
From: Malcolm Grimston <malcolmgrimston@outlook.com>
Sent: 26 July 2025 09:08
To: News from Councillor Malcolm Grimston
Subject: Augustus Road news update August 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.

AELTC – LATEST NEWS

The High Court has decided not to overturn the planning permission granted by the Greater London Authority to the AELTC last year. Save Wimbledon Park, the campaigning organisation, sought Judicial Review of this decision. The Court's role was to review the lawfulness of the decision-making process by the Deputy Mayor, not to reach its own view on the merits of the application. The full judgment can be found at <https://www.judiciary.uk/judgments/save-wimbledon-park-v-mayor-of-london/> but here is a brief summary of the decision.

- First, the Judge, Mr Justice Saini, was not persuaded that the GLA had failed properly to take into account the implications of the statutory public recreation trust and the restrictive covenants, both of which appear to prevent the development and which would make the alleged benefits of the scheme undeliverable. The Judge found that deliverability of a scheme was not normally a planning matter.
- Secondly, the Judge disagreed that the GLA failed to recognise that the creation of tees, bunkers, greens and fairway planting on the golf course was (in planning terms) "deliberate damage" to a heritage asset, so that rectification of such damage should not count as a benefit. In his view, the GLA were entitled to conclude that such works consistent with golf course use did not cause deliberate damage to a heritage asset.
- Lastly, the Judge concluded that the creation of a private sports and entertainment complex would not contravene national planning policy in relation to the provision of "alternative sports and recreation" for the public.

SWP stresses that the dispute is far from over. The Judicial Review deals only with planning and may be taken to appeal. The existence or otherwise of a statutory trust, preventing development and covering not only Wimbledon Park but also the Golf Course, is the subject of entirely separate proceedings which are likely to be subject of towards a major hearing next January. Further, the restrictive covenants signed in 1991 remain firmly in place. As the Judge remarked: "It is not in issue that the Golf Course Land is the subject of restrictive covenants which require it to be kept open and free of built development". The AELTC scheme cannot proceed unless the covenants are released by Merton Council. Merton's stance is still not clear. You can find out more about the issue and the campaign at <https://www.savewimbledonpark.org/>.

CAR FREE DAY

The Council is offering free road closures for anyone wanting to throw a street party to mark the annual Car Free Day over the weekend of September 20/21 (the day itself is September 22), rather than charging the normal £64 fee. You can apply [here](#). Information about other Sustainable September events can be found here – [Sustainable September](#) – and you can [subscribe to the Council's monthly Climate Newsletter](#).

THE WIMBLEDON FORTNIGHT

I've had feedback from residents about some issue centred around the Wimbledon Championships this year. These include some members of the Queue using Horse Shoe Wood as a toilet; the problem of Lime bikes; meals ordered by members of the Queue ending up being delivered to local houses as there does not seem to be a postcode for the Park; a general sense of overcrowding; and difficulty in finding a central point to report problems. As ever, when I reported these in I got a quick and helpful response from Johnny Perkins at the AELTC but if there are any other issues to raise for next year please let me know.

CRIME

The latest reported crime figures for West Hill, covering April to June, confirm us as a relatively low crime area. In comparison with the rest of the Putney, Southfields and Roehampton area there were fewer reports of theft from a motor vehicle, antisocial behaviour, drug offences and robbery, while criminal damage, theft of a motor vehicle and

residential burglaries were around the average. However, these are just the reported crime – please do make sure you let the police know of any crimes as it helps with the allocation of resources.

LIME BIKES/SCOOTERS ETC.

This continues to be the most divisive and frustrating issue in a long time (notwithstanding the golf course). In the 12 months from May 2024 to May 2025 there were 6.8 million trips made by rented e-bikes in Wandsworth but the challenge to find places to park them all continues to grow, even when riders are being responsible (which is not always the case). The sight outside Southfields tube at times during Wimbledon was astounding (right) – a veritable forest (pardon the pun) blocking the pavement. Lime did come and remove them quite efficiently once I alerted them but we have to push forward with finding solutions or at least better ways of managing the issue. The AELTC did make a large area of the golf course available but this too got very busy and full to capacity. I've had complaints from pretty much every area of the Ward, notably the Ackroydon East, Whitelands Park and Augustus Road. I'm often asked why we allow this but actually the powers the Council has to prevent it are very limited and officers are lobbying the government to consider changes in the legislation. You can report badly parked or excessive numbers of bikes or scooters to the operators at (Lime) london-ops@li.me, (Forest) cs@humanforest.co.uk or (Voi) support@voiapp.io. We are told by the companies that they are increasing the numbers of fines they are issuing and banning persistent offenders. The Council has introduced some changes that may be beneficial. There are some 170 dedicated on-street parking bays in town centres across the Borough, with more to come. We are promised that the Council will "soon be taking tougher action to remove badly parked rental e-bikes or e-scooters obstructing the pavement" – residents will be able to report poorly parked or abandoned e-bikes and e-scooters to the Council and officers will remove and impound them at the operating company's expense. Further, if someone is eligible for Access for All funding they can get 50% off rides on Lime and Forest bikes and Lime and Voi e-scooters – see [here](#).

BUSINESS WASTE, SOUTHFIELDS

I've had a few complaints about some Southfields businesses leaving their trade waste out on the pavement outside the allowable hours (between 9am and 11am or between 9pm and 11pm). I asked for the Council's waste enforcement officer to carry out some implementation visits and a number of penalty charges have been issued for waste being placed on the highway outside of the above time bands.

FLORYS COURT/AUGUSTUS ROAD

During my recent visit I noticed some short stalactite-like protrusions from the ceiling of walkway between 10 and 11 Florys Court where a crack can be seen. (Looking back through my files I raised this in October 2022 so am not sure why it is still an issue!) The Council's building maintenance inspector (BMI) attended site on 4 July to inspect and confirmed the presence of stalactites "with a rusty colour" were seen forming from cracks and that the face of the balcony slab also had visible cracks. There was no sign of damage to the paintwork in the balcony above (outside 16 and 17) but the BMI identified three possible causes of water ingress that could be contributing to the stalactite formation: missing mortar joints between the brickwork and the balcony finish; cracks underneath the windowsill of flat 17; or possible deterioration around the balcony 'upstand' supporting the bannisters. A job has been ordered to put scaffolding up, rake out all cracks on the face and ceiling between flats 10 and 11, carry out repairs to the mortar joints between flats 16 and 17 and apply CT-1 sealant around the upstand and monitor. Once officers are satisfied that this work has resolved the issue the cracks will be filled and painted but if the problem persists the BMI will undertake order further investigations within flats 16 and 17 to look for any possible internal leaks that could be causing the stalactite formation. Meanwhile orders have been raised to repair the broken glass panel in the back door of 66-70A Augustus Road and to readjust the damper so that the door will not bang shut; also to prevent the front entry door to 60-64A Augustus Road from sticking open.

DISTRICT LINE



There have been further problems with the District Line, notably during the Wimbledon fortnight (heaven knows how they will cope if there is a significant increase in the size of the tournament) and sometimes involving the whole line. Provision of information and the time taken to put things right leave a lot to be desired. On one occasion, at the height of the heatwave, passengers were ejected from a train at Earl's Court and had to make sense of the information system saying both that the branch was closed and that another Wimbledon train would arrive in a few minutes. I've asked our officers to raise this with TfL yet again – as I have mentioned before, for historical reasons the District Line tracks that pass through Southfields on the way from Wimbledon Park to East Putney and beyond are the responsibility of Network Rail rather than Transport for London, which seems to complicate matters. It may also be worth raising this with Fleur Anderson, our MP, and Leonie Cooper, the GLA representative for Wandsworth and Merton (leonie.cooper@london.gov.uk).

HISTORY CORNER – SOUTHFIELD HOUSE

Southfield House (left), with its 13 bedrooms, orchard, tennis courts and separate cottage, stood Victoria Drive are today, with its 5½ acre estate Thursley Gardens and the southern part of Glen. It was built in 1905 for John William Corrie Frere and his wife, Madeline Westly, née Busk (1863-South Africa. John, like his brother George who Camels on Princes Road, was a partner in the firm of Frere Cholmeley & Co, founded in 1750 by great grandfather, Sheppard Frere (1712-1780). survived until 1998 when it merged with John's great grandfather was John Frere FRS "who from his discoveries at Hoxne was the first to immense antiquity of mankind" (in the words of the plaque erected near the site at Finningham in Suffolk). It was there in 1797 that John Frere found "weapons of war, fabricated and used by a people who had not the use of metals... The situation in which these weapons were found may tempt us to refer them to a very remote period indeed, even beyond that of the present world." His conclusion – that the tools, which were found under the sea bed, could not have washed there so must have been much more ancient than contemporary thinking would have allowed – was too radical for the day but when his work was rediscovered 60 years later it became enormously influential in shaping our understanding of early mankind. He served as MP for Norwich from 1799-1802. Sadly John Corrie Frere killed himself in 1918 using two revolvers simultaneously, one to the heart and one to the brain.



paddock, where 94-98 covering Albyn Road. (1861-1918) 1936), from lived at The family law his great The firm Eversheds. (1740-1807), realise the

From 1914 Southfield House was home to Rt Hon. David Robert Plunket, 1st Baron Rathmore (1838-1919, caricatured right by Carlo Pellegrini), an Irish lawyer and Conservative politician. He was born into a prominent family. His grandfather, William Conyngham Plunket, 1st Baron Plunket (1764-1854), had sat in the last independent Irish parliament before the Act of Union of 1800. Robert's father was John Span Plunket (1793-1871), 3rd Baron Plunket; his mother Charlotte (1803-1886) was the daughter of Charles Kendal Bushe (1767-1843), Lord Chief Justice of Ireland. David's elder brother, also called William Conyngham Plunket, 4th Baron Plunket (1828-1897), was Archbishop of Dublin. After a distinguished early legal career, David was elected Conservative MP for Dublin University and was Solicitor General for Ireland under Benjamin Disraeli from 1875-1877, subsequently rising to Paymaster General and



membership of the Privy Council. He also served in Lord Salisbury's first government, becoming Lord Rothermere of Shanganagh in the County of Dublin when he retired from the Commons in 1895. He was a Director of the Suez Canal Company, Chairman of the North London Railway for many years and became a Director of the Central Line (or Central London Railway) when it was formed in 1900. David's cousin, the Hon. Katharine Plunket (1820-1932, left), eldest daughter of Thomas Span Plunket, 2nd Baron Plunket (1792-1866) and a renowned botanical illustrator, was the oldest ever person born in Ireland, dying aged 111 in County Louth, where she had been born. She featured in the first *Guinness Book of Records*, published in 1955. David's daughter, the Hon. Emmeline Mary Plunket, who also lived at Southfield House, was a council member of the Home Arts and Industries Association and a member of the Royal Asiatic Society. She was a writer, publishing *Ancient calendars and constellations* and *Merrie games in rhyme from ye olden times*.

In 1921 Hannah and Susannah Donkin, widow and daughter of Richard Sims Donkin, formerly of Albemarle on Park Side (featured last month), moved in. In the 1930s Southfield House was occupied by Julian David Marks (1888-1950) and his wife Nancy Pleasants, née Hollingsworth (1885-1972). Julian served in France and Salonika during World War I but was invalided out of the army in 1918. He became a director of several companies and took a keen interest in the justice system: he was a Justice of the Peace and served as Chairman of the Guildford Juvenile Court and of the Borstal Institution for young offenders. Nancy was daughter of Samuel Hollingsworth (1842-1894), a prominent Philadelphia lawyer. Julian and Nancy's daughter, Nancy-Joan (1918-2012), married Richard Madron Seligman CBE (1918-2002), son of local industrialist Richard Seligman of Elmley House, Wimbledon Park Side. Madron Seligman was a lifelong friend of Sir Edward Heath (1916-2005), Prime Minister from 1970 to 1974. Like most friendships, however, the relationship was not always perfectly harmonious. In his memoirs, Heath records that in late August 1939, when the pair were fleeing Germany just before the outbreak of War: "Madron insisted on pulling out his penny whistle, playing once again the same old tunes I had heard incessantly for the past three weeks – all slightly out of tune. I had come to dislike these dirges intensely and had already lost my temper with him after his umpteenth rendition of Colonel Bogey on the platform at Leipzig station. Now, as we tried to escape from Germany on this ghastly train, out came that wretched penny whistle again. It drove me up the wall. We had another flaming row, but at least I won on this occasion and we had some peace afterwards." Madron went on to ski for Britain in the 1952 Winter Olympics and he served as Conservative Member of the European Parliament for West Sussex from 1979 to 1994, gaining an entry in the *Guinness Book of Records* for having the largest majority (95,484) in any European democratic election.

Soon after World War II Southfield House was purchased by London County Council and demolished. At first its grounds were used for allotments before the Argyle Glen Albyn Road estate was built.

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

