



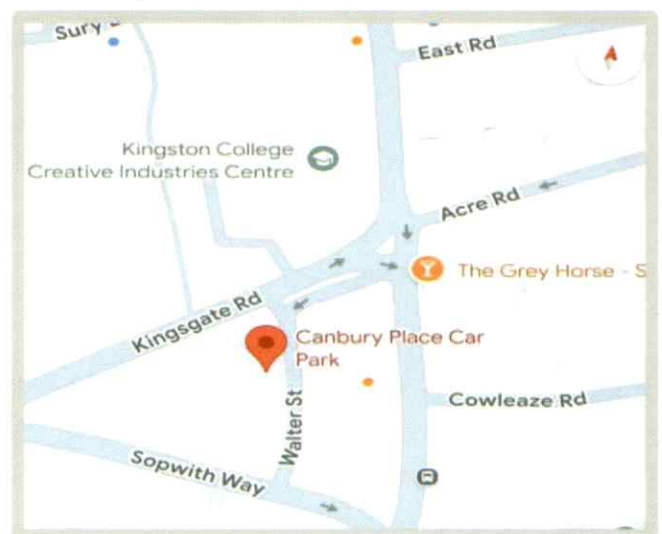
COMMUNITY UPDATE: Your friendly roundup of what's changing, what's coming, and what's worth getting excited about read on

VICTORY! A New Chapter for Canbury Place

At long last, we have great news! After eight years of debate, the Council has terminated its agreement to sell the Canbury Court Car Park behind Kingston station to Kingston Gate Ltd. This is a massive win; the proposed building over Kingsgate Road is off the table meaning it's **permanent closure and the resulting traffic chaos have been avoided**. This result is thanks to you - the residents, who have campaigned tirelessly alongside the North Kingston Forum (NKF) and CARA.

What's next? While we've saved the road, the Council is still anxious to develop the car park site and the area north of Kingsgate Road (near Queenshurst) to meet housing

needs. We're keeping a close watch so stay tuned for future plans!



Location of Canbury Car Park

....but what is happening to the Bingo Hall



Eyesore or Icon?

Just across Richmond Road, the historic **Bingo Hall** has been placed on the

"Heritage at Risk" register. This Grade II listed cinema is in urgent need of repair—currently, rainwater pours onto pedestrians when it rains! CARA and NKF are pressing the Council to serve an enforcement notice to at least make the building safe while it sits on the market.

Your views on long term plans to be sought :

The Council's borough-wide plan goes to meeting on **June 22nd** for approval before opening to a full public consultation. Simultaneously, the North Kingston local plan has been agreed and will be presented for a final resident vote in just a few months' time.

A Greener, Wilder Riverside

Progress at the Water's Edge

The wait is over! Work to re-naturalise the riverbank at the stone steps in Canbury Gardens starts the week of 27th April:



The council will be implementing the Thames Landscape Strategy's plan to replace the old concrete banking with natural planting reduce wash 'bounce back' and for maintenance.

Look out for temporary fencing while the new plants get settled—it's a small price to pay for a much prettier, wilder view, and there will still be plenty of access to the river nearby!

As we go to press, we look forward to a talk about this project on April 16th in Canbury Pavillion (see events page 4).

The Half Mile Tree Returns

The dangerous old tree that was felled, is being replaced by a Hornbeam. Why a Hornbeam? They are tougher than oaks and better suited to our changing climate.

- Week Commencing May 4th: Work starts on the new bench.
- A shiny new information board from the Thames Landscape Strategy will be installed.
- The tree will be planted, after all the other work is completed.



Artist Impression: The new Hornbeam and Bench at the half mile in 2046

Splash Down! London's First River Bathing Station

A bold idea is currently awaiting the green light from Defra. Local swimmers, the **Teddington Blue Tits**, supported by many locals, the council and MP, have proposed an official bathing station right here between the Half Mile Tree and the Richmond border.

The consultation closed on March 23, and if approved, we'll get weekly water testing to check the river pollution levels, and the YMCA has even offered changing facilities!

Meet the "Blue Tits": Marlene Lawrence describes the group as a mix of everyone—from Channel swimmers to those who just enjoy a "swim-chat" and a piece of cake. Want to join? Find *The Teddington Blue Tits* at their Sunday morning meet-up starting at 8:00 am near the Hawker Centre (What3words: small.worth.torn) or connect on Facebook.

Environments and Our Pets

The "Drinkable" Thames? The Hidden Cost of Flea Treatments, by Dr. Peter Higgins

We all love our pets, but did you know our flea treatments might be poisoning our river? Recent data shows that toxic insecticides like Fipronil and Imidacloprid—banned on farms years ago—are appearing in 37% of English rivers at levels 100 times higher than "safe" limits.

The Impact on Wildlife:

- **Birds in Danger:** A study of 103 Blue Tit and Great Tit nests found that 100% contained these chemicals from pet fur used for lining. The result? Fewer eggs hatching and more dead chicks.
- **The Bee Factor:** Just one flea treatment for a medium dog contains enough nerve agent to kill 60 million bees.

What can pet owners do? Research shows that treated dogs "shed" these toxins into the water for at least 28 days after a "spot-on" application. To protect our ecosystem, experts suggest keeping treated pets out of the river for 4 weeks post-treatment. 24 major organisations (including the RSPB) are calling for a government ban—but for now, the responsibility sits with us. What's your flea control protocol?

Kingston Climate Action: Your Voice Matters

Have you spotted the new **Rain Gardens** on Lower Ham Road? These clever bits of landscaping divert heavy rain into the ground rather than overflowing our street drain:



Rain Gardens: How our streets are getting ready for the rain

Have Your Say: Shaping Kingston's Climate Future!

Kingston Council wants **YOU** to help shape how our borough prepares for climate change! Whether you live, work, or just hang out in Kingston, your perspective counts. Take part in the climate consultation before **April 27** and let your ideas shine. It's easy—just click the link and share your thoughts:

<https://www.kingstonletstalk.co.uk/climate-action/kingston-climate-adaptation/>

Thames Landscape Strategy: Working Together for a Resilient River :-

Meet Becky Kendrick from The Thames Landscape Strategy—she's spearheading the Joint Thames Strategy to make sure our river stays strong and vibrant from Surrey all the way to the sea. This bold plan brings together councils and community groups from both sides of the Thames to build a cohesive vision for flood resilience and create riverside spaces we all love —creating a more vibrant, accessible, and economically robust Thames for future generations.

Expect plenty of chances to get involved and share your ideas as the strategy rolls out. Imagine Canbury Gardens and our riverside even better equipped for future flood risks, thanks to community input and innovative planning. Rest assured that CARA will remain actively engaged to ensure our community's interests are represented. Curious? Find out more at: <https://jtsrefresh.com>

How You Can Make a Difference

- Join the Kingston Council climate consultation by April 27.
- Stay tuned for updates from CARA on the Thames Strategy and local riverside improvements.
- Get involved with community groups and share your thoughts on making Kingston resilient!
- Keep an eye out for more opportunities to shape our borough's future.

Latest CARA Events

April 16th, 7.00pm : Improving Biodiversity along our Riverside at Canbury Pavilion.

Re-naturalisation of the riverbank beside Canbury Gardens and how this will enhance the biodiversity at the water's edge, by Georgina Fauconier (Royal Borough of Kingston's Biodiversity Officer) and Alex Leaver (Thames Landscape Strategy's Strategic Project Officer).

(We apologise if the newsletter is delivered after this event, which is soon after we go to press).

We are planning a number of other CARA events this year, please look out for them, more detail and exact dates will be published when they are finalised.

- An Art Lecture by a local artist
- Matching Cheeses with Wines
- CARA Barbecue

Other Local Events

May 15th : Canbury Gardens Bandstand Concerts start. These have been scheduled on 15 Sundays through to September, organized by CARA and Friends of Canbury Bandstand.

June 24th : Drinkable Thames Walk, Kingston to Kew, 24th

A relay walk along the Thames from source (Kemble 5th June) to the sea (Royal Arsenal 28th June) in 24 stages. Join us for the local section from Kingston to Kew on 24th June.

July 19th (Sunday) : Dragon Boat Races, A spectacular charity event on the river by Canbury Gardens. On Saturday 18th there will be schools' dragon boat races, with 30+ teams competing.

While we bring you the highlights every quarter, the latest news moves fast! For real-time updates and more details on any of these stories, please visit our website (link below).

CARA Committee

Clare Francis (Thames Boat Project) clarefrancis@gmail.com , Chestnut Road

Peter Higgins (Wildlife; Planning; CGWG) pchiggins007@gmail.com , Wolsey Drive

Sharon Langer (Environment; Wildlife; Marketing) sbmlanger@gmail.com , Ulster Court, Albany Park Road

Richard Mobbs (Environment; Thames Landscape Strategy) richard@statacom.net , Chestnut Road

Kelly Page (Litter Picking; Canbury Gardeners) kelly1page@yahoo.com , Chestnut Road

John Parrish (CGWG; Planning; NKF; Bandstand) john.parrish1080@gmail.com , Lower Ham Road

Charles Roscorla (Membership Secretary; Treasurer; Heritage) charos100@hotmail.co.uk , Ulster Court

Blaine Tookey (Newsletter Editor) blaine2k@outlook.com , Albany Park Road



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