

Editor's Introduction

This newsletter is for all our members, which is everyone living in Strawberry Hill.

There are two important SHRA events coming up over the next few months.

The first is our **Annual General Meeting** which will be held at **7:00 PM on Wednesday 22nd April in Strawberry Hill Golf Club**. This evening is designed as a social event for residents and incorporates a brief overview of the year from the Chair, the short AGM and an opportunity for questions. Complimentary drinks and finger food will be available. Do come along - it is an informal and enjoyable event.

The second is the **Strawberry Hill Community BBQ and Picnic** which will be held on the **afternoon of July 5th in the grounds of Strawberry Hill House**. Music will be provided by the St Margarets Elastic Band and there will be an entertainer, Jolly Julie, and other events for children. The BBQ will be provided by the excellent Roots and Berries. The picnic is a partnership between SHRA and Strawberry Hill House who will organise ticketing. Details will be provided closer to the time. The event was a tremendous success last year and sold out. One of SHRA's objectives (as set out in its constitution) is to promote community spirit. Events of this sort really bring the community together and are a great opportunity to find new friends and contacts in the neighbourhood.

For me, my year as a SHRA Committee Member brought the opportunity, in my role as Business Liaison, to introduce myself to our local businesses. These include retailers, a pharmacy, restaurants and cafes, hairdressers, beauty and health consultants, garages and brewers. It is always good to see new businesses opening and this year has seen the arrival of Parsnips in the Park, the long awaited new cafe in Radnor Gardens, and Kew Windows on the Heathlands industrial estate. Also in effect part of the local business community are St. Mary's University, Strawberry Hill House, the Royal British Legion and Strawberry Hill Golf Club.

Although rather daunting I thought the best way of getting to know the businesses was to knock on their doors. I have to say I received a warm welcome and was even given a guided tour of a number of premises. Many of the businesses very generously sponsor Carols in the Village, our Community BBQ and pay for advertisements in the Bulletin.

What occurred to me about the businesses is how important they are to Strawberry Hill. We are extremely lucky to have such a good selection of businesses on our doorstep. They provide at local level a vital role in providing services to the community and vibrancy to our "village". We all know the challenges facing businesses at the moment including increasing rents and rates and high levels of business taxation. In these uncertain economic times, we need to support them in any way we can. The publicity in the Bulletin is one of the ways that SHRA can help. In the end though whether they prosper will depend on all of us supporting them.

Finally, one of our Committee members, Sam Kamleh, is the founding partner of **Teddington Architects, Architecture:WK Ltd**. We were delighted to hear recently that the firm has been **shortlisted for a RIBA award** for the work Sam provided on the remodeling of the Park Lane Stables RDA.

Jonathan Bayliss, Vice Chair, SHRA

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In this issue:

Local Issues : Councillor Richard Bennett, Leader of the Green Group, reports on a proposal to install a water storage and distribution system on Twickenham Green. He also reflects on experiencing eight years as a councillor. **Dany Mooney** reports on crime in Strawberry Hill. [CLICK HERE](#)

The Association : We report on the success of our Carols in the Village event, set out our AGM notice and look forward to our Strawberry Hill Community BBQ and Picnic. We explore the fascinating material that can be found in SHRA's "**Strawberry Hill: a History of the Neighbourhood.**" We explain how you can buy a copy. [CLICK HERE](#)

SHRA Committee Members : Louisa Carradine and **Jonathan Bayliss** reflect on their experiences of being on the Committee and describe the current vacancies. [CLICK HERE](#)

Streetscape: **Andrew Miller** provides advice on how to be a good neighbour when undertaking building works, and, explores the curse of graffiti tags and who is responsible for removing them. [CLICK HERE](#)

History & Heritage : **Peter Lamb**, examines a representative sample of letters written to St Mary's University by families of former students who had been killed in the Great War. (Click here). **Rosie White** describes the Easter program for Strawberry Hill House, our principal heritage asset. [CLICK HERE](#)

St Mary's University : **Sairah Ali** sets out short courses provided by St Mary's University over the coming months many of which include a 10% discount for Strawberry Hill residents. [CLICK HERE](#)

Local Issues

To ensure that residents are informed about developments at the Council, we have invited **Richard Bennett**, one of our councillors for South Twickenham Ward, to provide an update on issues that will affect Strawberry Hill. SHRA is an apolitical organisation and any opinions expressed are the councillor's own.

Although Twickenham Green is not in Strawberry Hill, it is on the border and residents use the space extensively and are affected by what happens there (as we saw during lockdown). SHRA has maintained links with Friends of Twickenham Green for many years. Councillor Richard Bennett attends both SHRA and FoTG meetings.

Councillor's Update

Councillor Richard Bennett, Leader of the Green Group & Leader of the Opposition, London Borough of Richmond-upon-Thames (Cllr.r.bennett@richmond.gov.uk).



Twickenham Green Update

I wrote in the last Bulletin about my concern for the state of the Green and its future. Parks pointed out that Mediterranean grasses would survive Summer drought better, but would be less happy with a very wet, cold Winter.

However, in cooperation with Twickenham Cricket Club and the Friends of Twickenham Green, we have produced a proposal (and discussed it with Parks) to install a water storage and distribution system at the Pavilion. The Cricket Club is willing to fund this project. I expect it will still require planning approval, but their funding will enhance its chances of acceptance. We will seek to prove the concept and then press for its extension to the other end of the Green.

I am also hopeful that a proposal for a wild flower garden at the Prince Blucher corner will receive Council support.

Experiencing 8 Years as a Councillor

I had no idea that I would enjoy being a Councillor as much as I have done. At retirement I worried that my knowledge and experience had no outlet and continuing value. In fact my accumulation of corporate planning, project and risk management experience became relevant. I believe that after years of perseverance that there is an evident improvement in the Council's capabilities in these areas.

I also wanted to work in a civilised, collaborative environment. As Leader of the Greens and the Opposition I insisted on this. Admittedly, Liberal Democrat and Conservative Councillors were responsive. I often tabled motions that received unanimous support. As residents you can be proud of how your Councillors conduct themselves and treat each other.

My workload for several years was a heavy one. I was simultaneously a member of the Finance, Environment, Planning and Audit Committees. I was also on the Policy and Performance Review Board, the Governance Working Party and the Local Plan 2024-39 Working Group. I loved it! Most recently I have been focusing on ensuring that the cuts in funding do not cripple our front-line services.

I also Chair the Audit Committee. Overall, there is not enough challenging of officers, but it does happen here. Audits do not question policies but their implementation. There have been Audits that are, in effect, merely post mortems. I press for them to be sufficiently early to produce a better outcome.

Alert - Political Message

I am standing again in May. I will be one of very few candidates who can prevent all 54 Councillors being Liberal Democrats. Much as I love them that is too many.

Cllr Richard Bennett

Local Issues

Crime in Strawberry Hill

by Dany Mooney, SHRA Committee Member

Background

For policing purposes, Strawberry Hill falls within the wider South Twickenham Ward. In common with other wards across Richmond Borough, South Twickenham has its own dedicated team of police officers, our Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT).

After a difficult period of understaffing, spanning some two years, the SNT has now finally returned to full strength. This has also allowed them to give a greater focus to the Schools Officer role (visiting our secondary schools for education on safety and crime prevention). However, the team continues to suffer from a high 'abstraction' rate, whereby officers are called away to help across the Met more widely. Abstraction rates can unfortunately sometimes account for 25% of their time.

Strawberry Hill/South Twickenham continues to benefit from the work of our Police Liaison Group (PLG). Now joined with the West Twickenham Ward, the PLG meets quarterly, providing a forum for Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinators (NHWCs) and local residents to meet the SNTs and our local councillors in order to get feedback on crime trends and police activity and also to raise any concerns. Strawberry Hill is well represented on the PLG, with June Collins, NHWC for Tower Road, and Dany Mooney, NHWC for Radnor Gardens, both attending.

Updates from South Twickenham SNT at last PLG

Police activity continues to focus on shoplifting, which is particularly prolific in the smaller supermarkets in Twickenham, usually with goods sold on to fund drug habits. The police have had some success here, with the main offenders now known to them.

The increased staffing has enabled a strengthening of pro-active work to prevent bike theft. While further details are yet to be disclosed, good progress has been made and several serial offenders identified.

A renewed drive is also underway on residential burglaries.



Regular One Stop Shop meetings continue to be held at St Mary's University, with students being supported on issues arising from social media, e.g. blackmail, sexual offences and attacks.

Crime figures: While a mixed picture, the overall downward trend compared with the same period last year has continued from the last quarter. Residential burglaries are down by 2 (NB: this includes from sheds and garages), but commercial burglaries are up by 1. The number of thefts of motor vehicles remains constant, but theft from motor vehicles is up by 4 cases. Vehicle interference is down by 1. Robbery from persons has increased by 2, cases mostly being theft of mobiles from school children. Assaults without injury have decreased significantly from 23 to 10 cases, though unfortunately assaults with injury have increased from 6 to 8 cases. Cases involving criminal damage have fallen by 4. Overall then, a positive trend compared with last year. Richmond consistently ranks as the safest borough across London, only very occasionally falling to second position.

Concerns over cycling on pavements, including the use of electric bikes and scooters, have been extensively discussed in the last two meetings. Clearly this presents a real danger to pedestrians. It is illegal and the police do intervene when they see it happening (if they can do so safely). Offenders often claim not to have known it is illegal and as a result the PLG has called upon the Council to provide more signage to that effect.

Contact information

The point of contact telephone number for South Twickenham (not a reporting number) is 027 175 9465

X/Twitter address for South Twickenham SNT is [@MPSSTwickenham](#)

South Twickenham SNT email address is southtwickenham.snt@met.police.uk

Reporting homelessness

You can report people who are homeless to SPEAR (the homeless charity) and they will go out and help them – tel. 0208 288 6506 – <https://www.spearlondon.org/>

The following link is to the Street Safe online reporting APP.

<https://www.met.police.uk/notices/street-safe/street-safe/>

Viewing crime figures The following link allows you to view crimes in your area. Simply put in your postcode. UK Crime Statistics (crime-statistics.co.uk)

The Association



Carols in The Village

After deliberations about the impending storm we decided to go ahead with Carols in the Village on Friday 5 December and we are glad we did. Although proceedings started in the heavy rain it eased up by 6.15pm. We were delighted that the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Clare Vollum was able to open the event, and our Chair announced that donations would be divided between local Mayor's charities, Small Steps and Crossroads Richmond & Kingston. Richmond Brass Band played heroically through the wind and rain and the hardy audience of around 65 residents sang along to the extended repertoire of 12 favourite carols. Children decorated the tree which was commented on as being especially good this year.

A special thanks to our chief organiser, June Collins, and our Business Coordinator, Jonathan Bayliss and lastly to all our sponsors who made the event possible: Architecture: WK - Brewers Decorator Centres - Faith Hair and Beauty - Jawbone Brewing- Kew Windows - Kyzan Hairdressing – London Borough of Richmond upon Thames - Mercury Motors - MKG3000 Volvo and Mazda - Parsnips in the Park- Riverside Supermarket - Sopa Thai Restaurant - Squires Garden Centres - St Mary's University - Strawberry Hill Golf Club - Strawberry Hill Pharmacy - Strawberry Hill Post Office - Twickenham Body & Health.

Strawberry Hill – a history of the neighbourhood

One of the key goals of the Strawberry Hill Residents' Association is to promote and protect the heritage assets and history of the area.

SHRA's "History of the Neighbourhood" is aimed mostly at people who live in Strawberry Hill and wish to know more about the area, its history and its roads and houses. Strawberry Hill comprises around 2400 households in about 42 roads. For a relatively small area it has a fascinating history, many historic buildings and has provided a home for many prominent figures over the years. The Book:

Examines the history of the area. This covers its early days as part of the manner of Isleworth Syon, through to the transformation of the open South Field of Twickenham into the villas and estates of writers, artists and aristocracy in the 18th century. It then traces the building of the genteel residences of early Victorian times and the gradual residential development of the late 19th century into the London suburb we know today.

Contains historic maps of the area.

Traces developing transport links from the River, the railway, trams and trolley-buses.

Includes seven "tours" which together cover all the streets of Strawberry Hill identifying houses and residents prominent and not so prominent.

Sets out a Roll of Honour commemorating those residents of Strawberry Hill who gave their lives in the 1914-1918 Great War.

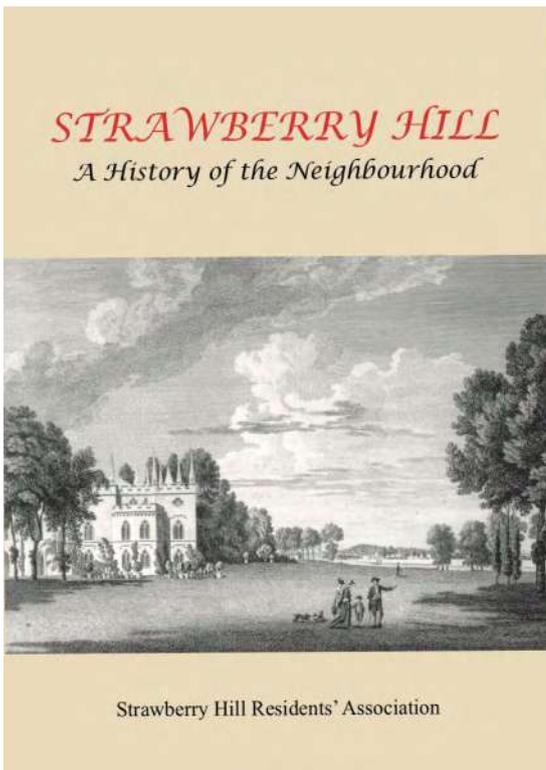
The Book is heavily flavoured by the recollections of residents and knowledge passed down by their parents and grandparents. Two quotes give an idea of the importance of this material in providing a fascinating, and on occasion sometimes sad, insight into the past of the area:

George Kerpner who came to Strawberry Hill as a 13 year old boy in the 1930s remembered the striking social contrasts before the Second World War:

" The big houses in Waldegrave Park were staffed by butlers and servants. Not far away, just off Shacklegate Lane, were roads of railway houses, which were really slums. Children ran barefoot and women sat on their doorsteps watching the world go by. Of course, there was no contact between them and us. It was a tremendous contrast."

Another resident commented that Strawberry Hill was considered a better place to live than "Twickenham proper, more for carriage folk."

No household in Strawberry Hill should really be without a copy of the book. It costs £8 and if you would like a copy please contact us at contact@shra.org.uk or mention to any Officer or Committee Member.



The Association

Annual General Meeting - Wednesday 22 April

Our Annual General Meeting will take place at 7pm on Wednesday 22nd April at Strawberry Hill Golf Club. This is effectively a social evening for Strawberry Hill Residents which starts with complimentary drinks and a finger buffet, then incorporates the formal, but short, AGM and its business, and then allows for questions. After the AGM there is a further opportunity for residents to meet Committee Members and other residents informally.

Please let us know if you plan to come and/or submit agenda items by 8th April by emailing contact@shra.org.uk or just turn up on the evening.

Strawberry Hill Community BBQ & Picnic – Sunday 5 July

This year's Strawberry Hill Community BBQ & Picnic takes place at Strawberry Hill House Gardens on the afternoon of Sunday 5 July. A variety of music will be played by St Margarets Elastic Band and Jolly Julie will provide entertainment for children. Roots & Berries, the resident House café, will provide a menu of exciting barbecued food but residents can also bring their own food and drink. Children will be able to dress up in Horace Walpole era costumes. Tickets will go on sale later in the spring and we anticipate brisk demand – last year adults paid for entry but children were free. All proceeds will go towards the restoration of the House. This is a great opportunity to picnic in the historic grounds in front of Horace Walpole's Gothic Castle.



SHRA SOCIAL EVENING
incorporating the
Annual General Meeting

*Strawberry Hill Golf Club
Wellesley Road
Wednesday 22 April
7pm for 7.30 start*

All residents of Strawberry Hill are members of SHRA and are invited to join us for drinks and finger food

Please let us know if you plan to come & submit agenda items by 8 April email contact@shra.org.uk or just turn up on the night

Would you like to become a SHRA Committee Member?

SHRA is keen to recruit new Committee Members. To give you some insight into what the role involves we asked two existing Members, Louisa Carradine and Jonathan Bayliss, to provide their personal experience.

First a little background;

SHRA's main aims under its constitution are:

- to protect and enhance the amenities of the area;
- to monitor planning applications in order to preserve the character of the area;
- to promote community spirit; and
- to work with other organisations to achieve these objectives.

The Committee has four officers: a Chair, a Vice Chair, a Secretary and a Treasurer. There are then 11 committee members who take on various roles. There are current vacancies for events co-ordinators who would help with organising the AGM, the Carol Concert and the Summer Community Picnic. We also need Committee Members who can help with marketing and communications.

There is always an element of the unknown when considering volunteering for this type of role. Will Committee meetings be formal and stuffy? Will the role be time consuming? What will you get out of participating? Over to Louisa and Jonathan:

Why did you decide to become Committee Members?

Louisa

When the opportunity to share the Environmental Co-ordinator role came up at SHRA, the timing felt right. I had just started my own local business focused on reducing plastic waste and with a six month old daughter I was on maternity leave and keen to connect more with people in Strawberry Hill. It felt like a natural fit both personally and professionally. Initially the role was shared with another local resident, Sharon, who worked at Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. We had a great partnership with complementary interests and skills.

Jonathan

We have lived in Strawberry Hill for a long time and I realised how lucky we are to live in such an attractive area with a strong sense of community. As we all know, the area has a fascinating history with many historic buildings. I had been aware of SHRA through its publications and events and making a contribution through its Committee appealed to me. I particularly wanted to be able to help in its continuing work to promote and protect local amenities and the landscape but also to meet more local people.

When I mentioned to the Chairman that I was interested I was invited to the next Committee Meeting and was impressed with the range of contributions and expertise and the very friendly welcome.



The Association



Jonathan Bayliss with Fiona Maxwell, Pam Crisp & June Collins

What is your particular contribution?

Louisa

I focused initially on organising a monthly litter picking group, which has now been running for three years. I also make sure the Wellesley Parade recycling bins are maintained and emptied regularly by Richmond Council Services, report any misuse or vandalism, flag fly tipping, and generally help ensure Strawberry Hill does its bit to keep all 42 streets clean and tidy. In the initial months, Sharon looked after bio-diversity related issues, maintaining the SHRA planter and other small green spaces in the area. Given her work at Kew Gardens, I was always keen to pick up gardening tips from her! Sharon has since moved to the West Country, and her responsibilities are now shared among other Committee Members.

Jonathan

When I first joined the Committee I helped other Committee Members with whatever support was useful. This included helping with the AGM and Carol Concert and (under supervision!) assisting with planting a neglected planter near the station.

I was then happy to accept the role of Business Liaison. The previous Business Liaison had compiled a detailed directory of local businesses, and had many contacts in the business community which he kindly passed on to me. Over a period of months I visited the businesses and introduced myself. The owners were welcoming and I was even given guided tours of a number of premises! When I returned to ask for support for the annual Carol Concert many businesses provided generous sponsorship. From my perspective it was fascinating to learn more about the local business community and my aim is to work on areas where SHRA can provide useful support to that community.

SHRA has quarterly meetings of Committee Members. How do you find these?

Louisa

I really enjoy hearing what is happening locally, from planning applications and news about local businesses to transport updates and new developments that might affect the area. Living somewhere as busy as Strawberry Hill there is always something going on. Being involved makes you feel informed and genuinely connected to where you live.

Jonathan

The meetings are a great opportunity to learn about the range of current issues from the different members. The meetings also plan for future events and drive forward the aims of SHRA. The meetings are friendly and completely unstuffy!

Do you find it difficult to combine your day to day activities and responsibilities with being a Committee Member of SHRA?

Louisa

You get out of it what you put in. The monthly litter picks come round quickly, but it's just an hour on a Saturday morning and a rewarding way to start the weekend. We have a consistent team of lovely neighbours who regularly turn up and I value catching up with all of them. Beyond that my involvement is fairly flexible. I've gone back to working in TV, so attend Committee Meetings when I can. There is no pressure, every contribution is appreciated.

Jonathan

Not at all. The commitment is modest and if for any reason a Committee Member is unable to attend meetings or contribute for a while help is always provided.

Have you found being a SHRA Committee member fulfilling?

Louisa

There is sometimes an assumption that being on a committee is mostly for retired people and perhaps there's a little truth in that. I have though loved getting to know Committee Members and understanding more about what's happening in our area. I feel far more integrated into the community and I'm lucky that when I walk round Strawberry Hill I often bump into someone I know, people I might never have met had I stayed within my usual network of school mums and children's clubs.

Jonathan

I was unsure at the beginning what lay in store but I have found it enjoyable and rewarding. Over the years I had been aware of SHRA working hard to protect and enhance our "village" and it feels good to be now part of it.

What would your message be to anyone considering becoming a Committee Member?

Louisa

You will meet new people, learn more about where you live, and feel part of the supportive local community- all with a very manageable commitment. I hope to remain part of the Strawberry Hill Residents' Association for many years to come.

Jonathan

Take the plunge! You will find you have the opportunity to help support our community for a modest commitment. You will also meet new people and open up a range of interesting local contacts.

If you are interested in becoming a Committee Member approach any officer or existing Committee Member (contact details on page 7 or tell us via our [website](#).)

The Association

RENEWAL OF SUBSCRIPTION:

Your contribution is vital in allowing SHRA to maintain and develop its events and activities including litter picks, the Strawberry Hill Community BBQ and Picnic, the planter, the Bulletin, local history, protecting the heritage and monitoring planning applications. We also maintain a fund for legal fees which are required if there is a need to challenge local planning decisions. All Committee members are volunteers. The suggested subscription fee is £5-£10 annually per household (April-March).

You can pay by BACs, Standing order or cheque.

BACs - please email the Treasurer (june.collins@hotmail.co.uk) when making a BACs payment so we know what it is for and who you are. Details:

NatWest Account Name: *Strawberry Hill Residents' Association*
Sort Code: 55-50-39
Account Number: 71550410

Standing order – please email the Treasurer (june.collins@hotmail.co.uk) for a SO form.

Cheques payable to *Strawberry Hill Residents' Association*, drop in or post to June Collins, *23b Tower Road*, TW1 4PD OR Post Office, 50 Tower Road, TW1 4PE (please enclose a note with your name, address and email).

RENEWAL OF SUBSCRIPTION : Your contribution is gratefully received and helps maintain the planters near the station, assists in publication costs and allows us to run and manage the AGM's as well as funds for possible local legal and planning requirements. All committee members are volunteers. Suggested subscription fee is **£5-£10 annually per household**.

Cheques to Strawberry Hill Resident's Association

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____ **POSTCODE:** _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____ **TELEPHONE:** _____

Please drop in to either A: June Collins, 23b Tower Road, TW1 4PD or
B : Post Office, 50 Tower Road, TW1 4PE

The Committee

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SHRA on social media

Please join/visit the following for more regular posts about Strawberry Hill.

 **Website** – www.shra.org.uk

 [@SHResidents](https://www.instagram.com/SHResidents)

 [Strawberry_Hill_RA](https://www.facebook.com/Strawberry_Hill_RA)

[Strawberry Hill Residents' Association](http://www.shra.org.uk)

Streetscape

by Andrew Miller

Building Works – Think About The Neighbours

It is that time of year again when the scaffolding lorries arrive and cover our Strawberry Hill houses with steel poles and planks. It seems to be the fashion following 'Homes under the Hammer' to buy a property and to gut it. This allows for major works such as rear extensions, loft extensions and the ubiquitous open-plan kitchen diner with island to be undertaken. Newcomers and current residents have the right to maintain and upgrade their property, however, SHRA urges residents to consider their neighbours.

Public costs

House improvements come at a private cost but there is also a public cost to those living in neighbouring properties. Those potential problems include (all of these have been witnessed):

- Noise from such as nail guns, cement mixers and angle grinders.
- Noise outside of local authority guidelines e.g. before 8am in the morning.
- Noise from radios played outside of the property.
- Dust and other small particles from demolition, carpentry and cement entering neighbouring gardens and dirtying windows.
- Unsightly piles of rubbish bags piled in the front garden or, worse still, on the road in front of the house – to avoid paying for a skip on the road.
- Damage to pavements caused by scaffolding, cement mixers and building supply vehicles.
- Damage to residents' vehicles from scaffolding poles or joists or similar.
- Damage to neighbouring roofs from builders walking on slates.

Another common issue is the reduction in parking spaces as builders arrive in separate vans to the job.



Communicate

So what should you do when planning major building works beyond the usual party wall requirements? The key is in communication. Your immediate neighbours would like to know the duration of planned works and the times when the most noise is likely to occur. They may also want to know about the times of cement or building supply deliveries or skip drop/pick ups – they may want to move their cars. It is also important to talk to the person managing the build to discuss your expectations.

There are good practice guides and some builders do try to be 'considerate contractors'. These ten 'golden rules' have been adapted from the list produced by the Cleaver Square, Cleaver Street and Bowden Street Residents' Association in Lambeth

Considerate Builder – 10 Golden Rules

1. **Talk to your neighbours first** – try to limit noise vibration and disruption to key times to reduce the level of disturbance. Be aware of vulnerable neighbours, the elderly or those with babies.
2. **Get the right permission and approvals** – planning permission, party wall agreements, street condition survey.
3. **Provide contact details** – on major works put a sign up saying who is in charge of the site and how to contact them.
4. **Stick to approved working hours.**
5. **Keep site noise to a minimum** – radios should not be played when they can be heard outside the property, deliveries and skip drop/removal should take place within agreed working hours.
6. **Keep the dust down** – particularly from stone cutting when correct damping down measures should be taken.
7. **Clear rubbish and builders' debris promptly.**
8. **Don't block the pavement or road** – ensure pedestrian access to the pavement, sweep and hose the street regularly.
9. Ensure your builders behave courteously at all times.
10. **Deal quickly and considerately with any problems** – treat complaints seriously and let them know what action you have taken to rectify the situation.



Streetscape

By Andrew Miller

The Curse of Graffiti Tags



It has recently been brought to our attention that the scourge of graffiti has been inflicted on Popes Avenue again. A tagger has walked up the street and covered the Popes Grove/Popes Avenue post box, numerous lampposts, utility boxes and green waste recycling bins with white spray paint. This follows incidents last year, when Strawberry Hill Station was covered in tags. These tags have now been cleared as a result of reporting by residents and the action of the Council and Network Rail. Graffiti is a criminal offence under the Criminal Damage Act 1971, and those caught can be prosecuted and fined up to £5,000. It would be a real result to catch the culprit and restorative justice would suggest a sentence of x number of days cleaning off graffiti would be an appropriate punishment – in a perfect world!

Council role

The Council will remove graffiti from Council owned property, private property, and commercial property when it is visible from the street, accessible and at a height below three metres. Graffiti is removed using either a high pressure machine which uses specialised chemicals, or paint. If you are a victim of graffiti you should first report it to the police. Graffiti can be reported directly to the police using the MET online graffiti report form or by calling 101. The Council offers a free removal service to: households that have been subjected to a graffiti attack and independent businesses with nine employees or less nationally. Graffiti removal can only happen once the Council has received a graffiti removal request and permission from the property owner or occupier. Once permission is given the Council aims to remove offensive graffiti (e.g. racist, homophobic or sexist) within one working day and other graffiti within five working days.

Multiple organisations

A problem for Strawberry Hill residents is that the Council will not remove graffiti on the following features in the streetscape.

- **Railway property** - this should be reported to Network Rail.
- **Electrical substations** - this should be reported to UK Power Networks
- **Utility boxes** - this should be reported to the relevant utility company. Most utility boxes have a manhole cover in front of them that will show the name of the company that owns the box
- **Bus stops and shelters** - this should be reported to Transport for London
- **Phone boxes** - this should be reported to BT.

The problem is that the graffiti vandals seem to understand this, so make a point of focusing on utility boxes where it is not always obvious who owns them. SHRA hopes that the residents of each street afflicted will take action to complete the Council's graffiti-removal forms aimed at the tags which the Council will remove and endeavour to report other graffiti to the organisations listed above. SHRA will pass on any concerns from residents to our South Ward Councillors to follow up. We want to ensure that the Council follows its own advice to householders that the best way to discourage graffiti is its rapid removal.



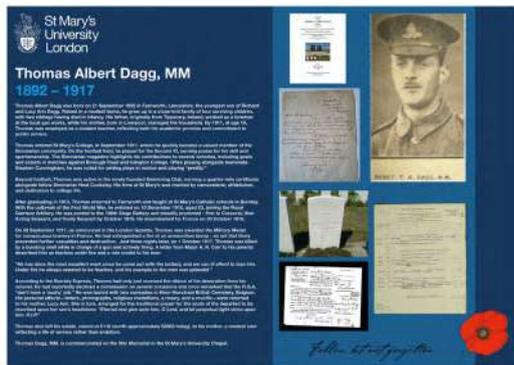
History & Heritage

St Mary's University : Letters of Loss The 1920 War Memorial Appeal

Last year, 2025, marked significant anniversaries for St Mary's University. Founded as a training college in 1850, the University not only celebrated its 175 years of existence, but also the centenary of its move from the original campus in Hammersmith to Strawberry Hill in 1925.

Such anniversaries prompt a retrospective look into the events and features that comprise the history of the institution, and we were particularly interested in the exhibition mounted in the chapel that brought to light a fascinating but poignant collection of material from the University archive.

For over 100 years, a sheaf of twenty two letters had lain unknown and unread, and when they were unearthed they were revealed to be missives to the then college from family members who had lost relatives in the Great War.



The initiative for these letters came in early 1920 as St Mary's Training College prepared for its first reunion since before the Great War. Mr Mahon, the College Secretary, appealed to the families of former students who had been killed in the war to send military details and photographs of their loved ones. A memorial board to the fallen was to be placed in the chapel as a tribute to the alumni who had made the ultimate sacrifice for their country, and it was unveiled at Whitson 1920 in the original chapel at Hammersmith for the first post-war reunion of Simmarians.

To honour them anew, as SMU celebrated its two anniversaries in 2025, the letters formed the body of a series of panels on display in the Chapel, a moving exhibition put together in time for the Remembrance Day commemorations last year.

To quote from the introductory panel: "These letters, written in response to Mr Mahon's appeal, were not merely administrative replies – in many cases they were acts of remembrance, tokens of love, and expressions of hope that their dear ones would not be forgotten."

From the twenty two panels we have selected a representative sample of four, but the complete display with copies of the letters and photographs can be viewed on-line at

[REMEMBRANCE DAY \(ALL\) by St Mary's University Twickenham](#)

Hugh Anthony Callan (1883-1917) grew up in a working class family in Middlesbrough. At 18 he worked as a pupil teacher before continuing his education at St Mary's College, Hammersmith between 1905 and 1907. He was actively involved in student life and was proud to be a 'Simmarian'. Committed to education, he later became a certified schoolteacher at the St Mary's Catholic Schools in Middlesbrough. In 1913 he married Matilda Connelly, also an elementary schoolteacher and they had two children.

At the outbreak of the war he enlisted as a signaller in the 105th Battery, 22nd Brigade Royal Field Artillery.

On the 6th October 1917, he was killed in action close to Ypres. In her heartfelt letter to St Mary's College, widowed Matilda described how a shell struck the dugout where he and his comrades were sleeping. She describes as 'merciful, thank God' that his death was instantaneous. His body is interred at Hooge Crater Cemetery with an inscription chosen by his wife. "We have loved him in life, let us not forget him in death".



Cecil John 'Jack' Cotter (1892-1916) was born in Fulham and grew up in a family devoted to education and public service. His father, Alfred Cotter, was a schoolmaster, as was one of his brothers. Cecil began his teaching career as a pupil teacher, attending Battersea Polytechnic Boys Secondary School. He became a student at St Mary's College in September 1910. At St Mary's he soon distinguished himself, both academically and as a football player. His athletic prowess received many mentions in the Simmarian magazine.

In September 1914 he enlisted in the 7th Battalion, Middlesex Regiment. He joined the '1st' Company formed of London County Council teachers. His father noted in his letter of 1920 that very few of the teachers survived. Jack rose to become a signalling sergeant, serving in Gibraltar, Egypt and finally on the Western Front. He was an exemplary soldier, but was tragically killed in September 1916 during the Battle of the Somme. Originally his body was misidentified, but this was later corrected on discovery of his tobacco pouch which was the only personal item bearing his name. He is buried at Delville Wood Cemetery, Longueval. He was posthumously awarded the Victory Medal, the British War Medal and the 1914-15 star. His name is commemorated on the War Memorial in St Mary's University Chapel.



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John Cotton (1894-1917) was born in Chorley, Lancashire into a family of quarry workers. He trained as a teacher at St Mary's College before the First World War and distinguished himself as a dedicated student, particularly on the sports field as a skilful footballer. He was a talented singer, performing regularly at College concerts. He enlisted in the Royal Navy in August 1916. He served on several ships, but it was on HMS Simoom that he met his ultimate fate. In January 1917 the ship was operating in the North Sea when it was struck by a German torpedo that detonated the ship's magazine. 47 crew members perished, among them John. His death was noted with deep sorrow in the Easter 1917 edition of the Simmarian magazine, which extended heartfelt sympathies to his family and honoured his sacrifice.

His name is commemorated alongside those of his fellow Simmarians on the War Memorial in St Mary's University Chapel.

Thomas Albert Dagg, MM (1892 - 1917) was born on 21 September 1892 in Farnworth, Lancashire, the youngest son of Richard and Lucy Ann Dagg. Raised in a modest home, he grew up in a close-knit family of four surviving children, with two siblings having died in infancy. His father, originally from Tipperary, Ireland, worked as a foreman at the local gas works, while his mother, born in Liverpool, managed the household. By 1911, at age 19, Thomas was employed as a student teacher, reflecting both his academic promise and commitment to public service.

Thomas entered St Mary's College, in September 1911, where he quickly became a valued member of the Simmarian community. On the football field, he played for the Second XI, earning praise for his skill and sportsmanship. The Simmarian magazine highlights his contributions to several victories, including goals and assists in matches against Borough Road and Islington College. Often playing alongside teammate Stephen Cunningham, he was noted for setting plays in motion and playing "prettily".-

With the outbreak of the First World War, he enlisted on 10 December 1915, aged 23, joining the Royal Garrison Artillery. He was posted to the 188th Siege Battery and steadily promoted - first to Corporal, then Acting Serjeant, and finally Serjeant by October 1916. He disembarked for France on 30 October 1916.

On 28 September 1917, as announced in the London Gazette, Thomas was awarded the Military Medal for conspicuous bravery in France. He had extinguished a fire at an ammunition dump - an act that likely prevented further casualties and destruction. Just three nights later, on 1 October 1917, Thomas was killed by a bursting shell while in charge of a gun and actively firing. A letter from Major A. R. Carr to his parents described him as fearless under fire and a role model to his men:

"He has done the most excellent work since he came out with the battery, and we can ill afford to lose him.

Under fire he always seemed to be fearless, and his example to the men was splendid."

We have outlined here just four of the twenty two who feature in the exhibition but accord no less remembrance to the others.

It is fitting to bring to mind that St Mary's University has a century long presence in Strawberry Hill, and a history that goes back even further. This remembrance exhibition recalls a time shortly before the institution came to Strawberry Hill, but it forms part of the heritage and identity of the university as it is today. Past alumni have made significant contributions to British society, both in times of war and peace. We hope to explore more of the history of St Mary's College and University in future editions of the bulletin.

Peter Lamb, SHRA



History & Heritage Strawberry Hill House

by Rosie White, Assistant Curator and Digital Marketing Manager

Spring at Strawberry Hill House & Garden
30 March – 12 April 2026



This Easter, Strawberry Hill House & Garden welcomes residents to step into spring with a programme that blends creativity, heritage and outdoor discovery. From Monday 30 March to Sunday 12 April, the House will open seven days a week (10am–4pm), offering activities for visitors of all ages.

A rare highlight awaits in the Red Bedchamber, where **Johann Heinrich Müntz's *South East View of Strawberry Hill* (1755–58)** will be on display. Painted while Müntz lived and worked at Strawberry Hill as Walpole's in-house artist, this remarkable work captures the villa and its garden at the moment the Gothic Revival was taking shape. It is one of only two surviving oil paintings of Strawberry Hill by Müntz. The House has launched a campaign to raise £85,000 to secure the painting permanently. Two generous sponsors have pledged to match donations to this appeal, meaning each gift you make will go twice as far until we reach our target. The painting can be viewed free with general admission.

Outdoors, families can enjoy the **Easter Woodland Trail** (28 March – 12 April), a self-guided adventure encouraging children to follow clues, look for signs of new life and explore Walpole's garden at their own pace. Trail maps cost £2 and include a reward cupcake from the Garden Café.

A varied programme of workshops runs throughout the holidays. **Easter Crafts at the Castle** (29 March, 2 & 4 April) offers relaxed, hands-on sessions inspired by nests, eggs and the small wonders of spring, while **Minibeast Adventures** (28 March, 3, 5 & 12 April) invite families to meet the bugs and creatures that make our garden thrive, build a mini bug hotel to take home, and join a guided hunt through the grounds. Adults can enjoy a slower creative morning on Saturday 11 April with **Stitching with Nature**, a mindful botanical embroidery workshop led by textile artist Katerina Knight.

Find out more about our easter programme strawberryhillhouse.org.uk/easter

Alongside the Easter programme, Strawberry Hill House has launched a new appeal to restore one of Horace Walpole's most imaginative garden features: the Shell Seat. Designed in the 1750s by Walpole's collaborator Richard Bentley, the original bench took the form of an enormous half-clam shell, positioned to frame a dramatic view of the Thames. A replica installed during the 2007–2010 restoration is now in urgent need of replacement. Working with digital preservation specialists Factum Arte, the House aims to recreate the Shell Seat using advanced 3D mapping and durable, weather-resistant materials. Residents can support the campaign at strawberryhillhouse.org.uk/shell-seat



Johann Heinrich Müntz's *South East View of Strawberry Hill*



Richard Bentley, Design for a Seat at Strawberry Hill, 1754. Ink drawing showing Bentley's original concept for Walpole's Shell Bench, Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University.



Easter Minibeast Adventures at
Strawberry Hill House

Saturday 28th March, Friday 3rd April Sunday 5th
April & Sunday 12th April | 11am-12.30pm

St Mary's University

Short Courses- Strawberry Hill Residents Welcome

By Sairah Ali, short courses administrator

We're delighted to offer a variety of short courses over the coming months, many of which include a **10% discount exclusively for our Strawberry Hill neighbours.**

You can browse all current offers on our dedicated page: stmarys.ac.uk/short-courses which is updated regularly.

Learn to Lift – Strength Building & Weightlifting

If you would like to add strength training to your fitness routine, our Learn to Lift course returns 15 April 2026. Held on Wednesday evenings, this course will teach you how to safely lift weights and improve your fitness in a friendly, fun, and supportive environment. The sessions take place in our state-of-the-art Performance Education Centre (PEC) on campus, with courses tailored for every experience level: Beginners 6-7pm; intermediate 7-8pm; Advanced 8-9pm. Take advantage of the discounted rate and secure your place.

We are thrilled to announce **Salsa at St Mary's University – Get ready to dance.** Join us for a free, beginner- friendly salsa taster session on **Thursday 5 March at 5.30** in the 1850 Bar Snug, St Mary's University. This welcoming class is designed to make you feel great- no experience needed.

Whether you're coming along with friends or on your own, just bring your energy and your smile. Discover the joy of Salsa in a relaxed, supportive setting.

Level 3 Certificate in Health Coaching (RSPH)

If you're passionate about supporting health and wellbeing in your local community, our part-time Level 3 Health Coaching course offers a rewarding opportunity. Delivered through a flexible blend of online learning and face-to-face teaching on campus. This programme equips you to guide individuals in making positive, sustainable lifestyle changes. From improving sleep and mobility to managing stress and long-term health conditions.

Accredited by the Royal Society for Public Health, the course provides expert-led training in behaviour change models, motivational techniques, and personalised care consultations. You'll develop the confidence to hold supportive one-to-one conversations, help clients identify barriers to better health, and create a realistic, personalised action plan that leads to lasting results.

Running part-time from **Saturday 2 May 2026 – Saturday 30 January 2027**, this qualification is ideal for those looking to make a meaningful difference locally- whether you're beginning a new career in health coaching or enhancing an existing role in fitness, wellbeing, or community services.
<https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/short-courses>

For our full course list, visit:

stmarys.ac.uk/short-courses

Or contact us for further information

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Reflexology

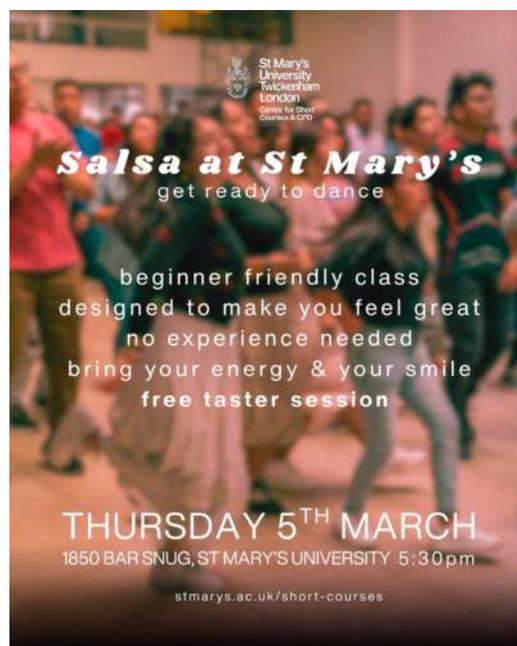
Take a step forward in your profession or personal development with our **Level 3 Diploma in Reflexology** – a comprehensive qualification in this respected complementary therapy.



Reflexology encourages deep relaxation and overall wellbeing by stimulating specific pressure points on the feet, lower legs, hands, face or ears. This course is led by expert practitioners and will equip you with the knowledge and skills to deliver safe, effective, commercially viable treatments in line with professional standards and legislation.

Upon completion, you'll be fully qualified, able to obtain insurance, establish your own practice, or pursue reflexology roles within the wellness industry. We are proud to be an **Association of Reflexologists (AoR) Gateway Member.**

Alongside these courses, we also offer a wide range of programmes in **Nutrition, Gym & Personal Training, Reflexology, Massage & Sports Massage, and Emergency First Aid at work.**



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