CARA Newsletter

Canbury & Riverside Association

AUTUMN 2026

Working to protect and enhance our local community

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COMMUNITY UPDATE: Good coffee, green spaces, and familiar faces: what's new in Canbury ... read on and find out

A GREENER, WILDER RIVERSIDE: PROGRESS AT THE WATER'S EDGE!

Transforming our riverbank into a thriving natural haven



Have you seen the changes happening down by the river? In September, HRH The Duke of Gloucester (a patron of the Thames Landscape Strategy) officially opened our newly transformed riverbank right next to Canbury Gardens—meeting our Deputy Mayor, Jane Lim, the team behind the project, and lots of enthusiastic locals in the process! Delivered in partnership with Kingston Council and the TLS, this 30-metre pilot project is replacing old, hard-edged concrete with a natural, living shoreline designed to welcome back wildlife and protect our beloved riverbank from erosion.

What's next for the patch?

Come spring, the team will begin planting a beautiful mix of native species, such as deep rooting Yellow Flag Iris, Bur-reed, and Lesser Reedmace at the water's edge to bind the gravel, alongside colourful Purple Loosestrife, Water-mint, and Water Forget-me-not. This will look absolutely stunning (see the gorgeous future preview!), and it will also create a buzzing paradise for early pollinators and a safe natural nursery for juvenile fish and nesting birds.

You'll notice some temporary mesh and protective fencing while the young plants find their footing and keep inquisitive paws and feet off the bank. It is a small price to pay for such a pretty, wilder view, and we can't wait to watch it flourish!



An imagined Future View of the Riverbank

UPDATE: CARA sponsored Riverside Improvements (alongside local community partners):



Have you spotted our new dedicated recycling bin?

Volunteers take the plastic, cans, and glass to the Chestnut Road entrance for collection from there fortnightly.



The refurbishment of the historic Half-Mile Tree is fully complete with noticeboard, seat and all-weather surface. Be sure to stop by and take a look on your next stroll!

REMEMBERING MICHAEL DAVISON (1932–2026)

Champion of the Canbury Bandstand



The "Group of Four" Michael Davison (back right)

The Canbury and Riverside community recently lost one of its most dedicated champions. Michael Davison passed away peacefully at home in August at the age of 94, leaving behind a lasting musical legacy on our riverside.

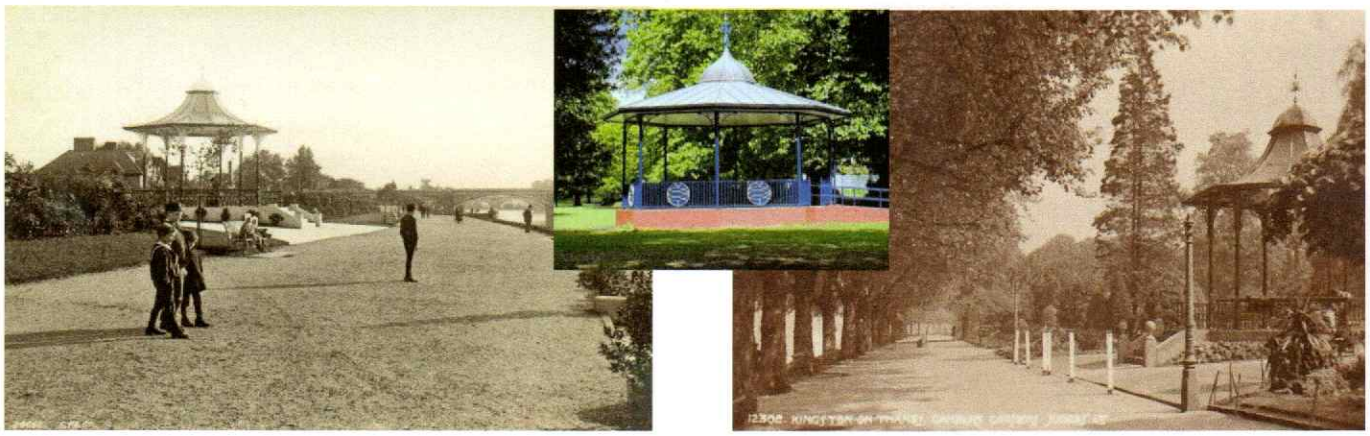
Today, the sound of live brass, swing, jazz, and community ensembles drifting across Canbury Gardens on summer Sunday afternoons feels like a timeless feature of local life. Yet by the late 1990s, our Victorian bandstand had fallen largely silent—underused, weathered, and in urgent need of an advocate.

Michael provided exactly that spark. As a core member of the **'Group of Four'**—an informal working party of passionate local residents dedicated to the enhancement of Kingston town—he spearheaded the practical vision that brought the bandstand back to life.

As a founding force and long-serving secretary of the Canbury Music Awards, he recognised that restoring the bandstand required more than repainting cast iron; it needed life, music, and community spirit.

Alongside fellow group members, council partners, and as long serving secretary of the Canbury Music Awards, Michael campaigned relentlessly for its full restoration. He understood that the structure needed more than fresh paint; it needed life, music and community spirit. He established the regular Sunday summer concert series, providing an open-air riverside stage for youth orchestras, brass ensembles, and budding school musicians.

Whenever music echoes through the plane trees on a warm weekend, it stands as a living tribute to Michael's and the Group of Four's civic devotion. CARA extends its deepest condolences to his family, along with heartfelt gratitude for a neighbour who kept our riverside playing.



Above: Canbury Gardens Bandstand as seen in 1892, early 1900's and (insert) today!

LOCAL BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT: BOHO CAFÉ

A Warm Welcome, Artisan Bakes and Autumn Treats on Richmond Road

I recently popped into Boho Café on Richmond Road to sit down with co-owners Bahadir and Kristina, taking five minutes over coffee to hear about their journey, seasonal treats, and love for our corner of Kingston.



Q: Tell us the inspiration behind Boho and the vibe you've brought to Richmond Road? For us, Boho is about good coffee, honest food, and making everyone feel at home. As a husband-and-wife team, we wanted to bring that personal touch to Richmond Road: somewhere relaxed and welcoming, where you can meet a friend, enjoy a quiet moment or stop for a chat. Our hope is that people walk in as customers and, over time, feel like part of the Boho family.

Q: What are your must-try menu warmers this autumn? On a cooler day, we would choose a toasted chicken, mozzarella and green pesto panini, followed by carrot cake or a rich chocolate brownie. A caramel latte or chai latte makes a lovely autumn treat, too. For something extra comforting, our deluxe hot chocolate comes with whipped cream and pink and white marshmallows.



Q: How important is being dog-friendly so close to Canbury Gardens? Essential! A local café should fit everyday routines. Welcoming four-legged friends before or after park strolls creates those friendly interactions that define our community.

Q: What do you value most about North Kingston? The genuine neighbourly warmth. Getting to know regular faces and seeing friends meet over coffee makes Richmond Road the perfect riverside home.

Do pop in and try it for yourself! **Boho Café,** 152 Richmond Road.

CARA EVENT: AN EVENING OF DEGUSTATION, CARA CHEESES with WINE

In October, CARA members gathered at the Canbury Pavilion for an engaging evening of guided wine appreciation and cheese pairing, hosted by Martine Roscorla.

All 20 attendees enjoyed an international journey across five distinct cheese varieties, each matched with celebrated wines. Highlights included a creamy French Chèvre Log paired with a crisp Australian Clare Valley Riesling, traditional Red Leicester matched with an expressive Beaujolais Gamay, and Dutch Boerenkaas Gouda served alongside an oak-aged Carignan.

The standout pairing of the night featured an ancient-method Georgian Tbilvino Saperavi paired with soft-ripened Cambozola, finished by an opulent sweet Semillon matching a piquant Bleu d'Auvergne.



A wonderful evening of convivial conversation and gastronomic discovery was had by all!

Look out for our next tasting event in spring 2027.

CARA FESTIVE CHRISTMAS DRINKS

THE BOATERS INN

Celebrate the festive season with neighbours, friends, and the CARA committee by the river!

Date & Time: Monday 14th December 2026 | 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm
Venue: The Boaters Inn, Canbury Gardens
Details: Buy your drinks at the bar and join the chat with neighbours, friends and CARA members - don't forget your CARA discount card if you are staying to eat!



Come along for a warm mulled drink, good cheer, and holiday toasts!

Some Photos from Canbury Gardens Events this year:

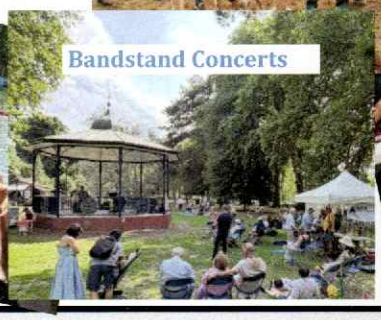
Look out for an exciting CARA program next year 😊













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