



CARA Newsletter

Spring 2025

Canbury And Riverside Association
Working to protect and enhance our local community

A sad day for the latest version of the Half Mile Tree

The original Half Mile Tree would have been a sapling when Henry VIII was born. It grew to be a fine specimen much like the young King Himself. It was called The Half Mile Tree by the boatmen on their way to Hampton Court as it was approximately one half of a mile to the first bridged crossing of the Thames since leaving London. Some believe that the tree that the noble visitors marked, on the way to the Court at Hampton, was the same one that had to be felled in 1951.



The Half Mile Tree
In 1920

Sadly, its replacement, a horse chestnut, did not have such a splendid life. It caught one or more of the diseases that ended the lives of many local horse chestnuts over the last few years. Our local Tree Officer considered it a danger, as well as unsightly, and arranged for it to be cut down a few weeks ago. Its demise had been anticipated for quite a few years and a young oak planted as a successor has not flourished.

Thames Landscape Strategy, whose founding patron is Sir David Attenborough, will work with Royal Borough of Kingston, who plan to plant a worthy successor for this royal riverside landmark, and landscape the surrounding area. CARA committee fully supports the need for a marker for our town's historical landmark, as do a number of local members and Kingston residents.

As soon as we have firm news of this project we will let our readers know.

The Half Mile Tree location can be found at the bend of Lower Ham Rd, where it turns right to Richmond Rd., at the beginning of the towpath, that continues down the Thames to Teddington Lock.

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OUR FINE FEATHERED FRIENDS

BY
PETER HIGGINS



You may have heard in recent days the cacophonous chattering of some of our feathered friends and wondered what and why this was occurring. The '**what**' is occurring are parakeets that live in Canbury Gardens and in other green areas around Kingston, including Bushy Park and Richmond Park. And of course some people are full of joy when they hear these sounds... others less so.

More specifically, our noisy neighbours are called Ring-Necked Parakeets or sometimes Rose-Ringed Parakeets or even more specifically *Psittacula kramera* (a good trivia night question). These birds have a brilliant green body and usually a red bill. Their average length is around 40 centimetres. Males can be identified by their black and pink neck.

This species of parakeet originates from Southern Asia and is well known in Australia. How they came to live in London a topic of several urban myths. Something that is agreed, is that they were first observed in London in the late 1960's. One myth says they were brought to London as pets and then accidentally released. Another myth is, they came here as specimens and again accidentally released. A wilder, and refuted myth, is they were used in the filming of the movie 'The African Queen' and released on purpose. We may never know the exact cause for the population that now exists but what we do know is the original population was less than 10 birds and now there are thousands. Ringed-Neck Parakeets are mainly found in London and more widely in the south east of England, extending into Surrey. Having said that, other populations have been introduced separately as far north as Glasgow. They are a friendly bird and often interact positively with humans.

That is the '**what**' of the noise, the
'**why**' of the noise is...
it is their breeding season –
I will leave the rest to your
imagination!



Peter Higgins has been a vet for over 30 years. He hails from Australia and has worked in a variety of practices before moving to the UK. Peter has written two books on pet care both of which sold out within a month of being released onto the market.

He has lived with a menagerie of animals during his time including rabbits, guinea pigs, mice, ducks, chickens, dogs, cats and horses. **He even had an ant farm... until the day of the great escape.** Since moving to the UK, he works as a vet in London, and is also an Official Veterinarian for the Animal and Plant Health Agency of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

As well as dogs, cats, horses, and birds, Peter has dealt with and treated a wide variety of animals including tortoises, snakes, bats, hamsters, rabbits, guinea pigs, gerbils, and of course koalas and kangaroos. Outside of veterinary medicine and surgery Peter is an avid sports fan and in particular rugby union, cricket, and athletics. Currently Peter has two German Pinschers called Heidi and Kaiser and a cat called Tilly.

Don't forget to say "G'day" if you see Peter walking his dogs in the park.



PERSONAL SPACE

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from Mayfair
to the elegant Albany Boathouse
overlooking the River Thames

info@psfitness.com



Suzie Roberts Sports Massage therapist

Suzie says,
"We differ from other
gyms, in that we
provide a range of
assessment tests
usually the preserve of
athletes. You will
receive a full report
and recommendation
based on your results"



Mark Roberts Fitness expert

Mark says ,
"We have a great
team of highly
experienced but
friendly experts.
We have Nutritionists,
Osteopaths, Physios
and even Golf
specialists, who can
technically assess
your swing!"

Our Gym has all the usual kit found in the best gyms but we differ in that we like to focus on regular assessments/testing. It's what professional sports people do and we think it's vital for everyone. An accurate picture of your weight, for example, will reveal how much of that weight is muscle mass and how much really is fat!

As we get older, we tend to dismiss problems affecting hips and knees etc but if you know what's actually going on, there might well be something you can do to rectify or improve it, injury prevention and cure is one of our top priorities.

After all, we only have one body, so it's vital to keep it in tip-top condition so we can go on to enjoy a flexible and problem free old age.

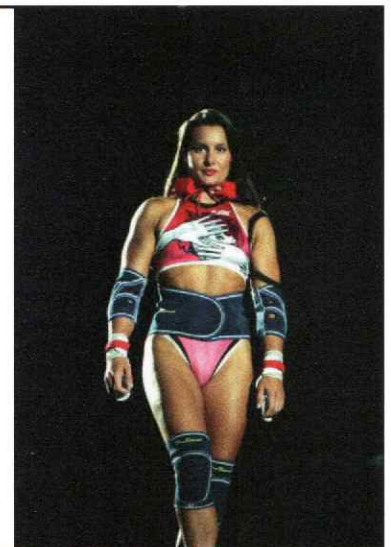
All welcome, clients range from 14 to 70+ years, complete beginners to International Athletes.

A Jewel in the Heart of Kingston

Mark Roberts and Suzie Cox met when they were both on LWT's Gladiators. Suzie was the **Gladiator 'Vogue' in 1997. See right.**

That's when they got together and hatched their plan to go into the health and fitness business, setting up very successfully in Mayfair.

However, with a desire to live in Kingston and run a business close by, they found the perfect house and then they finally found the ideal space for a gym, right on the river, with magical sunsets lighting up the sky and the forecourt of the Personal Space.





**CANBURY
BANDSTAND
CONCERTS**

Summer Sundays by the Thames 3pm-5pm

25 th May	St Margaret's Elastic Band
1 st June	Perrin Jazz Collective
15 th June	Barnes Concert Band
22 nd June	Euphonix
29 th June	Richmond Youth Jazz Band
6 th July	Kingston Music Service Wind Bands
13 th July	Kingston & Malden Scout and Guide Band and Surrey British Legion Youth Band
27 th July	Tony Heiberg's Folk Rock Band
3 rd August	The Cobham Band
10 th August	Herd of Sax
17 th August	The New MUGs
31 st August	Soul Rites
7 th September	Staines Lammas Band

Canbury Bandstand, Canbury Gardens, KT2 5AW

The concerts this year have kindly been funded by the following organisations:



Summer Sundays in Canbury Gardens

Join us for a diverse range of concerts in
Canbury Gardens Bandstand. Sponsored by
CARA and local businesses

3pm - 5pm

We will be kicking off on **25th May** with the
excellent

St Margaret's Elastic Band!

Has the trial shared path scheme worked in Canbury Gardens?

Sadly, the consultation deadline, for the trial of the
shared path scheme, will be closed by the time you
read this. However, a serious accident between a
pedestrian and a hired electric bike, has cast grave
doubts on the schemes viability.

Kingston Council will be reviewing various options,
including returning to the previous idea of keeping
cycles to the towpath, or maintaining the current
shared path, with restrictions on hired electric bikes.



This is the **CARA** QR Code. Scan until carakingston.org appears, click on
that for all the current info at **CARA**.

Alternatively, to www.carakingston.org to get to the same place.

CARA COMMITTEE

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