

CONDEMNED BEAN TREE MAY BE SAVED AFTER ALL

The remains of the historic bean tree in Radnor Gardens may be retained following a review of the plans to remove the 4 foot high stump.

Richard Perrins, Richmond Council arboricultural manager, has informed SHRA that the removal has been put on hold following the resignation of Cllr Denise Carr, Chairman of the Friends of Radnor Gardens over a controversial motion passed at the Friends AGM in July.

The review follows intense lobbying by residents. At the SHRA AGM in April, a surprise motion strongly criticising the felling was passed unanimously. The Chairman of SHRA was instructed to write to the Council expressing the meeting's anger and to ask why there had been no consultation with the Friends before the tree was lopped.

Mr Perrins has stated that the tree is suffering from honey fungus and is in a dangerous

condition. A copy of the arboriculturist's report was also requested, but at time of writing had not been received. (see *Arboriculturist's view* page 3).

Cllr Carr resigned from the Chair of the Friends because she could not support a motion, passed by a large majority, at the Friends' AGM. The motion said: "this meeting calls on Richmond Council to abandon its plans for further tree felling in Radnor Gardens

and to retain the coppiced trunk of the bean tree".

At the meeting attention was drawn to the absence of the tree from the latest plans for the Gardens which were prepared for the Council in February.

Since it was lopped the stump has pushed out healthy shoots and shows signs of flourishing. The bean tree (*catalpa speciosa*) was planted in 1903 to mark the opening of the Gardens to the public.

Students to probe resident's travel patterns

Students from St Mary's University College are joining with SHRA to undertake an in-depth study of the impact of the new train timetables on local residents.

The research programme will be led by Kevin Cook, director of geography studies at the College. It will form part of the academic programme of second year students and provide them with hands-on experience of conducting research and of using different quantitative and qualitative research techniques.



Kevin Cook

We look forward to working with local residents."

While South West trains research shows that more than 500,000 journeys are made through Strawberry Hill each year, it is now known how many residents use the service or how important it is to them

Opinion poll

A SHRA opinion poll carried out through the Bulletin early this year produced over 100 replies. Over 60% of respondents said the timetables changes had caused inconvenience

and added between 10 minutes and 40 minutes to their journey times. (see Opinion Poll page 2) The students will conduct out clipboard questionnaires and will be setting up focus groups to assess residents' views and feelings about the train service and the impact of the revised timetable.

SHRA urges residents to co-operate with the student project so as to further the case for improved times.

South West trains has said it will cooperate with the project and has approved student research among passengers on Strawberry Hill station.

Revision

SHRA hopes to gain valuable information which will enable it to argue for a revision of the train timetables.

Timed for November this year, the research project will provide a unique insight into the how people use the train service and other local transport.

Kevin Cook, director of Geography studies, said: "We rarely get the opportunity to research into an actual situation on our doorstep. Using research techniques such as focus groups is an important aspect of modern geography studies at St Mary's College."

FANCY A FOCUS GROUP?

Residents who would like to take part in focus groups on their views about the train service are requested to call Kevin Cook on 020 8240 4017 or e-mail him on: cook@smuc.ac.uk

The groups will be held in the College during the autumn.

Each group will consist of approximately 8 people and will last no more than 90 minutes.

The purpose of a focus group is to assess people's feelings and subjective views on their travel patterns and on the changes to timetables.

Tidying up the village - with your help

The plan to clear the overgrown plants and weeds along the strip of land between the station path and the former Gloria's cafe will start this summer. Re-designing and replanting this corner is one of the

SHRA 40th anniversary commemoration events. MKG 3000, the garage which leases the land, has also pledged to support the plan by cutting back the weeds in the next few weeks. Now SHRA is seeking volun-

teers for a gardening morning to clear roots and rubbish. This is planned for Sunday, August 21, at 10am. (Please call Clare Phelps on 020 8892 5863.) Your ideas are also welcomed for the type of plants

and garden environment. These range at present from planting ruby coloured flowers (40th anniversary colour) to a huge strawberry tower. It is also proposed to replace the picket fence.

SHRA Opinion Poll 2005

Survey shows major disruption from time change

More than 60% of residents using Strawberry Hill station said the new train timetable had caused inconvenience to their daily travel. Since December, trains from Richmond and Kingston pass through Strawberry Hill at the same time, effectively reducing the service to two trains per hour from four. At the same time, a sizeable minority of travellers added that the train service was more reliable, but the journeys now took longer. A similar number said they now arrived home earlier from work.

Travel changes

One third of respondents said that the new timetable had caused inconvenience in their daily travel. A further one third said the new timetable had added between 10 and 40 minutes to their daily journeys. While one in five said the revised timetable had made no impact on the journey, one in ten said that journey time had improved. One quarter of respondents said they used the bus more as a result of the changes. A similar number said they left for work earlier, while nearly 15% said they now travelled from Twickenham.

Top issues

Aside from trains, the major issue of concern remains parking and the possible introduction of a CPZ. These were nominated the top concerns for the third year running. Planning and the impact of planning decisions are respondents second major concerns with street cleaning in third place.

Ranked jointly fourth were aircraft noise, education and transport. Radnor Gardens was named fifth most important issue; nearly 45% said they had attended Music Day in Radnor Gardens in 2004. Graffiti and vandalism were in last place. One in five said they attended the annual SHRA Carol Concert and Christmas Tree unveiling.

Bulletin

While nine out of ten respondents said they were very satisfied or satisfied with *The Bulletin*, one third said they wanted more news about planning issues and one quarter said they wanted *The Bulletin* published more frequently.

HURRAY FOR VOLUNTEERS

Eleven people volunteered to join the SHRA Committee. More are always welcome. Please call the Secretary Clare Phelps on 020 8892 5863

No rave for 60s night

The joint event with the Friends of Strawberry Hill House, planned for June 17, was cancelled due to lack of support. Themed as a 60s evening, it was intended as a celebration of SHRA's 40th anniversary and a fund raising event for FoSH. Fewer than 20 tickets at £25 each were sold. All monies were returned; there was no cost to SHRA. A donation to FoSH from SHRA funds of £1,000 will go ahead and will be earmarked for a specific restoration project in the House.

The Future of St James's Hall

Rumours of the imminent development of the St James's hall site are wild and incorrect. Father Loring, priest at St James, says that the hall is in need of refurbishment and modernisation. At the same time St James's Church congregation is growing - against the national trend - and more room is needed in the church. The Diocese of Westminster and a local finance committee are looking at options from rebuilding the hall to extending the church. No decisions or plans will be submitted this year.

MAY PLANT STALL HELPS HANDS

On a wet, windy and discouraging May Saturday, John and Roz Armstrong set up their plant stall in Wellesley Parade and raised £176 for local charity Hands. Donations of plants, from exotic black tomatoes to wild flowers and trees, sold steadily between the showers. "The response from residents was good, but some sunshine would have made it better", says John. He is now looking to a bigger plant stall next year.

Pavements watched?

SHRA's Pavement Watch alert, launched following complaints from residents, seems to be bearing fruit. Extensive work is underway in Orford Gardens to pavements and slip mounts in granite blocks. SHRA looks forward to work of similar quality taking place elsewhere in Strawberry Hill.

Thanks to Sopa

Phil Rochford, owner of Sopa the Thai restaurant in Wellesley Parade, has replaced one of the floral tubs which had been stolen. The tubs are maintained by SHRA volunteers. Mr Rochford's contribution is much appreciated.

Why we felled the bean tree - Council view

In his reply to SHRA following the motion passed at the AGM Richard Perrins, Arboricultural Manager, says:

"The original tree was removed as it was found to be suffering from dieback in the crown; a further climbing inspection revealed that the tree had declined rapidly and we had no option but to remove it to ensure the safety of park users.

I would at this juncture point out that the tree had been viewed by three qualified arboriculturalists including myself and it was



Sprouting bean tree may be saved

not a decision that we took trees not lining them up for lightly, indeed we spend the axe. most of our time saving You may have noticed that

the stump has started to sprout new shoots and I have consulted with your local Councillors and the Friends of Radnor Gardens and we feel that the best way forward is to remove the stump and start afresh.

It is my opinion looking at the type of decay, wood staining and rapid deterioration of the tree's health and vigour that the stump is infected with honey fungus (a heart and root decay fungi) that will use the stump as a food source if left in situ".

Travel tips from The Post Office

The Strawberry Hill Post Office in Tower Road can now provide travel cards and bus passes in addition to the wide range of services such as providing foreign currency.

Thanks to familiar faces - a welcome to new ones

The following SHRA Committee members stood down at the AGM, . We wish to thank them for their contribution in recent years:

Dr Arthur Tarrant - Transport Portfolio
Kate Johnson - Radnor Gardens Portfolio

The following residents have joined the Committee in 2005. We thank them for their support.

Joe Brett - Transport
Michael Cauter - Planning
Christine Yusef - Events
Bruce Duff

The Friends of Radnor Gardens Phase 1 work well underway

By Denise Carr

The good news is that work has started on the new children's play area. Other works planned for the year are to improve access at the main gates, resurface the path between the main gates and the summerhouse as well as the paved area in front of the brick hut.

Phases 1 and 2

The Arcadia in the City project is also going well. Phase 1, covering a new pathway from the north pedestrian gate to the middle of the riverside path, includes the resiting of the bath house (gazebo) towards the riverside path. This is due to start in September and will eventually link up with the Great River View across Ham lands to the Star and Garter.

Phase 2 is planned for 2006. Work includes new pathways, and a sloped grass bank on the west side of the gardens, a curved wooden bench and interpretation panel on the axis with the Great River Avenue. Tree felling and replanting with oaks, ash etc to improve the look of the gardens is due to follow in 2006.

Music Day

Because of these works, we have decided not to hold our annual Music and Crafts Day this year.

This has been our main fundraising event, with the monies raised going towards the matched-funding required for the Arcadia project. But it takes a good deal of organisation and we do need extra help with this. If you would like to be involved in the future please contact The Friends

Sadly, I must announce that Robert Beattie, who has been closely involved with the Friends since it was set up, is leaving for a year's study in America. We wish him well.

FIELDEND AND THE SPIRIT OF SPAN

Fieldend, off Waldegrave Park, has attracted much comment and praise over the last 40 years for its innovative style.

Now Dr James Strike, an architect with English Heritage - and Fieldend resident since 2002 - has told the story of this small oasis and its significance in his book *The Spirit of span Housing*.

One of 30 housing estates built between 1948 and 1984, Fieldend was the creation of local architects Eric Lyons and Geoffrey Townsend who set up their practice, called span, at Hampton Court.

They were driven by a vision of creating well-designed housing meeting contemporary needs in contrast to the tudorbethan of much of suburbia. The span manifesto was "nothing pseudo - no fake rustic."

Dr Strike's book traces in detail and with charming human touches the creation of this distinctive estate and the loyalty and love it has generated.

Published by Strike Print.

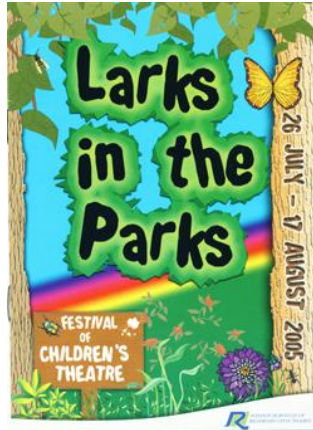
Jamesstrike@blueyonder.co.uk

CHILDREN INVITED TO LARK IN THE PARK

Children aged between 6 and 12 are invited to attend a thrilling dramatisation of Treasure Island in Radnor Gardens on August 2.

Tickets are £4 (discounts for groups of ten or for those holding leisure cards) and can be obtained from Orleans House Gallery or by telephone 020 8831 6000.

Played by Barking Dog Theatre, two actors recreate the magic of sailing ships and swash-buckling pirates with the help of sea



shanties, puppets - and the audience.

The play is part of the annual festival of children's theatre organised by the Arts Service at Orleans House Gallery in association with Richmond Parks and Open Spaces Service.

Eight professional theatre companies perform eight shows in eight different parks.

For more information about the Arts Service at Orleans House Gallery, call 020 8831 6000

Subscriptions call

Fewer than 10 per cent of the 2,500 homes in Strawberry Hill make an annual donation to SHRA. Your financial help, which is almost as good as your personal help on the Committee and at events, is much appreciated.

In our 40th anniversary year, the SHRA Committee has resolved to increase subscription income.

SHRA spends your money with care on local projects. This year made an exceptional donation of £1,000 to the Friends of Strawberry Hill for a specific restoration project. We also spend your money on plants and activities such as the annual Christmas Tree and Carol Concert (not to mentioned the free mulled wine and mince pies)

We look forward to your help.

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RENEWAL OF SUBSCRIPTION OF £3.00 (minimum) PER HOME FOR YEAR 2005

This subscription renewal may be made by cash, cheque made payable to Strawberry Hill Residents' Association. Hand to either:

- (a) Richard Spires, 70 Pope's Avenue, TW2 5TT - Standing Order Forms available from Richard Spires or the SHRA website
- (b) Costcutter by Strawberry Hill Station
- (c) Post Office, Tower Road

Additional donations are always welcome!

Name(s):			
Address:		Telephone:	
Date:		Amount:	
eMail:			