

London Forum *Insights*

Issue 17, December 2023

Editorial

If you have not already done so, please familiarise yourself with our new look website, www.londonforum.org.uk. In the coming months we hope to revise and extend our content. The Forum is urgently looking for someone with WordPress and PHP coding skills to help maintain the website, ensuring that upgrades go through smoothly, adding new facilities, troubleshooting etc. If you know (or are) someone who might be interested, please contact webmaster@londonforum.org.uk. We can pay (modestly) for an ad hoc service!

Over 3 years in the making, the Government's flagship planning bill finally passed into law as the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023. Most of the sections directly related to development management and plan-making have not yet come into force and will require secondary legislation. New Housing Minister, Lee Rowley, the 16th in 13 years, will have plenty on his plate! Click [here](#) for a link to the main changes that the Act will bring about.

One area being pushed by the Government is the greater use of technology in the planning system. Forum trustee Michael Jubb reports on the range of pilot projects being sponsored across the country, but also sounds a note of caution.

Enfield Borough Council's intention to build up to 9,000 homes on the Green Belt is criticised in an article by the Enfield Society. The topic of building on London's Green Belt will be the subject of a Forum Open Meeting on 16th January. This issue includes articles on the Forum's AGM held in October, and on November's Open Meeting on the suite of Plan Guidance documents published in mid-year by the GLA's London Plan team.

The first *Insights* newsletter was rushed out immediately following lockdown in the Spring of 2020. This is the 17th issue, during which time its style and format have remained largely unaltered. Between this issue and the next one, we shall be asking readers for their feedback,

and any changes they would like to see. Please respond to the short questionnaire which you will receive early in the New Year.

It only remains for me, on behalf of the entire London Forum team to wish all our members an enjoyable Christmas, and a happy and fruitful New Year.

Paul Thornton
Membership Secretary

Open Meeting on London Plan Guidance

Peter Pickering reports

With an echo back to Covid times, the Forum held an Open Meeting by Zoom on 15th November, not because of infection but because the Gallery was not available on a day convenient for our speakers. The subject was the key London Plan Guidance documents, and some fifty people participated.

Alan Smithies of the GLA Plan Team gave the presentation, and was assisted by Elliot Kemp in answering questions. We were introduced to four London Plan Guidance documents, three (Characterisation and Growth Strategy, Optimising Site Capacity, and Small Site Design Codes) aimed at the making of boroughs' Local Plans and one (Housing Design Standards) dealt with the taking of decisions on planning applications. The first three will be of great importance to those boroughs, and civic societies in them, which are embarking on, or in the early stages of, revising their plans, but may not so concern boroughs which, like Barnet and Islington, have recently adopted or are about to adopt a new Plan.

Our speakers emphasised the importance the Guidance attached to design and to community engagement (note, not simply consultation) very early in a borough's plan making process, and made it clear that neighbourhood communities (whether or not there is a neighbourhood plan) should be involved, and the whole borough should not be treated as a single entity. The foundation for plan-making was characterisation. - what makes a place special; this had to be based on surveys and analysis; followed by evaluation, especially sensitivity to change; then a strategy for growth. The assessment of site capacity was essential.

There had to be a Design Vision - the aim is optimisation of site capacity, with local identity. For full community engagement our speakers were enthusiastic about 3D modelling - community organisations are going to have to become familiar with this.

The Small Sites Design Codes were intended to provide clarity for developers interested in sites of under a quarter of a hectare and show what would be acceptable and what not; in conservation areas existing appraisals would be their basis; the guidance produced by Historic England was very relevant,

Active questioning followed the presentations. The term 'beauty', beloved by the Government, was equivalent to design quality. The GLA Guidance was compatible with the National Model Design Code; there had been consultation with the Levelling-up Department. The speakers could not clarify 'street votes', for which they awaited secondary legislation under the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act. The provision of the infrastructure necessary for the success of large housing developments (schools; medical facilities; open spaces; transport) was not covered in this guidance.

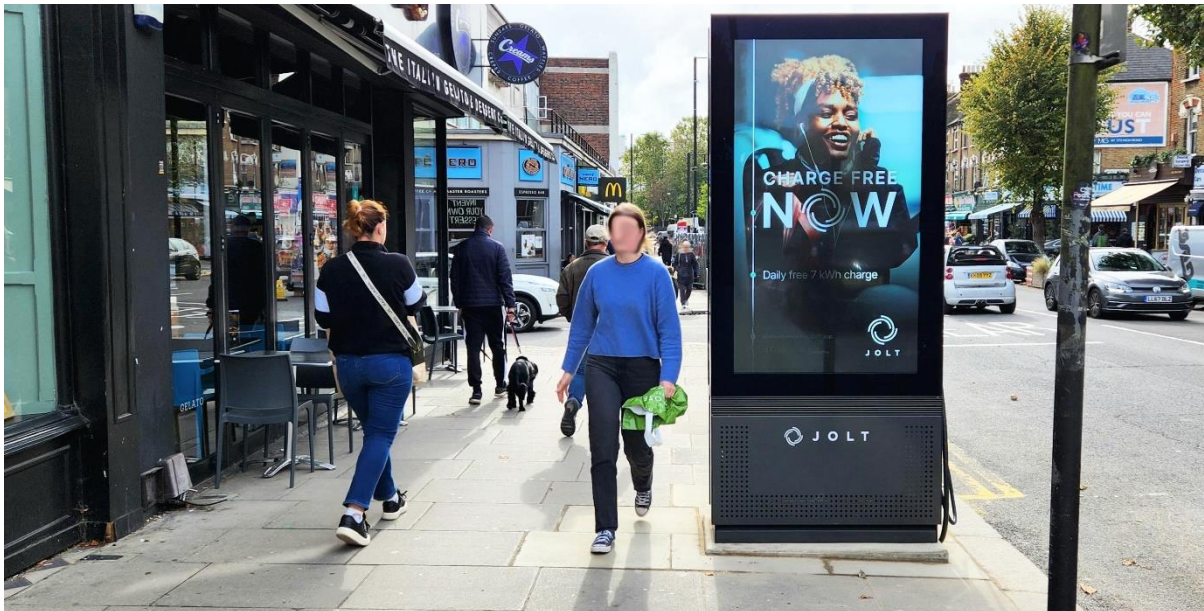
A general worry that permeated the discussions was that local planning authorities were not sufficiently staffed to make a reality of the admirable aspirations in the guidance.

Members who were not able to attend the meeting are able to access the slides used by our speaker [here](#).

120 JOLTs on Barnet Pavements?

The London Borough of Barnet obtained a grant of £2.1 million in 2021 from the Government's Office for Zero Emission Vehicles. The money is designed to fund the roll-out of 120 Electric Vehicle charge points. The council applied the money to an agreement with a company (JOLT Charge Ltd), which is now actively gaining planning approval for, and installing, charge points throughout the borough. These large installations (2.7 metres tall by 1.2 metres broad) comprise a small "fast" EV charger and digital advertising panels (1.9 metres diagonal). In appearance, they closely resemble the ubiquitous digital advertising screens of companies like JCDecaux.

The JOLT units are being erected on pavements, in town centres and along busy roads which provide the advertising with ample exposure to passing traffic. A small portion of the money from advertising will enable a brief period of free charging for motorists. Most of the revenues will be shared between the council and JOLT. Applications are being made rapidly throughout the borough - there have so far been 49, of which 18 have been approved and several implemented.



Constituents of the Federation of Residents Associations of Barnet are very concerned that the advertising panels increase clutter, obstruct pedestrians and are contrary to Council policy on advertising. The scheme will probably double the number of street advertising screens in the borough. It was introduced without consultation and the Federation has attempted to get councillors to halt the programme pending full consultation, but has failed. A few applications have been withdrawn, for instance because of proximity to a heritage asset; as yet none have gone to Planning Committee, so there has been no opportunity to argue the case before councillors.

Civic societies and residents associations support the provision of good facilities for electric vehicles, and welcome other programmes of charging points (flush with the roadway, attached to lampposts, or where the street furniture is no larger than required for the charging); but are very unhappy at the way in which Barnet Council seems to have ignored local and national policies on street furniture and to have failed to interrogate properly the case made by JOLT.

From what we know, Barnet is the guinea-pig in the UK for such a venture. JOLT has stated that it plans “to roll out thousands of charging stations across the UK in the coming years.” If this becomes a major part of EV charging infrastructure, the number of advertising screens on pavements will increase by two or three times. This is what is happening in many areas of Barnet. Member societies in other boroughs should look out for the possibility that such schemes will now spread. What happens in Barnet will demonstrate whether councillors are prepared to look more carefully at this and listen to objections; whether the charge points are well used; and what is the impact on pedestrians and on high streets.

DLUHC’s Digital Planning Programme Michael Jubb reports

The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act includes a number of measures which aim to transform planning processes by using digital data and services with common data standards and software

requirements. The DLUHC [Digital Planning Programme](#) began in 2021 and covers four main themes.

- Better access to planning data, by creating a new [national planning data platform](#) that will make land, planning and housing data easier to find and to use.
- Faster and more efficient decisions by building new services for submitting, processing and approving planning applications.
- Improved local community engagement, with new guidance and toolkits for Councils to use, with an aim to increase the quality and quantity of feedback from the community.
- Simpler, faster, more accessible plan-making, with tools to ensure that Local Plans are underpinned by good data, simpler to produce and understand, and more accessible.

Large numbers of local planning authorities in London and across the country have since 2021 received grants from the Digital Planning Programme (now badged as the PropTech Innovation Fund) to support them in developing new tools and techniques under each of these themes. The focus in the first two rounds of grants was on community engagement, and case study reports from eight London boroughs - [Haringey](#), [Hounslow](#), [Kensington & Chelsea](#), [Lambeth](#), [Newham](#), [Redbridge](#), [Waltham Forest](#) and [Wandsworth](#) – are available on DLUHC’s website.

A Government [report](#) on the first round of grants makes expansive claims about the “incredible achievements of the funded projects, both quantitatively in terms of increased engagement levels and reach, and qualitatively in terms of the new community data and response diversity achieved.”

The individual case studies, however, make clear that digital tools must be combined with face-to-face meetings with members of the public if they are to succeed. The Newham case study, indeed, shows that a digital engagement tool developed with the help of CitizenLab in 2020 was not successful until it was combined with outreach in the form of flyers, emails and social media, and, crucially, with in-person events where I-pads were provided for people to make inputs to a survey. And the Battersea Society’s experience of tools used to gather responses to a draft strategy on the local night-time economy in Wandsworth suggests that while the number and diversity of responses was high, their usefulness may be questioned. For the tools used demanded responses that could only be platitudinous.

Some of the boroughs involved in the case studies have since been awarded further grants to work on issues including

- interoperability and back office integration by developing application programming interfaces (APIs), platform integration and data standards and supplier collaboration (Hounslow, Newham and Waltham Forest); and
- working with statutory consultees and the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) to trial innovative approaches to process and package feedback and representations through the

application of new technologies including AI and natural language processing (Wandsworth plus Richmond).

As such methods gain currency, Forum members will need to become conversant with them if we are to play a full role in the planning system. The subject for an Open Meeting later in the year?

The Teddington Society 50th Anniversary

The Teddington Society was formed 50 years ago when someone at a public enquiry into the proposed development of a large Thames side house asked, 'is there a local amenity society to speak for Teddington?' This moved a few locals to create the Teddington Society in the summer of 1973.

Teddington (postcode TW11) is an ancient settlement that grew rapidly with the arrival of the railway creating a mixture of old, Victorian/Edwardian and modern development. It was named best place to live in London in 2021, where it was praised for "its community spirit, independent shops and [cafés](#), as well as its location near the Thames and the green expanse of Bushy Park". In particular the High Street has kept a mix of independent shops, cafés and restaurants, some of which have been trading under the same name since before the Society was created. Teddington is also the end of the tidal Thames and has the first lock on the river - a popular place for boating.



The Teddington Society today has just short of 1,000 members, all drawn to the aim of the Society – “to preserve and enhance the quality of life for everyone living and working in Teddington”. The Society runs a number of Working Groups, where members can take part in on-going and short-term projects that interest them. These include Planning, History, Environment, Gardens, Riverside and Transport. The Society also has a number of corporate members who contribute a business focus to the Society.

The calendar of activities is varied, with regular events such as talks on local topics, coffee mornings, litter picks, “Teddington in Flower” (where members open their gardens), “Teddington Village Fair” (co-organised by the Society) and an annual party, the latest being held to celebrate the 50th Anniversary. The Society also takes part in local events such as the “Chestnut Sunday” (in Bushy Park) and “Teddington Lights Up”. These activities are all advertised in the four “Tidings” newsletters sent to members each year, either in hard copy or via email, and through social media channels.

One of the main aims of the Society is to keep the membership informed on local issues, such as substantial new building proposals or land sales, and on local consultations; and to be a resource for research on diverse topics such as locally listed buildings and war memorials.

The Teddington Society recently surveyed their members’ opinions on the future of the society and is working through the challenges the answers have thrown up. This includes looking at ways to modernise the website and keep it up to date, to be even more visible in the neighbourhood and to attract younger members.

“In every way, we try to make Teddington a better place to live.”



Upcoming events

Is Building on London's Green Belt Inevitable?

16th January 6.00 for 6.30 pm at The Gallery, 70 Cowcross St

Many members will have read of Enfield Borough’s intention to revise its Local Plan, increasing the number of homes to be built on Green Belt land from 5000 to 9000. This has drawn

opposition from the local civic society (see article below) and from CPRE London, but also support from other, possibly unexpected, directions.

As the pressure to free up Green Belt land is unlikely to be restricted to Enfield alone, the London Forum is holding an Open Meeting to give the topic a thorough airing. The meeting will be at The Gallery, 70 Cowcross Street, London EC1M 6EJ on Tuesday 16th January 2024, starting at 6.00 for 6.30 pm.

We have confirmed speakers from from the Enfield Society, from CPRE London, and from an associate of Priced Out, the Campaign for Affordable House Prices.

Please note the date, and where possible, line up a member of your organisation to take part.

Hold the date - 18th April 2024

The Gallery, 70 Cowcross Street, 6.00 for 6.30 pm

Topic to be announced

Enfield's Green Belt under threat

The Enfield Society's John West and Dave Cockle report

Enfield Council published its draft Local Plan for consultation in 2021 (Regulation 18). That plan proposed thousands of new homes on Green Belt land including a large area of open land immediately east of Trent Country Park, Crews Hill Golf Course and surrounding areas at Crews Hill, and other areas within historic Enfield Chase. Well over 7,000 objections were received to the draft plan, the vast majority objecting to the loss of Green Belt and opposing proposals to allow high buildings at various town centres across the Borough.

Enfield's Green belt is one of the last remnants of Enfield Chase, a former Royal hunting ground. The Council's draft plan failed to mention that the whole of Enfield's open countryside is designated as the Enfield Chase Heritage Area of Special Character and is protected by the current statutory Enfield Development Management Document Policy which states that "new development within the Areas of Special Character will only be permitted if features or characteristics which are key to maintaining the quality of the area are preserved and enhanced".

The Council is currently preparing its Regulation 19 document that will go to the full Council in March 2024 for approval to submit to the Secretary of State. Current indications are that the Council will increase the housing target and retain all the development proposals for the Green Belt despite local opposition. The Enfield Society is firmly opposed to Green Belt development, and has worked with CPRE London and other local groups to produce a document 'Space to Build' identifying brown field sites across the Borough.

In Enfield, a number of major sites including a retail area on the Great Cambridge Road, a site at Southgate Circus and a former builder's yard in Winchmore Hill have all received planning

approval for residential development. Proposals are not currently proceeding and if the Council releases large parts of the Green Belt, it is certain that developers will prioritise open farmland land that is cheaper to build on.

Another Society concern is that the Council appears to be intending that its rewilding project on other Green Belt land will be used to persuade the Planning Inspectorate that the proposed large areas of Green Belt development are consistent with national planning policy in terms of compensatory improvements.

The Enfield Society is preparing to oppose these plans on the grounds that the Council's plans will impact on historic landscapes, lead to the loss of significant wildlife habitats, impact on the setting of Trent Park and other important local landmarks and erode the Green Belt. The Society supports the rewilding of Green Belt areas, but not at the expense of loss of other areas and their impact on the character of Enfield and the 'green gateway' to north London.

Annual General Meeting 2023

The London Forum's AGM was held in the Gallery, Cowcross Street on 12 October 2023, attended by 25 member societies. Forum Chair Peter Eversden summarised the main events of the year, drawing attention to the wide range of time-consuming issues that the Forum had had to address. These included the progress of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill through the House of Lords, numerous Government consultations, and the first steps towards a new London Plan (even though guidance in relation to the current Plan is still being rolled out).

Treasurer, Stephen Speak reviewed the accounts for the 12 months to 30th June 2023. Expenditure had been higher than in previous years owing to the engagement of a consultant to assist with the Forum's strategy review, a donation to Civic Voice, and the cost of developing the new website. Nevertheless the Forum still has a healthy balance sheet and no increases in subscriptions are anticipated. The Treasurer advised that he would have to step down in the not-too-distant future, and asked those present whether they could identify a possible successor.

All retiring trustees were willing to stand for re-election, as were the Forum's officers. They were re-elected en bloc. Details can be found on the Forum website [here](#).

Following the AGM, the Forum's Patron, Professor Tony Travers and President, Ben Derbyshire addressed the meeting.

Tony Travers drew attention to London's resilience in the face of numerous shocks in recent years – Brexit, Covid etc. The Capital has added important transport links such as the Overground and, most recently, the Elizabeth Line. The population has continued to rise and the city's GDP has grown more quickly than elsewhere in the country. However expenditure on local services has declined sharply and this needs to be reversed. Transport for London needs to find

new ways to balance its books and to pay for planned investments such as the Bakerloo and DLR extensions.

Ben Derbyshire's talk drew on his 50 years of experience as an architect, and reprised his recent article on "loved housing". He believes the most suitable forms of urban housing are streets and squares of between four and ten storeys in height. Neighbourhoods should be arranged in perimeter blocks, creating well overlooked streetscapes and the opportunity for private or shared amenity space within. Such neighbourhoods can comfortably house people from all walks of life as well as enabling the mix of uses we need for the walkable city. Rejecting the notion that there is anything sinister about the "15-minute city", Ben asserted that it is both possible and desirable for citizens to be within 15 minutes of everything required to support wellbeing.

Lengthier versions of these talks can be read [here](#).

Andrew Bosi's Transport Round-up

HS2 Cancellation

The announcement cancelling HS2 north of Birmingham, continuing doubt over the Old Oak-Euston section, and the pause of work there affords the opportunity to review what is left.

The Euston section relies on a tunnelled route that has been deemed unbuildable since it was approved by Parliament. No alternative exists in the public domain. With the reduction from 11, then 10, to six platforms at Euston, a flat junction might be feasible, but the panel of HS2 apologists assembled before the Transport Select Committee were scathing about the capacity implications.

The Architects Journal meanwhile has a useful article pointing out the folly of terminal stations which are wasteful of prime space. So many successful schemes of the past forty years (Manchester & Nottingham trams, Thameslink, Elizabeth line) testify to that. So Future Transport London is working up a scheme to utilise capacity on the Elizabeth line, by extending trains which now terminate at Paddington on to the half-built HS2 line to Curzon Street.

Even the apologists for HS2 criticise the value for money the remaining project now offers, even after discounting the money already lost. The heavy cost of the alignment required for the ludicrously high speed of the original project is lost, and probably the tunnelling costs, but the track and sleepers have not been laid and there would be saving there as well as on the leg to Euston and the station. Rolling stock design costs may also be wasted, although the planned trains could be repurposed as well. Intermediate stations would add to cost, but also bring significant returns in increased revenue and rail capacity. They would also compensate some of the people who have had to endure years of disruption as the ground has been prepared for this white elephant project.

Will British Railways ever be Great again?

The King's Speech did mention Great British Railways, but only promised a draft Bill for further consultation. The lack of legislation before the next election has dismayed the railway industry, with good cause. These proposals were non-controversial (relative to most government plans). Nor is the long promised "simplification" of rail fares happening soon, although more positively there will still be ticket offices to advise on the cheapest or most appropriate option. The closure proposals produced over three quarters of a million objections and all Transport Focus and London Travelwatch staff were diverted for two months reading every response and making recommendations on every proposal. It was the same recommendation for them all. What Private Eye calls the reverse ferret was delivered at high speed.



Thanks to the Greenwich Society for permission to use the Banx cartoon.

Some fare changes have been introduced on Chiltern and C2C services. Return tickets disappear but an evening peak is introduced, meaning some journeys will cost more and others will be cheaper. It can hardly be called simplification. Extending the Oyster system to stations in the south-east outside Greater London has been delayed.

Another successful reversal in response to public pressure is the agreement to retain the one-day travelcard in London. From next March it will cost 3% more, on top of the general increase applied to all fares.

Briefly Noted

First use of a Local Development Order in Kensington and Chelsea

The Forum's Michael Bach reports the first use of a Local Development Order (LDO) in Kensington & Chelsea. This will allow the residents of Nos 21-32 Redcliffe Road to make mansard roof additions without having to apply for planning permission, provided that certain conditions specified in a design brief are fulfilled. A consultation on the proposals has just closed. For more information on the proposals and the LDO process see [here](#).

Coffey Guillotine on recording Historic Paths

The Open Spaces Society reports with dismay that the then Secretary of State for the Environment, Thérèse Coffey, yielded to landowner pressure to dump the consensus approach to registering historic rights of way. 'Public access has never been more vital, and our path network is the most popular means of gaining that access. This rash and prejudicial move by

government will lead to the loss of thousands of public paths,' says Kate Ashbrook, OSS General Secretary. Forum members who think they may be affected should contact the OSS [here](#).

Securing the London Forum Archive

According to its website London Metropolitan Archives "is [sic] a public research centre which specialises in the history of London, caring for and providing access to the historical archives of businesses, schools, hospitals, charities and all manner of other organisations from the London area. we're proud to provide access to one of the finest city archives in the world - you could call it the memory of London." It run by the City of London Corporation.

It therefore seemed an appropriate place to deposit the Forum's records for permanent preservation, and a complete set of NewsForums, Annual Reports (with a couple of gaps we are seeking to fill) and Committee minutes from the Forum's beginning until 2010, are now there. More documents may follow. They will be catalogued and will in due course become accessible to researchers as well as the Forum. They will be a valuable source of information, particularly on the relationship of the Civic Society sector and London's governmental organs over the turn of the century, when the Greater London Authority was being established.

It is important that in a laudable desire to declutter, collective memory is not lost - after all, what's hit is history, what's missed is mystery.

Environment News

In August 2023, the **Ultra Low Emission Zone**, affecting cars and light vans, was expanded from covering London inside the North and South circular roads to covering the whole of Greater London. The Mayor had published a detailed report in February 2023 concluding that the ULEZ in central and inner London had led to significant reductions both in polluting emissions from vehicles and in concentrations of pollutants. We will be looking closely at the emerging evidence on how far the latest expansion of the ULEZ will lead to further reductions in pollution.

In November 2023, Hammersmith and Fulham council announced details of an **innovative green investment scheme**. Under this scheme, both residents and non-residents of the council could invest any sum from £5 upwards to support green investment schemes (covering areas like improvements to parks and open spaces, sustainable drainage and bicycle hangars) in the borough, and obtain a fixed return of 4.85% per year. It will be interesting to see how it develops, and whether other London boroughs propose anything similar.

Round the societies

Helen Warner and Michael Hammerson pick from society newsletters

Only a small proportion of our member societies send us their newsletters. We want to know your key issues. So, please feel free to send us some brief notes on what you consider would be of interest to the wider membership. Click [here](#) to link to the full-length stories.

It's hard to choose from the plethora of housing planning reports but here are a couple that reflect wider issues. The **Charlton** Riverside has been proposed by Michael Gove as 'Docklands 2.0', an area extending downriver on both sides of the Thames. This could 'fatally affect' the Charlton Riverside Masterplan, already under pressure from developers and the threat of flooding. As a result, proposed massive residential developments have largely stalled.

The Streatham Society are fighting proposed Woodgate Towers on the Homebase site in Streatham Vale. It would dominate this largely suburban area, dwarf neighbouring streets and destroy the views from Streatham Common. Locals are questioning why this development is being considered when the site wasn't identified in Lambeth's Local Plan. It would also set a precedent for the area.

The Brixton Society report that land alongside the railway line remains in limbo. Lambeth Councillors rejected a proposal to develop with 100% affordable housing, passing it to their Homes for Lambeth subsidiary, "who did nothing". Meanwhile, the owner of a factory site halfway along obtained his own planning permission for housing development, and Lambeth failed to buy back the land. Concerned at the delay, and in a belated rush to get a private developer on board, the Council now appears willing to reduce the share of affordable housing from their usual 50% to 30%.

The Mill Hill Society fear for The Ridgeway. The level of affordable homes is unclear but appears to be only 5%, insufficient to meet the London Plan, though Barnet planners advise that it is set at 20%. We note societies remain concerned that a shortage of planning and enforcement officers, which is leading to poor decisions in many boroughs.

Transport issues continue to be prominent for many societies, from the re-emergence of revised Low Traffic Neighbourhoods and consultations on TfL's Cycleways to the **Barnet Society** report that High Barnet's new role as a gateway to the Greater London Ultra Low Emission Zone has brought confusion for motorists and that enforcement cameras have been vandalised. Transport for London is facing opposition from Hertfordshire County Council. With fewer main roads than in urban areas, exemptions have had to be made to allow for traffic to flow freely within Hertsmere. Two charge-free corridors have been created around High Barnet.

Over in Peckham, a community drop-in will provide residents with a rare opportunity to visit the Victorian Old Waiting Room above the ticket office in Peckham Rye station. Derelict for many years, it was rescued by **Peckham Vision** and the **Peckham Society**, with the support of the Railway Heritage Trust, the rail companies and Southwark Council.

On environmental matters, we note that **Richmond** Council have rejected Thames Water's **Teddington** Abstraction Proposal (TDRA) as damaging to the river and to its land, when better solutions are available. 50 organisations impacted over the full length of the scheme have opposed it. Nevertheless, Thames Water aim to apply for planning permission direct to the Secretary of State for the Environment for a Direct Consent Order, on the grounds that the scheme is a national infrastructure project.

The Friends of St. James' and Green Parks report that the threat to Victoria Tower Gardens remains, and legislation to disapply the 1900 Act protecting the gardens is being considered by a Parliamentary Select Committee.

The Sydenham Society report that Lewisham Council has 141 air quality monitors in place throughout the borough and that air quality is improving. Nitrogen dioxide particles in the air have fallen by 34% in the last seven years, 10% of this figure in the last two years. However, the borough is well below DEFRA annual targets for air quality and still needs to halve current emissions to achieve WHO targets for cities.

The London Parks and Gardens Trust alert readers to the importance of the fungal mycelium network hidden in the soil beneath your feet, crucial to the ecosystems underpinning our existence. Soil would quickly become sterile without them. This network nicknamed the Wood Wide Web, enables trees to send chemical signals or food to their neighbours or saplings.

The **Mill Hill Society** objected to an application in 2021 for the installation of up to 100 lamp-post advertising banners but following discussions with the Council, the number of signs has been reduced to 37.

Barnet Council launched its Interactive Tree Portal alongside its new Tree Policy 2023-2028. On barnet.ezyportal.com is a map marking every Council tree. The aim is to increase street tree canopy cover by 1,000 trees per annum, replacing dying or diseased ones and managing existing ones.

The Dulwich Society unveiled its latest solar-powered audio post on Cox's Walk, commemorating the Society's 60th anniversary. It contains four recordings: two on local history and two about the trees or wildlife which may be seen or heard nearby.

And the **Teddington society** have recently celebrated their 50th anniversary and rejoined the London Forum! See separate article above.

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