost breathtaking speed. This new quarter of London aims to encourage visitors to move around on foot or by bicycle on an almost Continental scale compared to other parts of London. The public realm is to be as pedestrian- and cyclist-friendly as possible. The Nine Elms-Pimlico bridge will contribute to this by making it possible for Londoners north of the River to stroll over and access the area near the new US Embassy. They will then find themselves at the new Linear Park which will thread through the development towards Vauxhall Station.

What stage the idea for this bridge has got to: On 25 November the Jury which has been running a competition for architectural and engineering firms wishing to design the new bridge announced that the preferred bidder was a group of companies called Bystrup, Robin Snell & Partners, Sven Ole Hansen ApS, Aarsleff, ÅF Lighting Aecom, COWI Engineering and DP9. You can see their proposals at

http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/downloads/download/1658/bystrup_architecture_design_and_engineering_-_bridge_proposals



A week later, on 2 December 2015, Wandsworth Council's Executive approved the award of a £4½ million contract to this group for the provision of design services for the bridge. The next steps will include detailed design work, seeking planning permission from both Wandsworth and Westminster Councils, persuading the incoming Mayor of London next year to ratify the support Boris Johnson has already expressed for the bridge, and getting the Nine Elms Vauxhall Partnership to explore options to find about £14 million which is needed beyond the £26 million of CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) funds already earmarked. (The bridge will cost about £40million, less than a quarter of the sum the so-called Garden Bridge will cost.)

But much misinformation has taken root among residents north of the River: One might be forgiven thinking that everything is going swimmingly for this very first dedicated pedestrian-cum-cyclists bridge across the Thames. In fact, this is not the case. A huge controversy has raged on the other side of the River in Pimlico and Westminster. Unlike with the Cremorne Bridge (see the below), broad agreement between the two Councils which must each approve the bridge has not been established. Westminster Councillors, both Conservative and Labour, have criticised the idea. Various local groups of residents are opposed to the bridge. A petition against it was recently presented to Westminster Council. And all sorts of misinformation has been circulating – that Pimlico Tube Station would be flooded by thousands of Wandsworth residents pouring over the bridge every day during the rush hour; large numbers of commuter cyclists would overwhelm the peaceful St George's Square; Westminster Boating Base would be demolished; Pimlico Gardens and

its beautiful London plane trees cut down etc. This opposition is not unanimous. A handful of organizations, including the Inner London Ramblers Association Committee, Westminster Cycling Campaign, and Westminster Living Streets have come out in support of the bridge provided it does not damage the scarce and peaceful green space in this part of Pimlico. And there have been reassurances from Wandsworth Council and the designers that the precise location of the bridge has not yet even been decided, no trees will be cut down, and so on.

Wandsworth Living Streets supports the bridge in principle: We were part of a meeting in the middle of this year with the short-listed design teams briefing them about what was required of a bridge specifically for people on foot or bicycle. We stressed the importance of the bridge being unobtrusive and beautiful and with a minimal footprint on both banks. It is a great pity that the company hired to handle the consultation process thus far has done such an inadequate job of informing the residents of Pimlico and rebutting the wild rumours that have been circulating.

Proposed Pedestrian and Cyclist Bridge from Lombard Road in Battersea to Imperial Wharf – the Cremorne Bridge

This bridge from Lombard Road to Imperial Wharf would run adjacent to the Cremorne rail bridge used by London Overground. It's been a longstanding idea ever since Wandsworth and Hammersmith & Fulham Councils joined forces to fund a business case for it in 2004.



Latest developments: This month, a small step forward has been taken. On 2 December Wandsworth Council's Executive approved a new SPD for this rapidly changing area in North Battersea between York Road and the Thames. Developers have several proposals for new apartment blocks in the area. The prospect of many more people living in the area without nearby access to London's rail system has made the case for a new pedestrian and cyclist bridge across the River more compelling because it would link residents to the London Overground Station at Imperial

Wharf on the opposite side of the River. The Officers' Report noted that the bridge would: "generate increased pedestrian and cycle flows through the area, reducing journey times for many journeys and reducing conflicts between vulnerable road users and motor vehicles on the busy Wandsworth and Battersea Bridges". It went on to say that: "the full potential for the York Road / Lombard Road Riverside area will only be achieved through the provision of a footbridge."

The rapid redevelopment of the area also helps bring the prospect of the bridge being built closer because there is now the prospect of significant funding from the CIL contributions (so-called Community Infrastructure Levies) developers have to pay the Council. These won't be enough to meet the full costs. So Wandsworth and Hammersmith & Fulham Councils will need to persuade the new London Mayor after the May 2016 elections to get Transport for London to make its contribution too. That is something Wandsworth Living Streets supporters and others could be pressing the mayoral candidates on during the mayoral election campaign!

Safe, Simple, Successful Streets

– by Susie Morrow

John Dales, Director of Urban Movement and a Trustee of Living Streets, attracted an excellent turnout for the February 2016 meeting of the Wandsworth Society. Originally a traffic engineer by profession he now describes himself as an urban designer – which, he suggested, all traffic engineers should see themselves as. John gave us the proposition that there should be virtually no 'roads' in London, just streets - and that the design of our streets should reflect and support their various functions, e.g. social and economic, not just movement. *Manual for Streets* (2007) has helped get this wider thinking about our streets onto the agenda.

John amusingly illustrated how streets and roads differ in they are represented in our culture, including media as diverse as LP covers, movies, book titles and social media ('Street Life' being a prime example). The words 'streets' and 'roads' tend to have very different connotations – compare 'street party' and 'road rage', or 'The word on the street' with 'The rules of the road'. This reflects John's view that streets are for people. He used a quote from Al Murray [AKA the pub landlord] to illustrate the self-perpetuating nature and damaging implications of car-dependence: "Parents drive their children to school in order to protect them from danger presented by other 'school-run' parents; so we'll end up with a generation of flat-footed, asthmatic kids, with no sense of direction."



Designing streets isn't straightforward, since people have differing needs and preferences, which may change over time. How to measure street changes isn't obvious either; making a street more interesting might mean that someone lingers on it (perhaps even chatting to others), actually increasing their journey time.

Although walking is the fundamental mode of transport – nearly everyone walks and the national foot ownership rate is 2 per person – it's often undervalued by businesses and decision-makers. Transport for London (TfL) research, however, shows that walking is usually the local high street's most remunerative mode of access for shops. Even so, we've all experienced street environments that seem designed to discourage people from walking. This can be by cutting off obvious pedestrians' 'desire lines' with guard-rails blocking the route. Or unfairly dividing up highway space between the different users, resulting in pedestrians being pushed into spilling onto the carriageway in order simply to make progress.

John recently contributed to an international benchmarking study of cycling for TfL (see both <https://www.tfl.gov.uk/cdn/static/cms/documents/international-cycling-infrastructure-best-practice-study.pdf> and <https://www.tfl.gov.uk/cdn/static/cms/documents/international-cycling-infrastructure-best-practice-study-appendix.pdf>). Cities with a high modal share of cycling take it seriously as a mode of transport, in contrast to the 'lip service' provision commonly seen in London. One reason is that designing for cycling in successful cycling cities isn't ghettoised – it's just a normal part of transport professionals' jobs. A holistic, practical approach to street design is needed, asking questions like 'what are we trying to achieve here?' or 'what is the purpose of the street furniture?' – rather than a slavish adherence to standards.

It was encouraging to see the examples John showed us of improved streets in other London

boroughs, including nearby in Clapham. As the wide-ranging Q&A session highlighted, Wandsworth Council hasn't, yet, sought John's advice in our own borough. Achieving change, and especially introducing new street layouts, isn't easy; barriers are political, social, and professional. However, Einstein's axiom that 'We cannot solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them' is clearly demonstrated in our streets.

To those expressing concerns about motorists, John reiterated his remarks about the fundamentals. What do our cities need? What makes sense, in terms of transport, for the city? These should be our guiding principles in thinking about how we design and manage our streets.

Note: This article was written for the Wandsworth Society Magazine which has kindly given permission for its reproduction here.