



# CARA Newsletter

Spring 2024

Canbury And Riverside Association

Working to protect and enhance our local environment



The Thames Boat Project

**The River Thames Boat Project** operates two accessible community boats, Thames Venturer & Thames Discoverer, providing special subsidised day cruises for people of all ages with disabilities. They also have educational days learning afloat for Primary School children, either at Teddington Lock or Kingston, for their 'School on the River', covering geography and science. But what they need are volunteers! They have the boat and the lesson plans, but volunteers are needed to help to teach. They can be former teachers, teachers in training and those with no prior teaching experience at all!

The boats are also available for Private Hire for up to 12 people, for day and evening cruises or even static moored activities, parties, classes.... **RTBP needs donations and fundraising to subsidise the special days.**

Contact 020 8940 3509 or [info@thamesboatproject.org](mailto:info@thamesboatproject.org)

## Morning dawns, and there's a Bear in the River!

Well, that Bear wasn't there yesterday! The bears, created by Christine Jopling, have popped up all over Kingston to entertain and educate. But nitwits, with more brawn than brains, thought it was a brilliant idea to drag it from its position on the Thames. The fibreglass bear is full of air but attached to a very heavy base, full of bricks. It floated down on the tide and with a nudge from early morning boaters ended up on the slip in Lower Ham Rd.



**HELP  
BEAR IN  
THE  
RIVER!!**



Boater Rik gets a rope round Bear's legs.



Heave Ho - but the plinth is full of bricks!



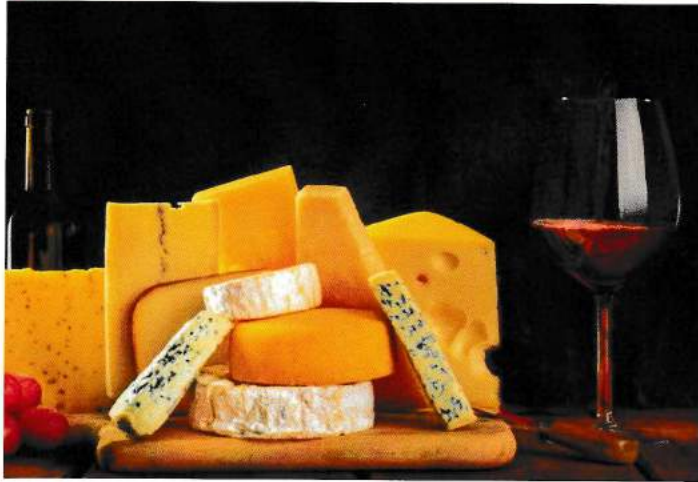
Remove bricks and unscrew Bear from plinth.



Hooray Bear's in the van at last

### **FINALLY**

Bear goes to Bear hospital for a rather bruised hip.



### The Cheeses and Matched Wine

At £15 a head, it was hard to resist this fun and educational experience, on 20<sup>th</sup> April. Our palates were expanded as we discovered new and favourite combinations. It was hard to resist the Vouvray with the Stinking Bishop!!

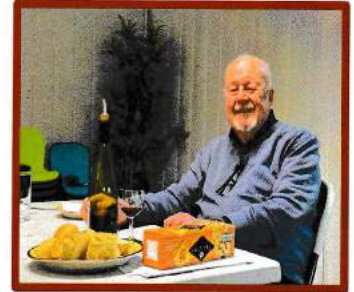


Happy trainee connoisseurs

### Master of Ceremonies

Connoisseur Extraordinaire

**John Parrish**



## Earth Day

On 22<sup>nd</sup> April **Elliot Newton** introduced **Earth Day**, a free event, open to all and once again he lead us on a search for bats, as the sun set. The bat 'lovers', were provided with bat detectors, which emit bat sounds to alert you to spot them as fly about overhead amongst the trees. Quite a crowd arrived with more children than



before and the kids were running about as their detectors started clicking, shouting "I've got one!" When a bat fluttered around overhead, a roar would go up from the watchers.



As the night falls, we are all gathered around Elliot to hear about Earth Day and the goings on in Canbury Gardens after dark.

### Litter Picking Spring Saturday with Fern Hill Primary School



Catherine, far left, organises this grand litter picking spree once a month on a Saturday. She feels it's good for the children to be aware of the litter carelessly left around in public spaces. It can also

have the cross over effect with the concept of keeping one's bedroom tidy. It's a great community collaboration as well as being fun to see how many cigarette-butts you can pick up in one go with a litter picker!!!

Ellie, right, quizzed us on 3 litter picking statistics. (see top right)



#### Elle's Quiz

- 1) When was the first national clean-up? **1951**
- 2) How many litter pickers in UK? **100,000**
- 3) Weight of litter from the big beach clean-up in 2021? **5,065KG**



If you feel you, or the kids, have missed out on some of these events then become a CARA member and you will receive an email every month with what's on the following month **Don't miss out - Join Cara**

## Talking Dogs

On the 13<sup>th</sup> March we were treated to a fascinating evening with **PETER HIGGINS & ELLIOT NEWTON** talking about dogs, in the pavilion beside the Tennis Courts in Canbury Gardens. (Page 3 of the New Year's Newsletter).

Dogs have lived alongside us for around 33,000 years, Elliot tells us, their common ancestor was the Grey Wolf which diversified variously around the world from their common ancestor, in Europe, North America, China and India eventually evolving into our doggy companions as workers, helpers, supporters and simply as part of the family.



Today, we probably see many of the devolved breeds in Canbury Gardens, who are free to run and make doggy friends as well introduce their human families to each other! However, there is a downside, now we are not hunting and gathering across the savanna now but living in a somewhat crowded island! Sadly, Peter and Elliot see another side to our freedom to care for and enjoy life with our beloved pets. While the vast majority of pet owners are responsible and aware of the problems that arise, Peter and Elliot see the results of those who are oblivious to the world around them. Unfortunately, this small minority can cause mayhem in our environment. Dogs can impact the river and the river can impact dogs. Also impacted is the wildlife, including swans, ducks and birds, as well as the diversity of the plants and insects that are lovingly nurtured in the Gardens by the Canbury Gardeners.

Nonetheless, we can all ameliorate the harm done by the careless few, by observing some simple rules, whilst we are out and about enjoying ourselves.

1. Using non-toxic flea collars and treatments, because the chemicals in some flea treatments are lethal to insects and river wildlife, when dogs take more than a paddle in the river.
2. Take care not to let your dog drink too much water from the river, as there is all sorts of toxic waste, sadly dumped or which seeps into the river. Vets like Peter, see dogs every day when they get infected.
3. Dogs need to be off the lead to let off steam and have fun with their kin, but it's vital to have an eye on them at all times. There have been injuries to swans, children, other dogs, as well as to newly planted flowers etc.
4. And, last but not least, dog poo must be tied securely in biodegradable bags and put in the litter bins.

**WE KNOW OUR CANBURY GARDEN DOG WALKERS ALWAYS DO AND THANK YOU FOR THAT.**

**But look at the photo below, to realise what some folk elsewhere think is amusing.**



**See our website for all the key points of the talks; QR code & email address on the back page**

Above all, carry on enjoying Canbury Gardens, especially now the Secret Café is open and with new ownership it offers the same Gelato and all sorts of delicious bites to eat, including Churros and dipping chocolate!!! Yum!

## Canbury Bandstand Sunday Concert.



Summer Sundays by the Thames 3pm-5pm

12th May	West London Brass
19th May	The Willful Choir
26th May	SAKOPHONY
2nd June	St Margaret's Elastic Band
9th June	KIX Jazz Orchestra
16th June	Merton Concert Band
23rd June	Macaroons
30th June	Tiffin School Concert Band
7th July	Singing it back Choirs
14th July	Kingston Music Service
28th July	Richmond Youth Jazz Band
11th August	Rock Choir
18th August	New Venture Concert Band
25th August	Perrin Jazz Collective
8th September	Soul Rites



The popular Sunday concerts are on again in Canbury Gardens, May to September 3pm to 5pm. Our audiences can be in the hundreds and include toddlers, families, elderly in wheelchairs, in fact, Kingston & beyond! These fun concerts in the open air currently rely on a tiny band of volunteers, so they are asking if you have time on a Sunday to spare an afternoon, or even a couple of hours, to do things such as open and close gates, put chairs out and back again, all with guidance from the lead marshal. You'll need to be there an hour before 3pm and leave around 5.30pm. Of course, you'll be able to flop into a chair and listen to the music in between the bursts of energy. See the concert programme, left, and if there's a day ahead that would suit you, go for it...

contact [tim.libbetter@btinternet.com](mailto:tim.libbetter@btinternet.com)

Canbury Bandstand, Canbury Gardens, KT2 5AW



Police officers  
Fixing  
stickers,  
one you can  
see and one  
you can't.

## Kingston Police Cycle Security Scheme

The Kingston Police were out and about in March, on the lookout for cyclists in Canbury Gardens, flagging them down to offer a police bike security scheme.

They match a sticker that has a QR code to the details of your bike. It's a very sticky sticker. There is an obvious one to put off thieves and a less obvious one to hinder the bike being sold. The moment your bike goes missing, if you inform the police, they add your QR code to their data base which is connected to the bike world, so if your bike comes up for sale anywhere, they can make a match.

Just having the sticky sticker should encourage bike thieves to move on to the next bike instead of yours, otherwise they are just storing up trouble for themselves later.

## CARA Committee

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With your mobile in **camera**, hover over the **QR code** on the left and when **CARAKINGSTON.ORG** appears in **yellow** on your screen, **tap on it**, to go directly to the Cara website for further information (including **Talking Dogs**)

Alternatively, go to [www.carakingston.org](http://www.carakingston.org)