
From: Malcolm Grimston <malcolmgrimston@outlook.com>
Sent: 29 May 2025 07:16
To: News from Councillor Malcolm Grimston
Subject: Augustus Road news update June 2025

Hi all. Please pass this on to anyone you think might find it interesting and share it with your household. If you know of anyone who might like to receive the newsletters please ask them to email me. You can follow me on X (Twitter) @malcolmgrimston. If you wish to unsubscribe please email me – it would be very helpful if you could confirm if you have moved away.

SUTHERLAND GROVE

I picked up a few issues during my walkabout in Sutherland Grove recently which I have reported in.

- There are some broken and uneven paving on Sutherland Grove, notably outside number 51 and 55 and the bricks round the tree outside 57.
- There are reports of rats infesting the building site at 2A Sutherland Grove and getting into neighbouring houses.
- Cars often park on Sutherland Grove on the single yellows from the parking bays at the Augustus Road end and along past houses 1-7, causing congestion especially on Chelsea match days – it may be worth considering double yellows on this stretch.

STREET BINS

Some years ago the previous Council removed almost all street bins except those in streets which are swept every day. There was some justification – bins when full tend to become magnets for flytipping – but I do get a lot of requests for them to be replaced. The Council is now proposing to reinstall litter bins at certain locations and has launched a consultation. 50 locations have already been proposed but so far none for West Hill – indeed the closest are in Garratt Lane or Telegraph Road. To ask for a few in our patch go to [bins consultation](#) – the exercise is now active and runs until Wednesday 10 June.

QUIET CYCLE ROUTES

Some time ago the Council consulted on a number of 'Quiet Cycle Routes', two of which would have gone through West Hill Ward. One (route 8), which starts at Tibbets Corner and travels down Princes Way and Woodspring Road to Wimbledon Park Road, is at detailed design stage and further public consultation is expected in January 2026 on any specific changes. The other (Route 3) route, which would have gone along Granville Road, Sutherland Grove, Augustus Road and Inner Park Road is not being taken forward, at least for now. See <https://democracy.wandsworth.gov.uk/documents/s115750/24-322%20-%20Amended%20Appendix%202.pdf> for a map.

NEW ZEBRA CROSSINGS

There have been some teething troubles with the new zebra crossings in Augustus Road and Princes Way, notably with regard to the Belisha beacons not working. The Council is rather at the mercy of UKPN, the company which is responsible for running the local electricity grid in London; our contractor is in regular contact with UKPN and pressing them to complete the connections.

FOOD WASTE RECYCLING

I've had a few questions about what happens to our food waste once it has been collected from the caddies or communal bins. You can find basic information at <https://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/rubbish-and-recycling/household-rubbish-and-recycling-collection/what-happens-to-your-recycling-and-rubbish/> – in short food waste is taken to the BioCollectors processing facility at 10 Osiers Way in Mitcham – their website provides further details of the process and outputs (see <https://www.biocollectors.com/how-it-works/>). Unlike the incinerator in Bexley which deals with the Council's 'black sack' waste, the Mitcham facility does not generate electricity, instead producing biogas (methane) which is fed into the National Gas Grid and is also utilised by BioCollectors to run their own fleet of commercial food waste collection vehicles. BioCollectors also produce a liquid fertiliser (or 'digestate') which is used on agricultural land and helps to reduce the demand for fertilisers from fresh sources.

DOGS

There are three issues that come up time and time again when I am chatting with local folk – flytipping, Lime Bikes and dog mess. (Missed rubbish collections seem to have dropped down the agenda recently, which I assume is a good sign.) The Council has an Animal Welfare Service and the manager is always keen to get any information about repeat offenders, e.g. time of day when they are allowing their animals to foul the area, description of the dog and/or owner and of course location of the offence. If you have any sightings or information that would assist the Council in identifying culprits the service manager would be keen to hear from you on 020 8871 7606 or at animalwelfare@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk.

THE WIMBLEDON PARK GOLF COURSE AND THE AELTC

Save Wimbledon Park, the organisation campaigning against the redevelopment of the former Wimbledon Park Golf Course for new tennis courts including an Albert Hall-sized new stadium, has now reached its crowdfunding target of £200,000, after donations were received from nearly 1,000 people. The fund will allow SWP to mount its Judicial Review proceedings on the Great London Authority (GLA)'s decision last September to permit the All England Lawn Tennis Club (AELTC) to build in Wimbledon Park. The case will be heard in the High Court on July 8 and 9; there will be a public presence outside the Court on both days to demonstrate the depth of feeling. SWP is continuing with its fundraising: while the £200k gets them to court they are keen to ensure our legal team has the best chance of success. You can contribute and find out more [here](#). There will be another public meeting, in Wimbledon town centre on June 16 from 1930-2130, to which all will be welcome. The venue is St Mark's Church, St Mark's Place SW19 7DN and writer and comedian Andy Hamilton has once again agreed to host.

WANDSWORTH COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP

The Wandsworth Community Safety Partnership brings together Wandsworth Council, the Metropolitan Police, London Fire Brigade, health partners, the criminal justice system including Probation Services and community and voluntary sector organisations involved with crime reduction and community safety in the Borough. They are consulting on priorities for the Wandsworth Community Safety Strategy and residents' experience and/or perceptions of crime and anti-social behaviour in our local area and in Wandsworth. There are some interesting factsheets [here](#), showing West Hill to be the fifth safest of Wandsworth's 22 Wards for reported crime. You can respond to the consultation at <https://haveyoursay.citizenspace.com/wandsworthced/cs-25/consultation/subpage.2024-12-09.7066620164/>.

E-BIKES – THE CURRENT POSITION

At present two e-bike operators in Wandsworth: Lime (around 1,400 bikes) and Forest (650 bikes). There were over 600,000 trips taken in Wandsworth in April 2025 (compared to 300,000 in April 2024) and over 6 million in the last year, involving over 100,000 unique riders. It is not unfair to say that e-bikes have transformed journey opportunities for many people in the Borough and across London, not least for women traveling at night for whom being able to get so close to home is very attractive. However, these clear pluses need to be balanced against the problems that have arisen for pedestrians and other road users through people parking or abandoning bikes inconsiderately. So in 2023 the Council decided to move over time to a mandatory parking arrangement, whereby e-bikes can only be parked only in designated parking bays, starting with town centres. Outside of town centres and busy areas (including most of West Hill Ward) bikes may currently be parked on the footway in a 'sensible location'. The problem is that e-bikes are not (yet) covered by any specific legislation, which makes it hard to enforce any action against bad parking. However, Boroughs can use S149 of the Highways Act 1980, which grants highway authorities the power to remove obstructions from the highway, specifically those that constitute a danger or nuisance, and to recover the associated costs from the person who deposited the obstruction. At the end of a ride the cyclist submits a photo to the operator which is reviewed by AI technology. Recently Lime has started rolling out new real-time AI tech which should improve parking compliance – if the bike is badly parked the rider gets a warning for a first offence, then fines of £2, £5, £10 and £20 + a ban for subsequent offences. Last summer complaints to the Council ran at about 50 per month, with an extra 100 per month from residents directly to the operators. 80% of users do not re-offend after their first warning.

Latest figures from Lime show they issued 2,389 trip warnings and 205 fines to users in Wandsworth in April 2025. Operators have an obligation to respond to the Council within the hour of receiving a complaint and set out a timescale for how they will action, though they don't always live up to this! Lime recently announced a £20 million 'London Action Plan' to address e-bike operations, boost cycling and enhance infrastructure. This includes 28 additional on-street staff dedicated to Wandsworth. It's a long process to create solutions to the problems but step by step things seem to be coming together. With regard to the overflow' in the bays at the Augustus Road end of Sutherland Grove, the Council has asked the operators to monitor the location more closely and remove any excess vehicles – it is clearly not acceptable that e-bikes are spilling over into the adjacent disabled bay.

Wandsworth is also taking part in the TfL e-scooter rental trial. The only legal way to ride an e-scooter on public roads within London is through this rental scheme (as part of a wide government-approved trial). Users must be 18 or over and hold a UK driving license (full or provisional) and all journeys must start/end in a designated parking bay: there are now 170 designated parking bays across Wandsworth. Two operators took part in the trial: Lime and Voi. Across London there are some 4,800 e-scooters; the initial fleet size in Wandsworth will be 300 (150 each operator), to be increased once the scheme been integrated and operating effectively. The speed limit for e-scooters in London is 12.5mph. Richmond and Lambeth are already in the trial.

CCTV

I occasionally get asked for CCTV the installed in areas where there is antisocial behaviour, flytipping etc.. CCTV is not always the silver bullet it might appear – it works well for example where the identity of the culprit is known (so we had one focussed on a difficult family in Smithwood Close recently, for example) but otherwise the pictures are often of little use. Further, it is a very time-intensive job to go through hours of footage and the police rarely have the resources to do so when a positive outcome seems unlikely. They don't have a great deterrent effect either, as miscreants either just avoid them and go somewhere else or increasingly know that such cameras don't always yield results. However, the Council does have a number of temporary CCTV cameras that can be targeted at a particularly difficult location for a short time and some good outcomes have been seen. The Council has adopted a new CCTV strategy – you can see the Committee paper at [\(Public Pack\)Agenda Document for Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 12/02/2025 19:30](#), pages 57-92. The use of CCTV must be lawful and justifiable – so for example, if a request is received for CCTV to be used to tackle fly-tipping the Council would expect to see evidence that it is a persistent issue in that location and that a range of measures (such as letters to local residents, signage and monitoring) have already been undertaken and not been successful in resolving the issue. When we get a request for CCTV we have to pass it one to the Council's Joint Control Centre who will assess the request (including talking to the police). If it thought that CCTV might be effective it will usually be deployed within one or two months of the request being received. In most cases the cameras will initially be in place for a two month period before a decision is taken to keep them up for longer. Deployable cameras are rarely in place for more than six months.

HISTORY CORNER – WEST HILL AND WORLD WAR II

As we celebrate the 80th anniversary of the end of World War II in Europe, it is a good moment to reflect on a few West Hill connections with the great conflict.



Struan (left), where the new hostel at 44 Augustus Road now stands, was home to Norman Bonnington Dickson, OBE (1868-1944) in his last years. One of the long line of West Hill railway engineers, he created the first railway in Siam (Thailand) and at various times was Chief Engineer of the Leopoldina Railway in Brazil, General Manager of the Central Cuban Railways and worked on the Argentinian system. At the start of World War II the Nazi regime created what has become known as 'Hitler's Black Book UK', containing the 'special wanted arrest lists' for use in the immediate period after a successful Nazi invasion in 1940 (an invasion that of course was never to be, largely as a result of the RAF retaining air supremacy after the Battle of Britain and the strength of the Royal Navy). The list was compiled by the Counter Espionage (Scandinavia) division of the Reich Main Security Office – the UK came under Scandinavia for German counter-espionage activities – later

renamed AMT Group IV and generally known as the Gestapo. The Black Book was compiled by Walther Friedrich Schellenberg (1910-1952), who was awarded the Iron Cross for his part in the 'Venlo Incident' in 1939 which led to the capture of two British agents, Captain Sigismund Payne-Best and Major Richard Stevens. Number 57 of the 2,820 named individuals was Alexander Graeme Dickson (1914-1994), third son of Norman Bonnington Dickson. Alec was a journalist whose 'believed location' in 1940, according to the Black Book UK, was Struan, Wimbledon Park. After writing for the *Yorkshire Post* and the *Daily Telegraph* Alec helped refugees in Prague following the Nazi invasion of 1938. During a period working for the British Council of Churches in Hungary in the mid-1950s he and his wife Mora (left) founded Voluntary Service Overseas, sending young volunteers to developing countries. Sarawak, Ghana and Cameroon were the destinations of the first 12 participants. VSO inspired a generation of young people and influenced US President John F. Kennedy to set up the American equivalent, the Peace Corps, in 1961. In 1962 Alec and Mora left VSO to found Community Service Volunteers, a similar organisation with more of a UK focus. He was awarded both the MBE and the CBE.

During the Second World War Florys (below left), next door to Struan and where Hansler Court is today, was rented by the Dutch government in exile to offer temporary housing for Dutch refugees and escapees from the Netherlands while they were being questioned by the Dutch security services. All foreign arrivals were first cleared through the British security services before being released to their own government's care. There was space for 15 residents under the leadership of former Merchant Navy Captain Wiebe Dik (1919-2001). After the War Florys became the new home of the Allenswood Academy which had once boasted pupils such as Eleanor Roosevelt but which was in its final decline, closing soon afterwards – the house was demolished in 2001.

3 Inner Park Road, where Kent Lodge is today, had a rather notorious inhabitant at the outbreak of World War II in the shape of Theodor Böttiger, a lawyer from Breslau who became a leading light in the pre-Nazi Young Conservative movement and had served as press secretary to Joachim von Ribbentrop, the German Foreign Minister. In the photograph (right) Böttiger is standing on the left beside Japanese military attaché General Hiroshi Oshima as von Ribbentrop and Japanese Ambassador Kintomo Mushakoji sign the Anti-Comintern Pact in 1936: it is claimed that Ribbentrop, who was German ambassador to the Court of St James from 1936-1938, visited him in West Hill on more than one occasion. As the representative in London of the *Völkischer Beobachter* newspaper, Böttiger led the Nazi propaganda campaign in this country up to the outbreak of the war. He was interrogated in 1945 but released and continued to write about topics such as German wine for some years. Later on the house was home to Colonel Donald Russell Naylor MBE (1916-1999) whose war record with the Royal Mechanical and Electrical Engineers was more positive (from a British point of view) and who served as President of the Building and Engineering Services Association.



Southmead was a significant villa which stood where the even-numbered blocks of Southmead Road are found today. In the 1880s it had been home to Anna Isabella Thackeray Ritchie (1837-1919), eldest daughter of the novelist William Makepeace

Thackeray, perhaps best known for his satirical novel *Vanity Fair*. Anna and was herself a novelist of some repute, *From an Island* being her best-known work, and was step-aunt of Bloomsbury Group novelist Virginia Woolf, who wrote an obituary for her. During the Second World War Southmead was commandeered for a Royal Naval Training Establishment (RNTE). About 25 trainees with some knowledge of the German language were trained by Lieutenant Commander Frederick Marshall, RNVR, to translate intercepted wireless traffic from German ships and pass the information on to the Naval Intelligence Service. In his memoirs, Peter Hammond (b. 1923) gives a flavour of the levels of secrecy involved. "My instructions were quite explicit: on arriving at Wimbledon I was to make my way to Southmead in Beaumont Road. Yet no one in or around Wimbledon station seemed to have heard of a Beaumont Road! In desperation I humped my kitbag and hammock into the nearby Police Station and asked the duty Sergeant for help. He consulted a street plan of Wimbledon: there was no Beaumont Road listed! A police officer then appeared from a back room and asked sombrely 'Did I hear the name Southmead mentioned?' Then, lowering his voice still further: 'That's a secret naval establishment in Southfields, a few miles outside Wimbledon, in the direction of Putney. No, I can't phone them for transport. The only way of contacting them is by radio via the Admiralty'." Eventually Hammond managed to find a fellow trainee who, with frequent admonishments not to 'say that out loud', took him to Southfields tube station and up the hill to Southmead. Another crew member, Stephanie Higham, reported: "We were given the job of translating captured German documents – highly technical ones such as the working of the V1 and V2, the effect of frostbite and medical experiments, etc. We used large technical dictionaries to look up all the unknown words and only hoped that if there was a choice of words we picked the right one and that the scientists, engineers and doctors etc. could make more sense of what we wrote than we did." The villa was treated as a ship: trainees would 'come aboard', 'go ashore' for 'shore leave', cook in the 'galley' and so on.

And last, but not least ... for a few months from June 8 1882 Beech Lodge (left), on Wimbledon Park Side where Our Lady Queen of Heaven primary school is found today, was rented by (Lord) Randolph Henry Spencer-Churchill (1849-1895). Randolph had been elected as MP for Woodstock in Oxfordshire in 1874 (the seat previously held by his father) and was regarded as a rising star within Conservative circles. However, his health had been poor (rumoured to be a result of contracting syphilis) so he and his wife, the American socialite Jennie, née Jerome (1854-1921), moved to the "quiet and pretty house away from the social intrigues of central London" with their children Winston (1874-1965) and Jack (1880-1947) – Jennie also referred to it as a "cottage". The peace of Beech Lodge's garden and its spacious lawns did Randolph's health the world of good; he was elected as MP for Paddington South in 1885 and the following year became Chancellor of the Exchequer and Leader of the House of Commons under the Marquis of Salisbury. However, he fell out with Salisbury and lasted less than a year in office. Both of the boys did well. Jack went on to have a distinguished military career, reaching the rank of Major in the British Army and being awarded the Distinguished Service Order and the French decorations of the Croix de Guerre and the Legion d'honneur. His son-in-law, Anthony Eden (1897-1977), served three terms as Foreign Secretary and was Prime Minister from 1955-1957. Winston (right) went on to win the Nobel Prize for Literature; the 2002 BBC reality show *Greatest Ever Briton* (posthumously); and the Second World War. (In *Greatest Ever Briton* he beat his sixth cousin, Lady Diana Spencer, into third place: Charles Spencer, 3rd Earl of Sunderland, KG, PC, 1675-1722, who served as First Lord of the Treasury directly before Robert Walpole, was Winston's 5x great grandfather and Diana's 6x great grandfather.)

SURGERIES ETC.



I hold an advice Surgery at Southfields Library from 11 till noon on the first Saturday of the month; you don't need an appointment, just turn up. I bring along copies of my book on our local history, *West Hill and Wimbledon Park Side – Story of a Council Ward* but if you want to get a copy (or more!) and can't make the Surgery, please get in touch and I will drop them off (£9.95 paperback, £17.95 hardback).

Best wishes,

Malcolm Grimston

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