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The Barnes Village Bugle

January 9, 2022

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£400k spend for the ferry that never was



London Mayor Sadiq Khan has revealed that between August and September the government paid over £400,000 for a Hammersmith ferry service that has never been active.

In November the Hammersmith Bridge Taskforce concluded that as the bridge had been open to pedestrians since July the ferry would no longer be necessary. However, by the time that the bridge was unexpectedly reopened to pedestrians by Hammersmith & Fulham Council on July 17, the contract for the ferry had already been awarded (in March 2020) and a team at TfL were working on implementation plans with a scheduled late summer start.

It seems it took four months for the Taskforce to decide the ferry was now no longer required and during that time costs were racking up to the tune of £20k per week. According to the Mayor, TfL wanted to 'mimimise' the costs associated with the ferry but was advised by the Taskforce that options should be developed for how the ferry could be used as a stand-by if required during the repair work on the bridge. A core team at TfL was therefore retained to work on the project which would account for some of the cost. The rest of the bill was due to 'holding costs associated with the infrastructure of the ferry service'.

The company that had been awarded the ferry contract, Thames Clippers, was told of the cancellation of the planned service on November 25th. The details of the contract with Thames Clippers are unknown, although it is likely to have included standing costs and notice period clauses.

The revelation came in a written answer from the Mayor to a LibDem member of the London Assembly. The Evening Standard quotes local MP Sarah Olney as saying ***“nearly half a million pounds has been spent on retaining a service that will never see the light of day...Seeing how much money has been wasted on the ferry really is inexcusable when you think about what else it could have been spent on.”***

As we have written at (unfortunate) length in previous Bugles no funding agreement has been reached for major repairs to the bridge and indeed no scheme for the major repairs has been decided upon.

Of the two schemes being considered by the bridge Taskforce, one, designed by Foster Cowi, aims to build a temporary infrastructure (to carry cars, pedestrians and cyclists) within the current bridge. This would allow repairs of some of the bridge's components to be made off site. The alternative scheme being considered would see all repairs take place on the bridge itself. Further closures of the bridge to pedestrians while either of these schemes are implemented cannot be ruled out, although it seems one of the benefits of the Hammersmith & Fulham Council backed Foster Cowi scheme is that such closures would be minimised.

If the Foster Cowi scheme is not chosen, a ferry may indeed be necessary if the works require the bridge is to be closed to pedestrians and cyclists for a considerable length of time and the ferry plans will have to be taken out, dusted off and implemented (so long as funding is in place...).

Shuttle seeks sponsors



The revelation of the huge spend on ‘the ferry that never was’ prompted Raphael Zachary Younger (who is one of the BCA’s trustees) to tweet about the money spent, saying ***“This amount of money could have secured the proposed @BCA4Barnesshuttle service for 4 years, providing a safe and easy crossing for the most vulnerable in our community.”***

The service needs sponsors to subsidise its running costs and enough people to use it. To cover costs without sponsorship we calculate that the shuttle would have to run nearly 140 journeys per day at £2 per journey which seems more than might be possible. The good news is that the BCA is in contact with a number of potential sponsors but we understand they are still open to additional offers of sponsorship. It’s a gem of an opportunity for anyone wanting to see their logo splashed across one of the most visible vehicles in Barnes and Hammersmith.

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Swans in late night flit



We don't know about you, but at the Bugle we tend to count swans as we go past the pond.

We count the cygnets in when they arrive and count them out as they are removed by Swan Sanctuary volunteers or sadly die due to disease or predation.

Normally, by this time of year, all the cygnets would have been rehomed but thanks to a cool summer, and therefore an ample supply of grass to graze on, the parent swans haven't been pushing out their offspring to seek pastures new – until recently.

In the natural scheme of things, once the cygnets are old enough the parents encourage them to leave - sometimes quite aggressively. This is all about conservation of food and territory.

In flying terms Barnes Pond is the equivalent of a light aircraft strip and swans need something more like a Heathrow runway to take off. As a consequence, our young adult swans don't learn to fly, and they need a little help to skip the nest.

For the past few years this has meant that volunteers from the Swan Sanctuary have collected the young swans and rehomed them in the community of swans near Kingston Bridge. However, our latest brood are being rehomed in a different destination, just by Small Profits Dock on Lonsdale Road where a brand-new community of swans has established itself.

The first eight-month-old cygnet to be rehomed was taken away between Christmas and New Year and it has now been joined by two of its siblings.

The community of swans by Small Profits Dock is mostly made up of young swans. Hopefully by being part of this new group our cygnets will find mates. As one commenter on the Barnes Pond Instagram account said ***"It's like Tinder for swans!"***.

You can see footage of all three swans being released on the [Barnes Pond Instagram](#) account.

Win a meal for two at Ela & Dhani



Church Road's brand new Indian restaurant Elā & Dhani will be open next weekend (January 15) and is already open for takeaway. To celebrate they are running a prize draw for Bugle readers who sign up to the restaurant's mailing list. Just click the link below to enter to win a meal for two for up to the value of £50.


The restaurant is a real family affair. It is run by Yogesh, Harry and Sunny, who have been childhood friends for many years, growing up in the beautiful state of Punjab, North India. They all come from large families where weekends were spent going to different people's homes and trying new and interesting dishes. They spent their holidays on their grandparents' farms; milking buffalos, churning fresh butter, making fresh paneer and picking fresh vegetables.

Harry decided to follow his dream and opened an award-winning Indian restaurant in Frankfurt. Sunny decided that being an entrepreneur was his calling and he now has a number of successful businesses in Barnes including the Barnes Pantry. Yogesh has over two decades of IT professional experience in India and the UK.

Now all three are working together to run Elā & Dhani with the aim of sharing the dishes they have loved since childhood. Signature dishes include Butter Chicken and Saag Paneer. They also do a mean biryani. You can see [their menu here](#) on their website.

Click to enter competition

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New plan brewing for Stag development



After the London Mayor Sadiq Khan turned down plans for the proposed new mega-development at the site of Mortlake's old Stag Brewery in July, the developers have gone back to the drawing board and will be submitting a revised scheme for the brewery site and a secondary school in late January or early February.

As we reported at the time of the decision, the Mayor turned down the plan on the basis of there being too few affordable housing units. He also objected to the proposed height of some of the buildings.

Local campaigners have been engaging with the developers Reselton Properties but have been dismayed that they have not yet been able to meet the head of Richmond Council, Gareth Roberts.

The nub of the issue may be the council's requirement for the development to include a 1250 pupil sized secondary school as part of the scheme. The Mortlake Brewery Community Group contends that a better solution to meeting the council's needs for additional secondary school places would be the relocation of the Thomson House primary school to the brewery site and expansion of the existing Sheen Park and Christ's secondary schools. Moving the primary school to the site would require less space and give the developers the opportunity to build more housing at lower density. The campaign group says the developers are willing to support this solution by assisting in funding for the relocation of the primary school and the expansion of the two suggested secondary schools.

The fact that the new plans are anticipated to still include a secondary school seems to imply that Richmond Council is holding firm on its proviso that a new secondary school should be included in the plans.

It is likely that a virtual public consultation on the new plans will be the next step. You can read more on the [Mortlake Brewery Community Group's website](#).



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Super natural



Ela and Dhani isn't the only new business to open its doors in Barnes this month, as over on Barnes High Street the old Octavia charity shop has been transformed into a new food shop focusing on organic and natural deli produce as well as vegan friendly ingredients.

Barnes Natural is an offshoot of Barnes Fruit and Veg and seems to be perfectly targeted for a very food-focused area. As well as deli produce, look out for fresh bread and delicious looking pastries.

Where everybody knows your name



It's the holy grail, a restaurant that feels like home, a friendly local place where the customers feel like they are part of the family. When Barnes restaurateur Rebecca Mascarenhas opened Home - a casual-dining bar and restaurant in Putney - that was her aim. That approach has now paid off in more ways than one, as its customers have rallied around to support the restaurant after it lost nearly £40,000 in revenue in December when Christmas party and other bookings were cancelled by people worried about Omicron.

When the first two lockdowns hit, customers got in touch with Home's manager and co-owner Craig Gordon to ask how they could help and he came up with the idea of a hall of fame with the names of customers who donated being immortalised on the exposed brick walls of the restaurant. In return, the new 'Home Heroes' would be invited to a summer party. He was overwhelmed by the response which raised nearly £30,000 helping to pay rent and other standing costs. And, if that wasn't enough, when they heard about the losses caused by Omicron, customers again stepped in, with some paying again to turn their bricks gold and also suggesting that their friends chip in, meaning another wall is being set aside in the restaurant to add new names – sidekicks to the original Home Heroes. So far, this has raised a further £16,000.

Rebecca says ***“Home is a joint venture, I backed some really exciting new talent in the restaurant business and Craig, the manager of Home, and his team just know how to make people feel looked after. He always goes the extra mile and he’s also a genuinely funny guy whose posts on social media are well worth following.*”**

“It won the London Local Restaurant of the Year Award in 2019, which is a testament to how much the customers love it, but even knowing that, I was shocked and hugely grateful for the support they have shown Craig and the team.”

As for Craig, he says *“I am just so touched. The last few years have been dreadful for everyone who works in hospitality. The fact that people love Home so much that they are happy to dip into their pockets to support us is hugely humbling.”*



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From daisies to snowflakes



When social historians from another era look back on the Covid pandemic there may be an interesting subset of their studies examining how our windows suddenly became performative spaces. Teddies appeared to amuse children on lockdown walks, rainbows festooned windows to demonstrate thankfulness to key workers, and in streets close to First Avenue in Mortlake you could see daisies everywhere.

Why daisies? Well for 11-year-old Saffron Cockerton Rai daisies were symbolic of the chains that link us all. They hold a special place in her heart after her grandmother taught her to make daisy chains, so in lockdown she decided to make paper daisies to send to her friends and to everyone in her street. The daisies ended up in windows across Mortlake and Little Chelsea and daisies were used as distancing symbols outside her school Barnes Primary. Saffron even made a film about her project '***We were together in being apart***' which was shown at the Barnes Film Festival.

Having made daisies in the springtime, Saffron has now turned to making snowflakes in the winter and, once again, windows across Barnes have been decorated with her artwork. This time she's also used the project to raise funds for charity and over £1,000 has been raised to provide disadvantaged children with a free education in Ethiopia.

You can find out more about Saffron's project and donate (free snowflake with every donation!) at her [Just Giving](#) page.

Lockdown life in miniature



How many of us dusted off old DIY and craft projects during lockdowns and finally got things done? Or finally read War and Peace, or took up a hobby that they previously never had the time to give to? At the Bugle, we started knitting again and a three-quarter finished jumper now languishing in a knitting bag is the result. Some people, however, have more gumption and staying power and, it has to be said, talent, than us at the Bugle.

One of them, Trisha Hawkins has been sharing the result of her lockdown labours on [Instagram](#) and if ever an Instagram account was worth checking out it is hers. Like many of us, she decided to declutter during lockdown and while clearing out cupboards discovered a dolls' house kit she had bought for her daughter and never got round to making. Her daughter is now 38.

Rather than donate the kit to a charity shop as some would have done, Trisha decided to finally give it a go and the results are spectacular. She grew up in a family that made things (her father was a great woodworker and her mother sewed beautifully) and was therefore undaunted at the prospect of making furniture for her house.

Once she started, the fun to be had from decorating rooms in miniature became very clear. As the house took shape she made miniature versions of her own favourite

items of furniture but rather than make a faithful copy of her own house she realised she could use the dolls' house as a form of experimentation and wish fulfilment. It's quite a risky undertaking to paint your hallway a dusky shade of blue but a dolls' house hall can be painted in half a day and you can use it as a template for your own hall. Similarly, having craved an Aga for her own kitchen and never had one, she could put an Aga in the dolls' house at a fraction of the cost and disruption (although this Aga was procured from a dolls' house catalogue rather than made by Trisha).

Once people see Trisha's house they are similarly inspired and one local artist – ceramicist [Lori Shaul](#) - has joined in the fun by creating a miniature version of a vase that Trisha bought at The Barnes Art Fair. It will sit in pride of place in the dolls' house sitting room.

The Bugle would love to hear about other readers who have undertaken similar lockdown projects. Are there more dolls' house enthusiasts out there? Have you built something wonderful in full scale? Do [get in touch](#) and let us know as we would love to feature the fruits of your labour in a future issue.

The Archway Street mystery



Anyone walking along Archway Street in Little Chelsea over the past few days will have been intrigued by some strange chalk inscriptions on many of the front doors (see above). What on earth could they mean? They do look slightly sinister but it seems they are a New Year blessing with the lettering representing crucifixes and the initials of the Magi. Quite who decided to take it upon themselves to bless the houses is still a mystery but the Archway Street locals we have talked to are relieved that the inscriptions are hopefully benign, although somewhat perplexed and slightly spooked by their sudden appearance on their doors.

The stars come out for the 10th Barnes Music Festival



This year the Barnes Music Festival will be celebrating its 10th anniversary. To mark the event ten new compositions will have their world premiere at the Festival and there will be some concerts featuring Classical music mega-stars including cellist and festival patron Steven Isserlis (above) and the oboist Nicholas Daniel.

Howard Goodall's *Eternal Light* will open the Festival in a concert that will also feature work from Tallis, Vaughan Williams and Holst. The Choir of Magdalen College Oxford will perform Stainer's *Crucifixion*, and the popular and original *Noisenight* will delight young audiences with their trendy take on classical music.

King's College London will return with *Rachmaninoff Vespers*, as well as Tony Palmer with his film about Vaughan Williams.

The Barnes Music Festival 2022 takes place from 4th to 20th March with 33 events at seven venues across Barnes.

A very important date



The Music Festival isn't the only institution in Barnes celebrating its 10 year anniversary. It's also been 10 years since the mysterious White Rabbit started to appear around Barnes, often on the 1st of the month.

The White Rabbit is the alter-ego of Barnes conceptual artist Spike Mclarrity who is fascinated by the symbolism related to rabbits. Why has the rabbit become so deeply embedded in folklore? Where do rituals like lucky rabbit's feet and saying white rabbit three times on the first of the month come from? And why is Easter and spring so often celebrated with rabbit imagery?

White Rabbit's 1st of the month appearances on the tow path near Barnes Bridge suddenly came to national attention in 2016 when he was snapped by a Daily Mail photographer. Since then he has continued his 1st of the month celebrations and joined in with Christmas Festivals and Barnes Fairs as well as dropping in at street parties. He's quite a fixture now.

To celebrate his 10 years you can find a special Barnes White Rabbit book at the Barnes Bookshop, Oh Darling! and Natsons and you can follow Spike's performances on [Instagram](#).



Camile Thai Kitchen

A wassailing we go...



Awassail is an ancient rural English celebration giving fruit growers and pickers the opportunity to drink to the good health of their fruit trees and to an abundant crop in the coming year. It also brings light, noise, laughter and cheer to the longer, darker winter months. In gloomy times like these it's also the perfect way to get together safely in a social distanced outdoor gathering.

The Friends of Barnes Common organise an annual wassail and it's all good family fun. Their wassail will be held from 10am on Saturday January 15 at the Vine Road recreation ground. There will be troubadours, story-telling and craft making plus spiced apple juice for toasting and snacks provided by The Feel Good Bakery. Adult

tickets cost £4.50 and children can come for free. Tickets can be bought from [Eventbrite](#).

The irresistible lure of Barnes



[Picture: Andrew Wilson](#)

As far as the newspaper property pages go it seems that Barnes is like the Hotel California, in that ***“you can check out but you can never leave”***.

As the pandemic began stories about a rush to the country from cities began to emerge. London prices falling, Cotswold prices soaring was the thrust of most property pieces. However, two years on, signs of buyer’s remorse are appearing, leading to two sort of articles along the lines of ***“I went to the country and love it...I miss good lattes through”*** and ***“Oh my god, what have we done, it’s all muddy and dark down here and a 20-minute drive to buy a pint of milk.”***

For the writers of the latter type of article, Barnes is seen as an acceptable facsimile of country life in London. The Times shares a story – gleaned from a removals company - of one family whom they moved from Barnes to Bath only to move them back eight days later. The same piece tells the sorry tale of Emma and Daniel who sold their home in Stockwell to move to a house in a remote Dorset village. Eighteen months on they have realised that they don’t want to live a holiday life full time and are looking for a house in, well you’ve guessed it, Barnes.

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Rejoicing for the life of William Blezard



The riverside work on the Fulham Stadium has been going on for a few years leaving walkers on our side of the river to speculate about what's being built. And as you can see from the image above that was released at the end of November, what is being constructed is pretty spectacular.

The work has combined the construction of a new stand in the ground itself with a great deal of river facing development in a project titled Fulham Pier. There will be a boardwalk allowing pedestrians to walk along the river from Putney to Hammersmith uninterrupted for the first time in over a century, and at the back of the stand there will be hospitality suites and a serviced apartment complex. At ground level there will be shops and restaurants and, at the Putney end of the development, a health club boasting an open-air swimming pool with a spectacular view of the Thames. Works are due to complete this year.

No news on date of High Street changes



Despite works on the High Street to widen pavements and move parking spaces being planned for January, the Bugle has been unable to find out what the start date may be. There are no advance works notices placed locally yet and no news from the council as to what the start date is. Similarly, there is no information available on what the fate of the controversial Church Road parklet might be. We hope to be able to publish an update in the next Bugle.

Bugle Classifieds

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Suits straight staircase. Only £990* including delivery and fitting by a trained Acorn installer and a three month full warranty. Contact 0800 0739793 quoting the reference 320298.

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What's on in January?

Check out our guide to What's On in Barnes this month

Great films at The Olympic



It's awards season, so not surprisingly the Olympic will be showing a plethora of Oscar contenders this month. From Steven Spielberg's glorious technicolour remake of West Side Story to Kenneth Branagh's much fancied Belfast. Critics seem to think that Denzel Washington is a shoo-in for a Best Actor for his towering performance in the Joel Coen directed The Tragedy of Macbeth. Also leading the contenders in the Best Foreign Film Category is Ryusuke Hamaguchi's Drive My Car. Be warned that this elegiac Japanese masterpiece is three hours long but it is a mesmerising piece of filmmaking. For those wanting to avoid three hour long films there are also blockbusters to be had, including the box office number one Spiderman No Way Home. Finally, for theatre lovers there is a must-have ticket; an NT Live screening of Tom Stoppard's multi-award-winning Leopoldstat.

What's on at The OSO?



From Joyce Grenfell to Derek Pringle

There's a glorious line-up of shows to look forward to at the OSO this month. Two amazing piano virtuosi (the extraordinary Viv McClean and the 'bewitching' Mei-Ting Sung) will play one-man-shows followed by a celebration of the OSO's historic Steinway with Viv, Mei Ting and pianist and singer Sofia Kirwan-Baez. The amazing vocalists Stephan O'Goodson will be celebrating the arrival of a new 'Roaring Twenties' with his Gatsby evening. On the drama front there are two very different comedies to enjoy from Joe Orton's darkly subversive Entertaining Mr Sloane to a light as a feather one-woman celebration of Joyce Grenfell. Finally throwing a googlie into the schedule is an evening with 80s cricket legend Derek Pringle.

See the full programme of events [here](#).

Bull's Head highlights



This month's best gigs at The Bull's Head range from blues to funk to silky-voiced cool jazz so whether you want to be energised or calmed there's a gig with your name on it. For those wanting to be soothed, the Bugle's prescription is an evening with Zoe Francis and The Blue Town Trio. Expect jazz vocal classics, exemplary jazz guitar and a hint of the Hammond organ. You can check out Zoe's mellifluous voice here on Youtube. For lovers of jazz funk there's the rather alarmingly named Thunderthumbs a group of 11 musicians and singers who have got together to celebrate the work of the great funk bassist Louis Johnson. Finally there's our home town boy Papa George, an international blues guitarist who takes his influence from artists including Ray Charles, Chuck Berry, John Lee Hooker and Jimi Hendrix.

Barnes Philosophy Club

Tuesday January 11, The OSO

An Agnostic View of Artificial Intelligence

Artificial Intelligence is all around us, but is any of it conscious? If not, might there be conscious AI in the future? Because these questions have major ethical ramifications it's imperative that we find clear answers.

[See website for more details.](#)

Barnes Music Society

Monday January 17, All Saints East Sheen

Emma Halnan, flute and Jayne Baley piano

A concert featuring music by Debussy, Schumann and Schubert.

Barnes Literary Society



Tuesday January 18, St Mary's Church

Authors Ingrid Persaud, winner of the Costa First Novel Award 2020, and Leone Ross, whose work has been nominated for the Jhalak Prize and Edge Hill Prize amongst others, discuss novels that explore trauma, love and what it means to be writing as British/ Caribbean authors today. Members and guests only. See the [BLS website](#) for full details.

Book Ahead

There are quite a few treats in store in February & March for which it might be wise to book ahead. Here's the Bugle's handy guide:

Roger McGough & Richard Harries at St Mary's

February 8th

Distinguished author Bishop Richard Harries and poet Roger McGough come together on Tuesday 8th February 2022 at 8pm at St Mary's Barnes to discuss their new books on poetry.

From Yehuda Amichai and W H Auden to Phyllis Wheatley and Walt Whitman, Richard Harries' latest book Hearing God in Poetry invites you to take a closer look at fifty great poems that say something distinctive that will lift your spirit.

At once funny and moving, Roger McGough's latest collection Safety in Numbers traverses new yet timeless terrain with his signature wit and intimacy.

Yes Prime Minister at The OSO

March 16th - 20th

Yes, Prime Minister is an updated full length stage production of the popular TV sitcom. Barnes Community Players's 2022 version of this telling satire introduces Gemma Hacker as a female PM, trying to save the planet.

Barnes Music Festival

March 4th-20th

Thirty three events in seven venues across Barnes, see story above.

About the Bugle

The Barnes Village Bugle is an independent publication. People often think it's produced by the Barnes Community Association, but no, they have their own excellent email Prospect Plus.

At the Bugle we endeavour to simply report what's going on in Barnes in as comprehensive and entertaining a way as possible. We have no agenda apart from spreading the word about the huge number of genuinely interesting things happening in and around Barnes and sharing information about local campaigns and news events.

If you have a story you would like to see featured in the Bugle do email us by clicking here.

We can't guarantee that we'll run it, but if we think it's going to be interesting to our readers then we'll publish your information.

If on the other hand you want to publicise a commercial venture then it's easy to advertise with us. Our mailing list has well over 4,000 subscribers so you'll reach lots of people in Barnes very inexpensively.

The Bugle is a labour of love, not a profit-making venture. We pay to send it out and our mailing costs are covered by the fantastic support we get from Winkworth and our other advertisers. We'd love to get more advertising as that would at least go some way into covering the costs of our time, so if you advertise with us you'll not only be reaching a large audience you'll be keeping a local resource going.

At the Bugle we endeavour to check information for accuracy to the best of our abilities. However we are reliant on information provided to us by third parties. On occasion, dates and times of events may be subject to change and we would urge Bugle readers wishing to attend events, or use a service mentioned to verify information in advance. Where possible we provide links to websites to allow readers to double check the most recent information available, as details can be subject to change.

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