
From: Malcolm Grimston <malcolmgrimston@outlook.com>
Sent: 24 October 2025 06:55
To: News from Councillor Malcolm Grimston
Subject: Augustus Road news update November 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.

THE FORMER WIMBLEDON PARK GOLF COURSE

It's been a relatively quiet month on the golf course front. Save Wimbledon Park, the local campaign organisation, is still waiting to hear whether it can appeal the decision taken by the Judicial Review of the GLA's granting of planning permission to All England Lawn Tennis Club (AELTC). Work is developing on the next court case covering the issue of Public Trust, which is due to be heard in January 2026 and where SWP's legal advisers are optimistic of a positive outcome. The campaigners "continue to hope that AELTC will come to its senses and engage with the local community to agree a better plan".

DISTRICT LINE

I have continued to press TfL for a sustained improvement in the District Line. With the exception of one particularly bad day caused by a trackside fire that disrupted the rail services through Putney as well, the impression I have from chatting to residents is that things have improved. TfL tell me that working with Network Rail engineers they identified faults within a lineside cable and other trackside equipment. The final stage of repairs was carried out in September. "We recognise that the service on the branch in recent weeks has been short of what customers expect and deserve and we are very sorry for the delays experienced and thank all our customers for their patience during this time." I've also been asked about replacement buses, which now don't really come anywhere near Southfields Station. A few years ago buses did serve Southfields directly outside the station using Replingham Road but the bus operation contractor reported that parked cars and delivery trucks repeatedly made Replingham Road a bottleneck, causing traffic gridlock. Following this, TfL took the decision to route replacement buses along Merton Road, as the congestion around the station was causing highly unreliable journeys for customers and unpredictable delays for the operator. "In the interests of being responsible with TfL's finances and valuing customers' time, we do not intend to add another replacement bus route just to serve Southfields station with the current traffic operation."

ELECTION 2026

The next Council election will be held on May 7 2026. All of the 58 Council seats in Wandsworth (and indeed the whole of London) will be up for grabs. In order to vote you will need to be at least 18 years of age and be on the electoral register, which is open to all UK and Irish citizens; citizens of the Commonwealth; (for local elections) all citizens of Denmark, Luxembourg, Poland, Portugal and Spain who have right to stay in the UK; and all other EU nationals who have been in the UK since before December 2020 and have right to stay. If you have not registered yourself you can do so by going to www.gov.uk/register-to-vote and completing the online application – you should just need your National Insurance number or a scanned copy of a valid passport etc.. The polling station for your area is at Southfields Library and it will be open from 7am until 10pm. If you think you might not be available on that day or otherwise find it difficult to get to the polling station you can apply for a postal vote – see <https://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/postalvote> – or a proxy vote (whereby you ask someone to vote on your behalf – see <https://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/voting-by-proxy>). I have been very grateful for the help I have been given at the last two elections – if you would like to either chip in towards the cost of my leaflets or to help to deliver them please let me know!

'LIGHT PARTY'

Holy Trinity Church, at the West Hill end of Beaumont Road, will be hosting a 'Light Party' on Friday 31 October from 4-6pm. There will be games, crafts, a bouncy castle, face painting and a short drama – 'an afternoon of fun for all the family'. There is no cost for the event and no tickets are required.

SOUTHMEAD CHILDREN'S CENTRE

This much-appreciated local facility, located next to Southmead Primary School, was closed during COVID and has not reopened, as surveys show the building is unsafe and will probably have to be demolished – repairs would cost upwards of £1.4 million. I am told that eventually the Children's Centre is likely to be relocated into the Community Centre within the Ackroydon Estate redevelopment but this won't be for some years. Oddly there is still a signpost pointing to the facility at the Swanton Gardens entry to Southmead School.

HISTORY CORNER – POSTWAR WEST HILL



West Hill boasts a number of post-war buildings by prominent architects. In 1969 seven large (by today's standards) houses – 66 (left), 68 (Fir Tree House) and 70 (Cranbrook) Princes Way, 84 and 86 Augustus Road and 59 and 61 Victoria Drive – were sold to make way for Levana Close, King Charles Walk and Claudia Place. Claudia Place (right) was designed by the Farrell Grimshaw Partnership and built in 1973. Sir Terry Farrell (1938-2025) is perhaps best known for the M16 building in Vauxhall, Charing Cross Station and the TV-am 'egg cup' studios in Camden. Sir Nicholas Grimshaw (1939-2025) designed the Eden Project in Cornwall, Waterloo International Station and the National Space Centre in Leicester – he was also briefly involved in the proposed reshaping of the All England Club in the mid-2010s. Sadly both architects died just a fortnight apart this September. Levana Close, like King

Charles Walk, was designed by Stefan Zins (1927-2022) and Partners and earned a place on architectural walks carried out by the Twentieth Century Society. Among Zins's other works are over 500 houses in Cambridge, including that of the late great physicist Stephen Hawking. He also designed Valiant House in Battersea, the first development on that part of the riverside, where he spent his final years.

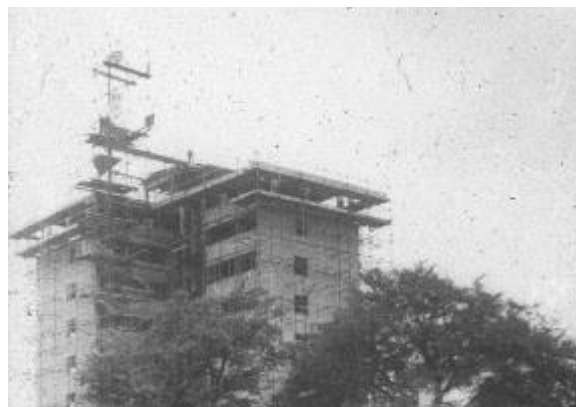
The Farm, on Princes Way, is by Eric Lyons (1912-1980), who had worked with celebrated German architect Walter Gropius (1883-1969, who among other achievements founded the Bauhaus school of architecture and married composer Gustav Mahler's widow Alma, with whom he had an affair during the composer's last years) during Gropius's short residence in London in the 1930s. Lyons went on to design a large number of modernist housing estates, including World's End in Chelsea; he also designed 60-70 Victoria Drive.

In December 1962 the Council bought a site at the junction of Albert Drive and Victoria Drive occupied by a large house (Mowbray Lodge, 87 Victoria Drive) and two bungalows (72 and 74 Albert Drive). The Victoria Drive Estate was designed by Leonard Grange Vincent (1914-2007) and Raymond Gorbing (1920-2013), whose work includes Stevenage New Town which boasts the first traffic-free shopping centre in the UK.

Roundacre, off Inner Park Road, is a 1960 estate by (Charles) Kenneth Capon (1915-1988), best known for designing the University of Essex, and was built where 52 Inner Park Road used to stand. Tibbets Close (left), was built in the early 1960s by the modernist firm of Andrews, Emmerson, Sherlock and Keable on ground that had once been part of the enormous garden of Elmley House on Wimbledon Park Side. Ian Nairn, in his *Modern Buildings of London*, said: "The way that a motor road and enclosed footpaths are both threaded through the site is very ingenious. It seems half a mile long and in fact is only a few yards." This firm also built Hollytree Close and 42-46 Victoria Drive. Nairn was also impressed by Littlecote Close, off Beaumont Road, which



he described as "a lovely, relaxed group of brick houses around a cul-de-sac. For just one example, the balconies are not just mean enrichments to make a



pretty pattern but man-sized projections that you can really use. More of these happy houses are in Mere Close off West Hill, built not for the London County Council but for the Borough of Wandsworth, who made a wise choice."

The Ackroydon Estate holds an important place in the history of council housing in London. It was the first – "and in some ways the best" according to Nairn and Nikolaus Pevsner in their *Buildings of England: Surrey* – of the London County Council 'mixed developments', with a range of housing types both to create greater visual interest and to cater for a wider range of population than earlier, more uniform, estates. The 436 homes, housing over 2,000 people, include a total of ten types of dwellings: 314 flats (in 3, 5, 8 and 11-storey blocks with internal staircase access, plus 3, 4 and 5-storey blocks with balcony access); two types of maisonette; and terraced cottages. The high-rise blocks (Oatlands, Eastwick, Mynterne and Tymperley Courts), on the Swedish model, were the first to be built by LCC. Nairn described Oatlands Court (right, under construction) in the following terms. "[Oatlands Court is] just south of an awkward roundabout called Tibbets Corner. When the LCC came to these suburban roads in the 1950s they stirred up the social pudding properly and now the place doesn't know where to turn. This is the very first of the LCC's point blocks and still one of the best: compact, not too tall. The charm and humanity and, above all, the modesty are not automatic but a personal contribution. To see what happens when it is left out, go half a mile along Park Side. On the left is the same plan, the same number of storeys, but without the personal touches [Bisley House] looks awful." (Apologies to the good residents of Bisley House, which has some of the best views in the Ward!)

In 1955 Wandsworth Council bought Edgecombe Hall, a large villa on Beaumont Road, and its 12½ acres of grounds and demolished it for the present estate (seen left in 1964). The architect of the scheme was Clifford Ewart Culpin, OBE, FRIBA (1904-1988), whose other works included the Town Halls at Poplar, Greenwich and Wolverhampton as well as the Galleons Estate at the top of Skeena Hill. The name Whitlock Drive was adopted in 1962 in tribute to Edward Whitlock (1885-1969, right). Whitlock had trained as a coppersmith and became a Director of Aluminium Plant and Vessels Company Ltd, later APV, in Wandsworth, a company established by Isaac Seligman of Elmley House on Park Side. Edward was an early member of the Independent Labour Party and Putney Labour Party had its first meeting at his house. While at APV he introduced a scheme of paying workers at full rate if they were ill, a pioneering idea at the time. In recognition of his wide ranging charity and voluntary work – as well as chairing the Governors at Wandsworth Technical College, for example, he was chair of the Wandsworth Peace Memorial Seaside Holiday Home for Children – he had been elected an Alderman of Wandsworth Borough in 1945 and was awarded Freedom of the Borough in 1964.

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

MALCOLM GRIMSTON
Councillor (Independent), West Hill Ward

