

Southgate District Civic Voice

Newsletter No. 272
July 2025

**We cover Southgate, Winchmore Hill,
Palmers Green, New Southgate, Cockfosters
and Hadley Wood**

(Registered as an amenity society with Civic Voice).



PALMERS GREEN FESTIVAL 2025

**Sunday 7th September
12.00pm - 5.00pm**



(See page 6 for details)

AUTUMN OPEN MEETING

**Saturday 27th September
2.30pm Walker Lower Hall**

**The Work of an Archaeology
Advisor for
Historic England**

by Greer Dewdney

(See page 4 for details)

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Contributions to the October newsletter should be sent by Friday 26th September 2025
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Note:- Copies will be emailed, hand delivered or posted during week commencing 13th October 2025

www.southgatedistrictcivicvoice.org
Facebook: www.facebook.com/southgatevoice
Contact us: info@southgatedistrictcivicvoice.org

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Saturday 10th May 2025



The AGM was held at the Walker Hall on Saturday 10th May. It was good to see so many people getting together to talk about issues impacting our area of interest.

The meeting was chaired by **Graham Davis**, who during his Chair's report led thanks to **Elaine Tyler** who has stepped down from the committee this year. Elaine has been a member of our committee for many years and was previously our very efficient Treasurer.

Elaine will continue to be our webmaster and guide us through the technicalities, so, we will still have the benefit of her experience. We also appreciate that she organised the refreshments after the AGM.

Elections to the Executive Committee 2025-2026

The following members were elected as officers and members of the Executive Committee:

President	<i>remains vacant</i>
Vice-Presidents	<i>remains vacant</i>
Chair, Executive Committee	Graham Davis
Vice Chair	Jane Maggs*
Secretary	<i>remains vacant</i>
Treasurer	Roz Jones
Membership Secretary	John West
Newsletter Editor	Colin Barratt
Publicity Officer	<i>remains vacant</i>

Committee Members (up to 6 members)

Jane Maggs
Richard Purver

Unfortunately, we did not receive any nominations for the posts of President, Vice President, Secretary and Publicity Officer so regrettably these posts remained unfilled.

The Executive Committee would be pleased and relieved if a member would volunteer to take on any of these roles, particularly **Secretary**. The other members of the committee have taken on some of the duties, but it is difficult to cover everything.

If you can help in any way, please contact the committee at info@southgatedistrictcivicvoice.org

*Jane Maggs was elected as Vice Chair at the subsequent Executive Committee meeting. The Vice Chair is not voted for at the AGM.

Jane Maggs

PALMERS GREEN HERITAGE WALK

A talk by Adrian Day

After the AGM in May, we were pleased to welcome **Adrian Day** to talk about his recent publication **The Palmers Green Heritage Walk**.

The walk was produced by The Enfield Society, with input from members of SDCV. Adrian told us that he had lived in the area a long time hence his interest in creating this circular walk.



Adrian started with a brief history of Palmers Green, before we were off on our 'walk', with 'stops' at strategic points to provide more details.



Palmers Green had a slow start, but the coming of the railway was a revolutionary catalyst, even though local landowners tried to prevent any change. Eventually the big estates were broken up and Palmers Green developed.

Adrian's talk took us through our streets and reminded us all to look up. The upper floors of our buildings show the history and the elegance that remains in our town centre. Harry Potter even got a mention!

This was a fascinating talk, which is very topical with the Unlocking Broomfield project in full swing.

Adrian has also led some real walks, which will be repeated later in the summer.

The printed walk is available to buy from The Enfield Society website or from our stall at the Palmers Green Festival on 7th September.

Jane Maggs

AUTUMN OPEN MEETING
Saturday 27th September 2025
2.30pm Walker Lower Hall

We are delighted that our speaker for the next open meeting will be **Greer Dewdney** BA (Hons) MSc ACIfA, who is the **Archaeology Adviser** for the **Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service (GLAAS)** at Historic England.



Greer is the Archaeology Adviser for this part of north London and was recently involved in the dig at Broomfield House. She will also be advising at this summer's dig at Elsyng Palace.

This will be a fantastic opportunity to understand about her work and how it impacts us and the developments around us.

The Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service (GLAAS) is part of Historic England and provide advice for the whole of Greater London, except the London Borough of Southwark, which has its own archaeological planning advisers.

GLAAS maintains the **Greater London Historic Environment Record** (GLHER) which aims to cover all aspects of the capital's historic environment. GLAAS is also involved in planning decisions across the capital, advising on the significance of any heritage assets.

For more information see their website: <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/planning/our-planning-services/greater-london-archaeology-advisory-service/>

This Meeting is open to **everyone** - free to members and only £5 to non-members.

Date & Time: Saturday 27th September at 2.30pm

Where: Walker Lower Hall, Christ Church Parish Centre, 7 The Green, Southgate, N14 7EG

There will in due course be an Eventbrite booking form and the link will appear on our website and in E-News bulletins.

Jane Maggs

SOUTHGATE CELEBRATES

On 11th May Southgate celebrated the launch of the Portrait of Southgate art trail.

The trail has been inspired by Southgate's unique heritage and celebrates the achievements and stories of the vibrant mix of people who were either born in Southgate or made it their home. The artists **Alex McHallam** and **Liz Tiranti** took us along the trail explaining the background to each mosaic and more about the project as a whole.

As well as the artists, **Clare Maloney** from Enfield Council, plus the art champions **Poppy Kanu**, **Jane Maggs** and **Dan Maier** joined the tour and added their perspective to the whole project. Also, showing support was **Cllr Sabri Ozaydin**, Cabinet Member for Environment and Placemaking.



The tour was followed by planting with the Bee Friendly Trust around Southgate Station.



The flower beds are beginning to look more colourful now. There will be new opportunities to be involved with these beds later in the summer.

But in this dry weather we would like some volunteers to assist with the watering. If you can help, please contact us via info@southgatedistrictcivicvoice.org

Let's keep it looking this good!

Jane Maggs

Photos: Mervyn Maggs



SOUTHGATE CHILDREN'S LITERATURE FESTIVAL 12th July

A Magical Day of Books, Theatre, and Fun coming to Southgate!

The Southgate Children's Literature Festival is set to be an exciting addition to the borough's social calendar, bringing families, schools, and book lovers together for a day of storytelling, theatre, and creativity.

Taking place on **Saturday, July 12, 2025**, this festival will put Southgate on the literary map - and if all goes well, it could become an annual celebration!

For more details go to:

<https://www.southgatekidslitfest.org/>



PALMERS GREEN FESTIVAL 2025 - WE NEED HELP! Sun. 7th September



Southgate District Civic Voice have again booked a stall at this festival. As last year, we will have our gazebo, displaying details of local projects, historic local photos, and have books and DVDs for sale. We would like to have a rota of members on our stall, to talk to visitors about our activities and local history and, hopefully, to encourage more people to join us as members.

If you can help on the stall, even for just an hour, please contact Colin Barratt on colin_barratt@yahoo.co.uk or 07826 868690.

RESTORATION OF PYMMES BROOK IN ARNOS PARK

During my childhood Arnos Park was my local park and playground and I remember paddling in Pymmes Brook, under the tube viaduct. (I wouldn't advise anyone to do this now!). This park was also where we played our primary school football matches and it was regularly used for cricket matches and by Sunday morning football league teams.

In the nineteenth century, the area which later became Arnos Park was part of the great Walker estate, where Pymmes Brook wandered through the valley, on its way to Edmonton. This part of the estate was bought by Southgate council in 1928 to create Arnos Park. The brook tended to flood at various places along its length. To prevent this, and to accommodate the tube viaduct, which spanned it, the council re-routed and straightened Pymmes Brook, running it in a concrete channel for much of its length.



Over the years the brook has become polluted and there is still a risk of flooding downstream in the Edmonton area, so Enfield Council's Watercourses Team have put forward a plan to restore the section which runs through Arnos Park. The intention is to recreate its original meandering route, released from its current concrete channel.

This proposal has generated strong feelings both for and against it:-

Pymmes BrookERS is a volunteer-run community group that works to improve the health of both the Pymmes and Salmons brooks. They support any proposal to restore the health of the Pymmes Brook along its course and believe this will benefit the river, wildlife, and people.

Their view is that Pymmes Brook is in very poor health. It is polluted by agriculture, where it rises in outer London farmland; by sewage from property plumbing misconnections and the poor condition of Thames Water infrastructure; and by road run-off (oil, petrol and heavy metals that come off vehicles via brake pads and tyres, and which wash into rivers after rain, killing all aquatic life). Pollution levels vary with weather conditions and other factors, but the river's concrete sides and base, straight and too-deep channel, plus weirs in Arnos Park and elsewhere, all contribute to its poor health. Weirs stop fish spawning, so they can't survive for long. Weirs also slow the flow behind the weir, creating a stagnant pool, where toxic sediment is deposited.

Restoring and re-meandering a river allows it to flow more naturally. Faster flows clean the gravels, under which invertebrates live. These invertebrates are crucial to the food web, supplying food for birds and aquatic life, but they can't survive in dank, concrete-clad, slow-moving water where sediments are constantly being deposited. A natural river is about 30% fast-moving riffles and 70% slower-moving, deeper pools.

Adding small wetland areas will improve the river even more, as the plants filter out pollutants completely naturally. Wetlands also hold on to volumes of water in heavy rain, which helps to reduce flooding both locally and, vitally, downstream in Edmonton, where there is a risk to people's homes.

Re-meandering the river will also improve river health and water quality. It will restore biodiversity through riverside planting and wetlands, allowing wildlife to thrive – which means more dragonflies, kingfishers, herons and fish! This scheme in Arnos Park presents an opportunity to enrich the area's biodiversity.

The Pymmes BrookERS believe that any scheme delivered by Enfield's watercourses team will be high quality. The team has won awards for its work on the Salmons Brook and Enfield Chase Restoration Project, plus wetlands projects at Wilbury Way, Firs Farm and Albany Park, among others.

Pymmes BrookERS have set up an online petition for people to register they are in favour of the scheme, which currently has 270 signatures.

Friends of Arnos Park & Arnos Park Preservation Society oppose the plan for what they consider a divisive flood defence scheme in Arnos Park. Over 700 residents have appealed to Enfield Council to halt the plans.

A member of both groups, Matthew Pierce, said "Local people are unhappy with the proposal as we believe it will split the park in two, reducing space for ball games, picnics etc. and blocking sightlines in the park, making it less safe for women.

"We also doubt how much of a flood risk Pymmes Brook actually is and think that any wildlife benefits will be severely limited by heavy pollution. How can they afford to maintain this new river?"

The residents highlighted issues with trees and reeds getting overgrown and not being managed on other river schemes such as Turkey Brook in Albany Park and Firs Farm Wetlands in Winchmore Hill.

Matthew said residents would like to see work done to improve the wildlife habitats and tackle the pollution, but many did not think this was the solution.

Enfield Council's Response A council spokesperson said: "The council is currently in conversation with the Friends of Arnos Park, Arnos Park Preservation Society, and several other local community groups.

"A community meeting will be scheduled this summer which forms part of a series of early engagement events that will help the council to shape the proposal, and address concerns raised by the local park users and residents. A full public consultation is planned to be carried out later in the year.

"The council is designing the scheme based on community feedback, with the key aim of including restoration of natural river habitat and reducing flood risk to hundreds of residents downstream of Arnos Park, including in Edmonton where there is a greater risk of flooding.

"The overall aim of the proposal is to design a scheme that delivers significant benefits to residents and wildlife, while minimising any potential negative impacts."

Southgate District Civic Voice currently has not taken a position on the proposal, but we felt it was important to put both sides of the debate to our members.

Colin Barratt

Local libraries sadly due to close on 5th July 2025



Southgate (opened 1966 as Southgate Circus)



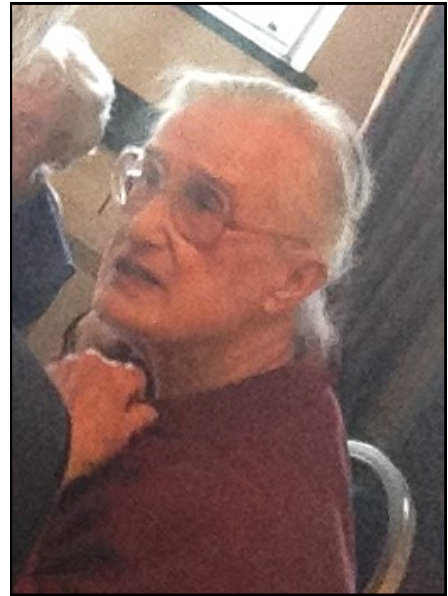
Bowes Road (opened 1939)



Winchmore Hill (opened 1961)

Barbara Walsh

I first met Barbara at a Winchmore Hill Residents Association AGM. I was on their Committee dealing with Planning, and every year Barbara would bring up something that was always relevant to me. This was in the 1980's. When I became the representative for the Southgate District Civic Trust at the Conservation Advisory Group to Enfield in 1999 I resigned from WHRA Committee, and chaired the SDCT Planning Group. Barbara did not belong to that Group until we began the development of the Highlands Hospital site that was already a designated Conservation Area. She came then and was able to become involved with her knowledge of that area. Her expertise in the numerous trees and shrubs was invaluable, and she had many personal feelings for development of the site that she made us aware of.



When that development finally came to an end after several years Barbara was by that time the leader of a Trees group for the SDCT which she maintained alone. She would go anywhere anytime for any member who needed advice and was a permanent and valued member of the Planning Group. She lived very near to me where the monthly meetings were held and together with another regular member Stan Rondeau would walk in all weathers to our meetings. Sometimes there were only the 3 of us to deal with the months planning and we didn't always agree, but we dealt with it all. She always meant what she said and had high principles in what she expected our Conservation Areas to be that she never lowered during her work for the Trust. She would come with me every 5 years to make a check on Highlands CA, for Enfield, and take photos, which was another of her attributes.

As a personal friend she could always be trusted to tell me the truth and help at any time. When my neighbour's tree fell on part of our house she was there with her camera and added her opinions when the Insurance Company asked for details. When we moved she gave us advice on the garden. We were always in touch, and Barbara and Peter will be missed by us.

I have lost a good friend and having spoken to Peter after she died it was an added sadness to hear that he survived her for such a short while. Especially as he had told me that he had plans to use their garden as a memorial to her with special visits by her friends this summer.

Irene Stone